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BUILDING A CULTURE OF MEASUREMENT

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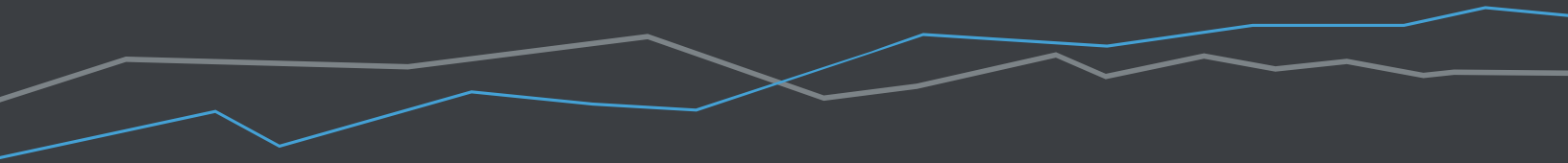
TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Without a doubt, we are living in a big data world where businesses are amassing unprecedented stores of information about their programs, campaigns and customers that are reaching epic proportions. Yet, amid these petabytes of data lie stories of success that paint a compelling picture of business in the twenty-first century. Organizations that have harnessed the ability to unearth these stories are effectively using data as a means to advance their organizations to success. They've achieved this by building cultures of measurement that recognize the value of data at multiple levels within their companies starting at executive management and cascading through to tactical specialists. Yet, nurturing a program of measurement that has a profound impact on an organization in this way requires time, diligence and planning.

In our experience at Web Analytics Demystified, we've realized that most organizations are not adequately equipped to leverage the measurement technologies at their disposal for conducting data analysis and using data to drive change within their organizations. Most often, individuals struggle to deliver insights using flawed processes or via short-sighted strategies. Data remains locked within departmental silos and never gains the chance to permeate throughout an organization. Yet, a few savvy organizations like the ones interviewed for this research are breaking the cycle of data underutilization by leveraging a culture of measurement that has been nurtured within their companies.

One interviewee described it well by stating; "We need to get the data out of the closed box that has been web analytics for so long." He went on to explain that Webtrends, the sponsor of this paper, is helping in this regard by enabling data extraction using their REST API's so that it can be used by other systems in the enterprise. Yet according to our sources, moving cultural initiatives forward requires dedication and support from senior management. This is difficult when so many executives still view the web as a gadget compared to television or other direct marketing channels. However, organizations that have a willingness to advance, can evolve their companies to take advantage of data and measurement technologies for competitive advantages.

Throughout this paper, Web Analytics Demystified shares examples of how organizations are building, nurturing and succeeding with cultures of measurement within their respective organizations for substantial gains. We also detail methods by which you can build a culture of measurement within your organization that includes strategy, process and most importantly results.

THE BENEFITS OF OPERATING WITHIN A CULTURE OF MEASUREMENT

In today's business environment, organizations can find competitive advantages by understanding customers and interacting with them in deep and meaningful ways. These enlightened interactions are possible because of the digital data that winning organizations collect about their customers. By using analytics and measurement technologies that span web channels, social media platforms and distributed applications, companies can elevate the dialogs they have with their customers. Yet, to harness this information and use it effectively throughout an enterprise requires an internal mindset that values data. This mindset is established at the cultural core of an organization.

Savvy managers can reach this core of digital management nirvana by pulling on the right levers within the organization. A wise man once wrote that there are only three true business goals: increasing revenue, lowering costs, and improving customer satisfaction.[1] While some may argue that there are many more nuanced goals

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1: See Jim Sterne's book Social Media Metrics: How to Measure and Optimize Your Marketing Investment, John Wiley & Sons, 2010

when it comes to managing digital aspects of your business, these three are cornerstone elements that are sure to attract the attention of senior executive everywhere. Effective use of digital measurement technologies, like those offered by the sponsor of this paper, Webtrends and their worthy competitors, is the key to quantifying change within your business environment. As organizations progress toward their goals and desired outcomes, measurement is the yardstick by which they are judged. Thus developing a culture of measurement enables companies to understand, report and most importantly act upon changes within their business environments.

Nurturing a culture of measurement allows businesses both large and small to leverage data to accomplish their goals. When this use of data becomes rooted within the culture of an organization, the benefits of making data-driven decisions become immediately apparent. So, if saving your organization money by optimizing operational aspects of your customer-facing business; or increasing revenues by identifying customer needs and wants; or if elevating customer satisfaction by delivering timely, relevant and meaningful digital experiences is your goal... Then read on to learn how to build a culture of measurement and capitalize on the benefits of using data as a key business driver.

