

Criterion A: Initial consultation

Interview with: Keith Davis

Occupation: Accountant

Date of Consultation: 20 April 2021

Location: Keith Davis' Home Office

Note: The interview was conducted verbally in person.

What is the problem you are experiencing?

The problem I am experiencing is that it takes a long time to manually manipulate data to put it in a format that is readable, understandable and can be leveraged to perform my job.

What solutions have you tried before and why are those not efficient?

The solutions I have tried before are primarily manual efforts to manipulate the data as well as utilizing Microsoft Excel. Manual manipulation takes far too long and requires me to actually have to do mathematical calculation myself, wasting valuable time, especially when I am looking at a lot of data. Microsoft Excel helps with the calculation, but I have to aggregate so much data from multiple sources that it is unable to perform this job efficiently. While the spreadsheet can do the sorting for me, I have to manually transfer the data from every spreadsheet I receive into one master sheet before the data can actually be sorted. This takes away time that I could be using for other areas of my job.

What solution would you suggest to fix this issue?

I think a computer program that could perform the data manipulation for me would be the best solution to the problem.

What functionalities does the solution need to be able to perform?

It needs to be able to compile all the data, remove the unnecessary elements and perform the particular aggregations of my choosing.

In what format do you typically receive the data you have to enter and manipulate?

Typically in XL format. I get the data from someone else in a spreadsheet and it's nothing more than raw data and that's what I start with. Now the data will have a column heading, but then below the column heading it will tell me what that is and then it's just all the raw data.

What types of data do you receive?

It is basically nothing more than what we refer to as a “data dump” from a subsidiary operating system that houses all of the loan data for every loan from the bank. The data can vary depending on loan type, so there are different systems depending upon the loan type. Certain loans are on one system and other types of loans are on another. For example, credit cards are on one system, but home mortgage loans are on a different system. The data dumps come from multiple systems and I’m trying to aggregate it all together. The data elements that come in though that I care about are: sales, payroll, and property. I get a bunch of other data, but a lot of that data is not relevant for what I do.

What are the ways in which you need the data to be manipulated?

I need each of those elements by state, so it needs to be listed out based on every state in the United States, plus the District of Columbia, plus one category for foreign. Then once the by state criteria is established, I need the totals of the elements I had previously listed based on each state. Once I have those numbers, I can perform the calculations for each aggregation type.