ANALYTICS

Weber State University

Predicting student retention and success during a pandemic with Qlik AutoML.

Qlik Q

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

"My models are much more powerful in Qlik AutoML. When you have more power, it's easier to see problems as well as to account for variance. [...][Using old methods,] there's more noise than there is signal."

Heather Chapman, Director, Academic Analytics, Weber State University

Empowering Students Using Qlik AutoML™

Weber State University (WSU) began using Qlik AutoML in late Q1 2020, right as the pandemic took hold in the US. As Covid-19 wreaked havoc, the university had difficult decisions to make about where to allot resources in the midst of self-described "survival mode." A combination of the right power at the right price made Qlik AutoML a viable choice even in uncertain times as a method to empower, support, and retain their students in a quickly-changing world. After a trial month with Qlik AutoML, decision-makers saw value thanks to Qlik AutoML's ability to translate something complicated to something understandable, making it easier to share with stakeholders with and without technology backgrounds.

About Weber State University

Weber State University is a state-funded community college as well as a bachelor's-, master's-, and — as of recently — doctoral-granting institution in Utah. They are non-selective in which applicants can attend, attracting students from varied educational backgrounds including many developmental students that need additional help in math or English composition. The university has a mission to close the skills gap for these types of students, and they have seen big gains over the last three years.

With limited funding, Qlik AutoML was a more attractive option because of its affordability compared to competitors and consultants that can incur "astronomical expenses," according to WSU's Heather Chapman, Director, Academic Analytics.

WSU Core Value Pillars To Achieve With Qlik AutoML:

1
Improve funding factors of enrollment, persistence, and graduation.

2
Institutional mission to help students and lower skills gap

3
Data science proof of impact to share with stakeholders for future scalability and budget

Navigating Education In A Changing World Using Data

WSU is using Qlik AutoML to fuel a variety of predictive analytics projects and to answer questions including:

- Persistence - Which students will persist (i.e. come back for the next term)? What are the characteristics of these students? Persistence is a key factor in getting funding for the university.

- Graduation - Which students were most likely to graduate? What impacted graduating students? Among their most impactful projects so far, WSU discovered that worry-free aid—aid that students did not have to pay back—dramatically impacted a student's chances of graduating. Graduation is another key factor in determining funding.

- Accreditation - WSU incorporated predictive analytics into the accreditation process to help quantify and show that the degrees they issue are valuable and meaningful

Being able to understand and affect graduation and persistence rates is critical to schools such as WSU. Because they are a state-funded school that gets little by way of grants, these are impactful factors among many that determine how much funding they receive. In turn, this determines which projects they can fund to make a difference for their students and further their mission to close the skills gap.

WSU has many upcoming projects they want to try using Qlik AutoML. The ease and speed of Qlik AutoML is opening more room for idea exploration than previous methods of predictive analytics that required time-consuming, iterative processes.

> "It's not just the speed, it's the accuracy and validity as well. It allows me to do things quickly that are actually good, they're valid results. […] Because the tool provides 4 or 6 different views of the data[…], it builds trust in the data and results."

Geek-Approved Data Science

Rejoice, statisticians and data geeks — Qlik AutoML is built from the ground up to inspire trust in your results without sacrificing speed. Plus, it integrates with the rest of your data science and analytics stack. WSU is using:

Data warehouse	Analytics Dashboards	Argos	Survey tools	Retention tool
WSU considers this their greatest asset which they are continuing to build. "Everything feeds into the data warehouse."		Evisions tool for detail-level reporting, built for higher ed		

Friends On Your Team

Qlik AutoML offers a step-by-step onboarding process with a small team that gets to know your needs inside and out. The Big Squid team is always ready and willing to answer questions or to help you find solutions to your biggest questions. And the support doesn't stop once you've settled into using the software.

"The [Qlik] team has been great… everybody has been great. I actually think the [onboarding and support] model is pretty cool. We get better support. Different support. More hands-on support from Qlik AutoML. If I hadn't had the onboarding experience, my ideas about how to use Qlik AutoML would be far less.[…]"

Heather Chapman, Director, Academic Analytics, Weber State University

Qlik Q®

About Qlik

Qlik's vision is a data-literate world, where everyone can use data and analytics to improve decision-making and solve their most challenging problems. Qlik offers real-time data integration and analytics solutions, powered by Qlik Cloud, to close the gaps between data, insights and action. By transforming data into Active Intelligence, businesses can drive better decisions, improve revenue and profitability, and optimize customer relationships. Qlik serves more than 38,000 active customers in over 100 countries.

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