MANAGING CHANGE PRESENTS CHALLENGES

Building a business culture is not something that happens overnight. Instead culture evolves over time from the values, beliefs, taboos, symbols, rituals and myths that all companies develop. More often than not, culture stems from the vision of executive management and permeates an organization. Yet, there are great disparities between business cultures when it comes to measurement.

Some organizations leverage technology and digital capabilities to understand their customers, while others still rely on antiquated methods for deciphering customer wants and needs. These discrepancies present competitive advantages for organizations that seize the opportunity to adapt their businesses and instill a culture of measurement. Yet, doing this often requires change within a company, which presents formidable challenges that must be overcome.

Debunking The Myth of Infinite Measurability

At some point during the inception of the Internet the fallacy that the web is infinitely measurable was born. It emerged from the fallacious belief that web analytics tools could magically provide insights and analytical recommendations about consumers. This myth was perpetuated by organizations that looked to early digital measurement pioneers like Webtrends who began in 1993 by collecting and parsing weblog files to understand which pages of their clients' websites were being accessed by visitors. While technology was indeed evolving to capture the digital footprints left behind by online visitors, merely collecting this data without understanding its potential use was detrimental to the advancement of the measurement industry. Tools excelled at quantifying direct conversion events and complex visitor behaviors, yet too often they failed to deliver actionable insights. Thus, while the web was indeed becoming more measurable, much of the data collected was merely digital trivia that served no purpose for the organization.

Online visitor activities such as research, information gathering and online entertainment, which have become hallmarks of consumer behavior today, were undervalued because there was no conversion event at the end of the session. While capable of measuring these actions, many organizations failed to utilize this information due to a lack of adequate resources, flawed processes, and shortsighted strategies. Even more elusive were the online branding activities that have latent effects on bottom line revenue. Thus, the notion of the infinitely measurable web is a really a half-truth that remains partially unfulfilled today. Simply measuring is not enough.

Organizations must measure and translate their data into information, insights and recommendations. The only way we've identified to do this is by leveraging human resources for analysis, which is a cultural change for many organizations.

Finding Meaning Within the Measures

Organizations that do apply resources to web analytics and use data effectively almost without exception always have a plan for what they want to accomplish and how they will get there. Most often this emerges from a discipline that we at Web Analytics Demystified call the "Waterfall Strategy" (see Figure 1). By starting at the top of an organization and identifying the corporate goals, the Waterfall Strategy provides a common direction for each member within the company to work towards. From there, the Waterfall Strategy cascades to include business objectives which align the goals with management strategies necessary to monitor meaningful activity. Next comes the measures of success which allow organizations to apply metrics against their strategies and quantify progress. Finally, the Waterfall Strategy includes operational tactics that dictate individual programs, campaigns, and channels.

CORPORATE GOALS

BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

OPERATIONAL TACTICS

Figure 1: The Waterfall Strategy consists of Goals, Objectives, Measures and Tactics

Across each of these four tiers of the Waterfall Strategy, organizations can apply measurement to assess progress towards their desired outcomes. To do this, goals must be both specific and measurable. Let's take a look at the following examples that an organization might use:

GOALS	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	TACTICS
Elevate online conversions by 1% every quarter of 2011	Integrate customer database with targeting solution inherent to web analytics platform	• Total Conversions • % Conversions by Segment • Cart Abandoners by Segement	• Email remarketing • Dynamic content injection • Segment profiling
Increase market share to 51% among competitive set by 2015	Build brand awareness using social media channels	• Share of Voice • Impressions per social media channel • Conversions by social media channel	• Identify new audience channels • Test marketing messages • Deliver applications
Elevate customer satisfaction by 20% within 2 years	Maintain unified customer profiles of behavior across channels	• Satisfaction Score • Engagement • Interactivity	• Deliver coordinated messaging across channels • Use digital behavior cues for marketing

Figure 2: Example Goals, Objectives, Measures and Tactics

By using a plan that includes a strategy embedded with specific measurement tactics, organizations can systematically develop programs and campaigns that can directly impact progress towards corporate goals. It's important to note that while there may be only a handful of corporate goals, there can be many objectives, measures and tactics that work towards advancing the company to achieve its targets. And not all of these goals will have necessarily have a direct impact on the bottom line. However, each initiative requires planning and strategy as well as collaboration across the enterprise.

Imparting Wisdom Across the Organization

Precious few organizations develop the rigor and foresight necessary to instill a strategic measurement plan like the Waterfall Strategy, let alone a pervasive cultural mindset. Most commonly we see company's creating tactical programs or creative campaigns and attempt to stuff in measurement as an afterthought. This is not only bad practice, but often results in disappointing metrics with little real evidence of success. Instead, Web Analytics Demystified recommends developing cross-functional teams that collaborate on goals, objectives, measures and tactics early on to mitigate the misfortune that comes with a lack of planning. While this may sound daunting to the culturally challenged organization, it opens the lines of communication, sets expectations and offers innumerable rewards to companies who take this approach.

Unfortunately, because so many organizations have unique structures, there is no cookie-cutter approach to developing a highly functional organizational approach to measurement. However, the construct that offers the greatest degree of data quality, accessibility and capability for widespread distribution is a hybrid centralized / decentralized model. Sometimes referred to as a "Hub-and-Spoke" model, this method of organization uses a centralized team to govern and manage digital data. This group typically has liaisons within business units across the organization to fulfill data requests, analysis needs and ongoing reporting. Yet, to make this system work efficiently, companies must ensure a high degree of collaboration and communication between the centralized and decentralized teams. Thus, the need for a cultural mindset that rewards use of data in daily operations and decision making is important. These tasks can be accomplished using a new measurement game plan.

MARKETING AGAINST A NEW GAME PLAN

Given that the technologies of today are up to the task of measuring digital activities, organizations have found that process is a requisite part of the solution. As such, businesses need to instill process and a coordinated game plan to truly execute on a progressive vision of consumer marketing. However, all good game plans must include a method for measurement by which organizations can assess progress and gauge results. This is where the postmodern marketers differentiate themselves from their timeworn competitors.

All Your Gut Should Tell You Is When To Eat

One of the immense benefits of digital measurement technologies is that they bring new levels of accountability to marketers and the organizations they operate in. This is especially true within companies that still struggle to prove the value of analytics and digital measurement practices. When used properly, web data has the ability to create ample fodder for persuasion and sometimes even offer irrefutable evidence necessary to prove a point. Organizations that capitalize on this resource succeed by indoctrinating measurement tools and the data they provide into their key business processes. Web analytics data is well suited to infuse into process because it can be used to answer key business questions and it can also be analyzed to identify new opportunities and flailing efforts. In a similar way, optimization technologies can also be used in conjunction with web analytics tools to validate hypothesis and test online concepts. By doing this, marketers can guide their organizations to migrate from systems where decisions are made based on intuition to ones where data drives the decisioning process.

At one large media and entertainment company, a senior manager explained that the culture within their organization was such that executives mandated that their constituents always come prepared to support any hypothesis or proposed project with data. Eager employees that would attempt to present ideas without existing data or modeled hypotheses showcasing data projections would be shunned and sent away to try again. While this may sound harsh, it's becoming the norm for organizations who can no longer afford to execute against guess-work marketing. As Professor Tony O'Driscoll, of Duke's Fuqua School of Business was quoted as saying, "Metrics are heuristics designed for the purpose of guiding organizational decision making."[2] This is more true today than ever and measurement technologies have brought new accountability to marketing initiatives. Thus, organizations are transitioning to this new method of operation and making it a part of their cultural business practice.

Measurement Offers A Foundation For Operational Excellence

Measurement processes take shape in many forms and offer ways to expedite actions and drive better decisions. Yet, all processes are not created equally. Some can be loosely defined, as in the example above where managers simply insist that recommendations are backed with data, while others can take on a more scientific and methodological approach.

One enterprise interviewed for this research shared their process for using data to drive projects forward within their organization. They use a system shared by many manufacturing companies called PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act). Originally created by Dr. W. Edwards Demming it's a scientific method that begins with a hypothesis, moves to experimentation, and then to evaluation (See Figure 2). The company uses PDCA as a method to illustrate what any given stakeholder wants to accomplish with their project; how they'll measure the success; the tools necessary to accomplish the task; and the targets that they're hoping to achieve. This process can be applied to web projects or any other initiatives - large or small - which

enables the teams to evaluate activities across the organization in a standardized way. Using the PDCA process, internal teams can determine which areas need improvement and prioritize for quick wins in areas that will have the greatest impact across the organization.
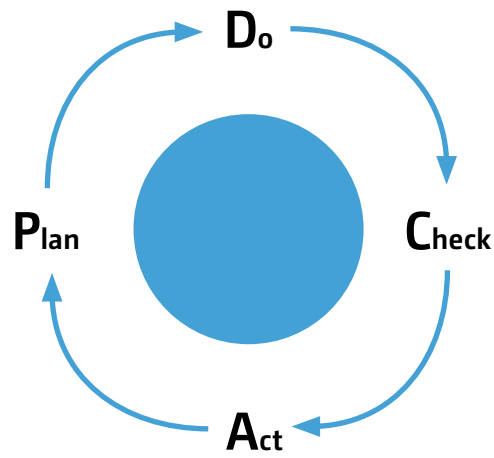

Figure 2: The PDCA Cycle[3]

While the PDCA process may not be appropriate for every organization, it serves a very specific need within many organizations. Further, in the case of the company we interviewed, PDCA was ingrained within the culture of the organization and everyone within the company was familiar with the concept and how it worked. Thus, when new initiatives were introduced, it was expected that they be tested using the PDCA process. This company in particular, adopted this method within their digital practice because it was widely used within the organization at large and therefore, it had a much greater change of acceptance and utilization. Yet there are many other examples of types of processes that can be found within organizations of all sizes. Whether formalized or loosely structured, digital measurement teams can leverage the cultural processes in place within an organization and adapt them to new needs. So, even if you're organization doesn't employ established processes like PDCA its worth looking for methods that are commonly used where measurement plays a critical role.

Success Unleashes A Data Hungry Organization

The best stories of success the partners at Web Analytics Demystified have witnessed include examples where organizations exceed expectations in one area of the organization and showcase the results throughout the entire company. Examples include recovering millions of dollars in lost revenue do to a flawed online checkout process that was revealed using web analytics technology to discovering entirely new market opportunities based on the geographic analysis of web traffic data. Whether these stories of success incite a competitive environment or merely encourage the use of data, organizations that celebrate data consumption and the benefits that measurement brings to the enterprise are most likely to foster a culture of measurement.

One individual interviewed for this research described her process of training internal stakeholders to access their web analytics tool on a self-serve basis to answer routine business questions as the equivalent of getting them to eat their vegetables. It was painful and required patience and diligence. Yet, the efforts were wildly successful. Business users who received the training were empowered to explore the data to answer basic questions, which led them to ask more insightful questions. This process yielded revelations about the effectiveness of specific channels and segment behaviors that were previously unknown. By

learning to work with the data and understanding the capabilities of the tools at their disposal, individuals became hungry for more information. Our interviewee shared that after training and getting a taste of data in an actionable format that her business stakeholders were gobbling down data like it was candy. Not only were they successful in their own programs, but news of their success also spread throughout the organization encouraging others to participate in the training sessions.

While, this transformation may not work at all organizations, the introduction of data and the discoveries that it can offer opened up new opportunities for learning about business programs, consumer behaviors and project success. Each of these elements works to advance the culture of measurement within an organization.

MEASUREMENT CULTURES IN ACTION

Many organizations are evolving their corporate cultures to adapt to the ever-changing digital landscape, yet most are leveraging technologies to help them make the transition. Webtrends customers Cabela's, Barclaycard and a well-known auto manufacturer who requested anonymity for competitive reasons all shared anecdotes about the measurement cultures within their respective organizations.

CABELA'S BUILT A CULTURE AROUND THEIR CUSTOMERS

Some might say that the culture of measurement at Cabela's began in 1961 at the kitchen table of Dick and Mary Cabela's home in Chappell, Nebraska. Today, Cabela's is widely recognized as the country's foremost outfitter of hunting, fishing and outdoor gear, but back then the original items shipped in true direct marketing style with a mimeographed catalog of outdoor products accompanying each box. Growing up as a direct-mail company, the Cabela's kept the names of all their customers on index cards. It was their early start at collecting data about their loyal customers. They did it to maintain relationships with their customers and to build upon their growing success as a retail organization. Today the company has grown tremendously with numerous accomplishments and a remarkable dedication to customer service. They've also evolved their measurement culture to accurately predict how much product they'll sell and to operate a high tech demand based system that is made possible through sophisticated use of data.
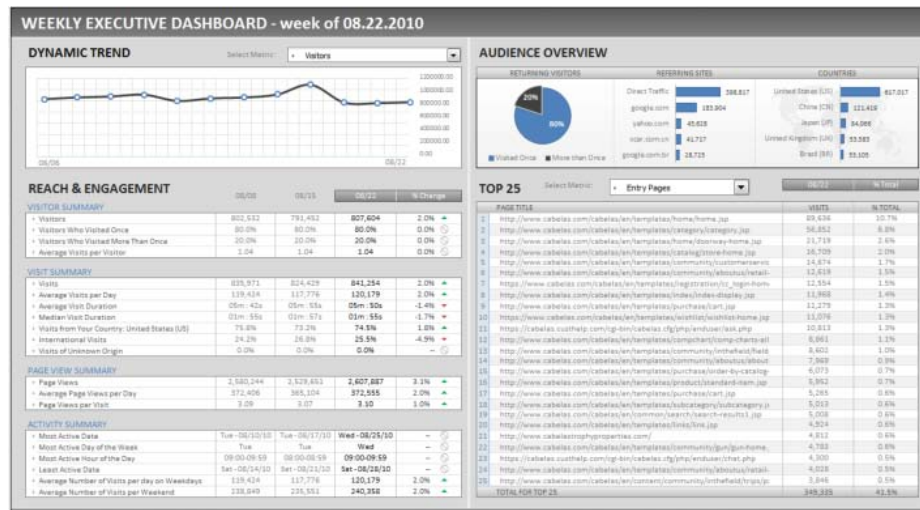
What do your executives want to know about?

Unlike some organizations interviewed for this document Cabela's didn't have a single "Ah-Ha" moment when they realized that data could aid in their operations and marketing success. Instead, that realization was there from the outset and simply became ingrained within the business. Over the years measurement practices were refined as the Cabela's family created and tracked performance metrics that indicated just how well a campaign, a catalog or an event delivered. For them, it wasn't about measuring for the sake of keeping data, but rather it was for accountability purposes. It costs money to execute in the early days as it does today, so by using metrics, non-performing products would get cut from subsequent catalogs to make room for more profitable items. As Cabela's grew to incorporate other sales channels beyond the catalog, they adapted their measures to the new channels with similar discipline. Data is now collected using multiple systems of record that span retail transactions, web site usage, call center traffic, and of course catalog information, which is distributed across the organization for analysis.

To accommodate their growing stores of data and their data collection needs, Cabela's turned to Webtrends as part of their cultural evolution. Cabela's needed flexibility to not only collect data, but also to extract it for use in their other database systems that included historical information about the business and its customers. The interface capabilities they sought would enable the measurement team to collect detailed information about online sessions that wasn't possible with their previous data collection tools. Additionally, they needed a solution with no limits placed on the volume of data collected from their digital initiatives. As their massive data stores expand, Cabela's wanted the option of enabling web analysts to conduct analysis using an analytics user interface or to provision access to extracted data from within their centralized data warehouse using other analytical tools. This flexibility will afford the company multiple methods of getting web data into the hands of business users across the organization.

Cabela's is definitely a data-driven organization and one that has increased their focus on measurement in the past year. As mentioned previously, the have recently become much more focused on data and are enabling access for hundreds of people across the organization. This has created both benefits and challenges for the organization. A measurement team sits at the center of the organization and acts as a "hub" to distribute data throughout the organization via "spokes" to other departments. The marketing department is a heavy user of data but it is also used in other areas for sales, retail planning and other activities. Yet, to ensure a common understanding of data and proper use of information, Cabela's has enlisted governance methods to help create common definitions within a data dictionary and a data governance council that looks at conflicting metrics to reconcile the right ones. The structure enables people to get access to the data they need, while maintaining rights privileges for advanced data analysis to a select smaller group of analysts. The results produced a highly productive data environment that empowers users with self-service access to critical data, while also training people to ask questions of their business units. This has fostered a culture where appointed individuals can lead from a reporting and analytics standpoint and provide the business units with access to data necessary to perform their jobs.

In many ways Cabela's is fortunate because a culture of measurement has always existed within the company. Yet, they're also driving forward and demonstrating true innovation by using data and their cultural foundation in new ways to evolve and become more efficient.

BARCLAYCARD TAKES A MEASUREMENT CULTURE DIGITAL

Barclaycard has been issuing credit cards to consumers in the United Kingdom since 1966 and has achieved significant accomplishments along the way. As the organization grew to service 8.4 million customers today, it established a track record of continuous innovation by delivering numerous firsts to the United Kingdom including: becoming the first ATM card used in the UK, launching the first credit card loyalty program, and venturing first onto the Internet. These technological achievements positioned Barclaycard to evolve to the global organization that it is currently operating in over 60 countries servicing businesses and consumers across the world. All the while Barclaycard has been fortifying its culture of measurement.

Data governance has always been top priority for Barclaycard because the nature of their financial services business, which mandates that they are proper, stewards of all sources of information. As such, the organization has built up measurement "pockets of excellence" within their risk and data management teams as well as other areas of the company. Teams of analysts work diligently to evaluate data using predictive modeling disciplines and advanced statistical analysis to mitigate surprises and ensure the sustainability of their financial programs. Yet, much of the success of the culture that enables this level of measurement exudes from senior management. One manager at Barclaycard stated, "The senior leadership at Barclaycard has always fostered a culture of measurement, and now with the rise of digital, we're taking information management to the next level."

Vinesh Chauhan who Heads the Global Digital Research and Analytics function, is one employee at Barclaycard who is leading the strategic digital analytics initiative. Mr. Chauhan is building out a program of measurement designed to deliver a world-class digital strategy that quantifies the customer experience across multiple channels and enables value creation for business-to-business and end user customers alike. His challenge is not only in identifying what digital analytics excellence looks like, but also in unlocking the expertise that exists within "pockets" of the organization. Mr. Chauhan is working towards this end by developing a corporate strategy that adheres to the vision of senior leadership, while clearly articulating the capabilities and enablers of the Center of Digital Insights he's building. In gaining momentum for the program, one tactic includes showcasing successes achieved from using measurement as a catalyst for effective marketing. By breaking the silos of data distribution and demonstrating success across the organization using measurement systems, stakeholders within Barclaycard recognize the value of the data, analysis, insights and recommendations produced by the Digital Engagement group. This in turn promotes utilization and underscores the culture of measurement at Barclaycard.

While the strategic program of digital analytics is still in the making at Barclaycard today, the organization is well on its way to innovating electronic banking in the twenty-first century. The company currently services customers across its digital channels and is harnessing the data from these individuals within an institutional knowledge share. This method aggregates data from myriad sources including: web, branches, call centres, and social channels to benefit the organization and its customers at large. The result of these efforts will produce a burning platform of digital analytics that is widely utilized across the company as a resource for data aggregation, integrated analysis and widespread dissemination of insights all necessary to drive growth and innovation within Barclaycard. All of this success is made possible because the company embraces a culture of measurement and extends it to reach customers in their channels of choice.

A GLOBAL AUTO MANUFACTURER SPANS CULTURAL DIFFERENCES THROUGH CENTRALIZATION

Like many auto manufacturing pioneers, this global organization has roots that date back to the early 1900's when it began producing its first production automobiles. Steeped in tradition, the company developed a series of guiding principles that focus in part on both customer and employee culture. However, as with many stalwart brands, creating a culture of measurement is a long journey. At the surface, there exists a strong culture of measurement in that decisions are made by understanding facts and figures prior to taking actions. But like many established organizations that are adapting to the web and emerging digital channels, the transition of measurement practices that apply to some areas of the enterprise are not always easily transferred to new ones. While digital measurement was somewhat basic about five years ago, it has evolved to become more sophisticated out of necessity.

This evolution of digital measurement practices over the past several years has occurred to some extent because the organization operates in over 35 different geographic markets which required coordination to ensure consistency of messaging and branding. A centralized team manages systems and technologies used to deliver and measure their consumer facing digital efforts. This enables corporate management of measurement tools as well as the ability to offer guidance on analysis, making use of wed data, and site optimization tactics which are delivered from a team of trained measurement professionals. It also provides the opportunity for global benchmarking of marketing initiatives and competitive analysis across geographic regions. While the central team manages activities like web analytics deployments and topline analysis, it also delivers guidance, support and coaching to the local teams to help them use and understand online data specific to their regional markets.

The company uses Webtrends for its analytics measurement and injects tags into the global Content Management System to facilitate data collection across all corporate web pages and to ensure consistency of metrics. This practice dictates that local sites are all collecting data in the same way, making comparisons across sites possible. The central team also uses web analytics for measuring key customer interactions like those on their Flash car configuration application. This app is used by 25 countries and data revealed in the analytics interface allows the central data team to understand how the application performs and how it can be optimized.

Yet, despite the global measurement tactics in place today, the auto manufacturer found that it has to continually work to demonstrate the value of the digital data and how if can be used by other parts of the organization. The measurement team worked to create an awareness of the data and educate others within the company on how to use it. One challenge that they encountered was that just distributing colorful reports was not sufficient, but that training recipients to use the information contained in those reports to take action was critical. They do this by holding internal "conferences" that educate stakeholders on best practices, analysis methods and the capabilities of the system, which seems to be working for the Internet Marketing team. Just five years ago, there were only a small handful of stakeholders within the organization that paid attention to the analytics reports, but now there are hundreds that rely on the information to perform their daily job activities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS & LESSONS LEARNED

Understand Your Cultural Roots to Prepare for Change

One of the most important aspects of building a culture of measurement within an organization is understanding where you're starting from today and where you want to get to tomorrow. While organizations featured in the case studies here benefited by starting from a position where a culture of measurement already existed, it doesn't always have to happen this way. Companies can build culture from scratch by clearly articulating the benefits of operating from a data-driven vantage point. They can also nurture cultural elements and best practices from parts of the organization that inherently use data to drive ideas and initiatives forward. Examples of this are also made possible by individual leaders within organizations who rise within the ranks of their companies and carry a cultural mindset with them to their new roles. Yet, all of this requires taking a close look at the existing corporate culture to determine if it's one that: fosters innovation over traditionalism; manages risk vs. reward; and honors data over intuition. While some organizations will undoubtedly start from a better position of data-driven excellence, many companies will have to work continuously to stay there. Thus, understanding your cultural roots can help in determining the proclivity for measurement within your company and how much work and effort will be required to influence change.

It's also important to realize that technology alone cannot succeed in building a culture of measurement. People are critical to the development of culture and even the best intentioned people cannot succeed alone. Measurement is a team effort that requires executive support, enterprise collaboration across stakeholders and expert analysts. Throughout each of these groups, effective communication, a clear understanding of corporate goals, and the measures of success that will reveal desired outcomes is of the utmost importance. The human assets that make this possible are likely to be your most valuable in the journey to building a culture of measurement. They're also the most difficult to obtain. Thus, attracting and retaining strong staff is one of the key ingredients for building a culture of measurement.

To help assess the state of your measurement culture today, Web Analytics Demystified developed a diagnostic test to determine where improvements can be made. Each one of the questions in Table 1 indicates a strong practice in building and maintaining a culture of measurement and will serve as mileposts towards a solid program of measurement.

Table 1. Measurement Culture Diagnostic Self-Test

Key Questions	Answer
1) Is your measurement plan aligned to support corporate goals?	Y / N
2) Are your corporate goals specific and measurable?	Y / N
3) Does everyone within your organization know what the corporate goals are?	Y / N
4) Is your executive team supporting the measurement program?	Y / N
5) Do data consumers understand the data capabilities of the measurement system?	Y / N
6) Have you collaborated with business stakeholders to capture their business needs?	Y / N
7) Do you educate stakeholders on the benefits of measurement regularly?	Y / N
8) Have you developed key measures of success that demonstrate performance?	Y / N
9) Are the measures of success used to set and maintain expectations?	Y / N
10 Do your measures of success mandate actions when they exceed thresholds?	Y / N
11) Are measures of success widely distributed throughout the organization?	Y / N
12) Do you have a data governance program?	Y / N
13) Is there a method of self-service for stakeholders to gain access to data?	Y / N
14) Have you developed a process for stakeholders to make data requests?	Y / N
15) Do you have a process for testing hypotheses and experimenting with new ideas?	Y / N
16) Is process ingrained within your corporate methods of taking action?	Y / N
17) Are existing processes iterative and designed for continuous improvement?	Y / N
18) Do you have a system to collect and analyze customer feedback?	Y / N
19) Are data successes celebrated throughout your organization?	Y / N
20) Does data affect change at your organization?	Y / N

Deploy a Waterfall Strategy for Measurement

Numerous lessons can be learned from organizations who take a strategic approach to measurement. These measurement strategies typically share a common element of translating the vision held by corporate management into specific and measurable goals. These goals are then supported with business objectives that align different groups within the organization to focus on common tasks. The measures of success act as status indicators depicting success or failure of corporate programs. Each measure of success plays a critical role in the management of independent programs. Finally, operational tactics align the corporate goals with executable campaigns that reach customers across multiple channels. The strategic coordination of each of these elements of measurement comprise the Waterfall Strategy and represent a method for deploying a culture of measurement.

Using this strategy places the burden of work in the planning phases because it requires that each initiative is launched with specific measures, targets and expectations in place. While this method may inhibit immediate turnaround of new initiatives, it also minimizes rash decisions. Organizations like the auto manufacturer referenced earlier benefit from this type of process. The result produces standard operating procedures that are widely understood throughout the organization and serve as a method for evaluating success on a comparative basis.

Communicate the Merits of Measurement Through Storytelling

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of building a culture of measurement is celebrating success throughout an organization. Going back to cultural myths and legends; tales are told about epic journeys, monumental accomplishments and the valiant heroes that saved the day. Much like ancient lore, business accomplishments can be celebrated and become part of the cultural fabric of an organization. By leveraging the capabilities of measurement technologies and showcasing the accomplishments of individuals and business teams, companies can encourage the use of data in a positive and genuine way.

The art of storytelling with data can also be used to inform the business about progress towards goals, competitive advantages and even financial wins. To do this, data analysts must break free from merely reporting via spreadsheets and rows of data by making the data come alive with examples and comparative illustrations. Organizations that do this well always present data in context - whether that includes year-over-year comparisons or market share versus the competition - the ability to go beyond raw numbers is imperative. Good data stories are always rooted in numbers and have the backing of solid analysis behind them. The key is to tell the tale that is both interesting and important to the business so that it captivates the attention of your audience and forces them to take action. Yet, by building a measurement plan that is based on corporate goals and business objectives, data storytellers have all the right ingredients for story-telling that is fact-based and critically important to the business.

CONCLUSION

When building a culture of measurement there are several moving parts that you need to pin down in order to be successful. First, you must understand where you're starting from in order to reach a desired outcome. This happens by taking a realistic assessment of your corporate surroundings and identifying the existing culture you work in. Then, develop a strategy that begins with the corporate vision and cascades through the organization using objectives, measures of success and operational tactics. This can be achieved using a process like the Waterfall Strategy. Next, instill a process that facilitates this strategy by mandating that projects and initiatives include a detailed program for measurement and that data will be a driving factor in determining

their success. Further, you must continually ask difficult questions of the organization to ensure that your measurement strategy and resulting data supports the needs of the business. This information must be widely socialized and readily accessible. If signs point to the fact that the plan is wavering from the desired path, then it's time to take corrective actions. Finally, ensure that efficient and effective use of data is celebrated throughout your organization. Positive results should be broadcast throughout the company and all goals and measures of success should be visible to the masses. Successful outcomes that result from use of data should be showcased such that stakeholders who have yet to immerse themselves in the culture of measurement will be compelled to do so.

All of the above also assumes that the organization has the right technology and resources in place to execute. While cultures can be built upon many different types of technologies, strategies and processes, it is important that the tools chosen for the task meet the business and cultural needs of the organization. So talk to your stakeholders to assess their needs and then approach vendors with questions about their solutions that will foster a culture of measurement. Whether you decide to approach this paper's sponsor Webtrends, or another vendor of your choice, you should view vendors as partners who will help in your quest to build a culture of measurement.

We welcome any comments, questions and feedback about our work. Please write the author of this paper directly at John.Lovett@webanalyticsdemystified.com or call us at 603.262.5636.

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About the Author

John Lovett is a Senior Partner at Web Analytics Demystified, a consulting firm focused on digital measurement strategy. He has over a decade of experience analyzing and evaluating web technologies. Since joining Web Analytics Demystified in December of 2009, Mr. Lovett has declared his quest to become a change agent for web analytics by questioning the status quo of vendor measurement practices; challenging clients to fully develop their strategic vision for measurement; and driving the industry to collectively embark on advancement.

Prior to joining Web Analytics Demystified, Mr. Lovett was a Senior Analyst at Forrester research, where he conducted research on web analytics, testing and optimization technologies. He is widely recognized as an industry expert on measurement technologies. Mr. Lovett currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Web Analytics Association and is an active member of the Research and Standards Committees.

About Web Analytics Demystified

Web Analytics Demystified, founded in 2007 by internationally known author and former Jupiter Research analyst Eric T. Peterson, provides objective strategic guidance to companies striving to realize the full potential of their investment in web analytics. By bridging the gap between measurement technology and business strategy, the Web Analytics Demystified Partners have provided guidance to hundreds of companies around the world, including many of the best known retailers, financial services institutions, and media properties on the Internet.

For more information on Web Analytics Demystified and The Demystified Partners, please visit www.webanalyticsdemystified.com, email john.lovett@ webanalyticsdemystified.com, or call (603) 262-5636.

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