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Insight 3 of 4 – Memberships in the Digital Age: How to unleash the power of data with knowledge & insights

Maximising data as a crucial asset for driving business growth in Membership organisations and Professional Bodies: An Exploration

How to unleash the power of data with knowledge & insights

When it comes to data, organisations often tend to be stuck on the how and where to start – this becomes even more evident when we consider AI as a new layer to work with. In 2022, the MemberWise Digital Excellence report found 70% of membership organisations use data to make important decisions, however only 13% had trust in their own data.

Addressing the "Where to start" first

- Bridge the data gap – You can kick-start by ensuring the right stakeholders (Tech & Business) are collaborating at a strategic level. Those teams need to talk continuously and talk the same data language – bring to the table those individuals equipped with domain expertise and programming skills. If you don't have those individuals with such a profile in your organisation, consider starting to embed some of your data team directly within the business teams.

- Start with the end in mind – what are the strategic business objectives, the KPI's and the challenges you are working with? Ask which type of insights / actions are expected, so expectations can be managed. You will most likely need to educate the organisation and showcase how data & insights can be trusted and how it can help to drive membership value and growth.

- How well do you know your membership data? – What data do you currently have

about your members? How is your data quality? Do you have defined and aligned measures for all three key pillars – retention, engagement and recruitment? Do you maintain specific business views via targeted and easily maintainable segmentation? Do you run constant analytics & insights? Can you merge datasets from various platforms to offer a comprehensive view of the whole member journey through your digital channels? These are some of the key questions to help you identify where existing gaps might be so that you can define a place to start.

- Start small, iterate and fail fast – If you are embarking on your data journey, then identify those quick wins associated to no-regret activities. The ideal use cases often resemble clunky Excel reports stored on a shared space, manually updated weekly or monthly. These reports are sometimes heavily relied on by business teams to understand their overall membership offering, such as exam or membership performance, member engagement, etc. Once transformed through proper data modelling, visualisation, and interpretation, you can achieve FTE savings, improve data quality, and deliver business value through actionable data insights.

As far as the "How to start" is concerned

- Invest in data analytics expertise and tools – this is

pivotal, but make sure to maintain a well-balanced data capability between domain expertise and programming skills. There are now powerful open-source software's leveraging a low-code / no-code approach. Those can offer sought after capabilities in data science, machine learning and AI without the expensive price tag of a data / AI engineer – such hires could come later when you progress through your data maturity journey. Low-code / no-code allows for more time available to build domain expertise, drive insights and enable business actions.

- Don't expect the first draft of any data analytics solution to provide a perfect output. Instead, iterate rapidly and involve the business in the journey to align on the solution. This process builds trust in the data, your analytics team, and across the larger organisation, ensuring a solid end-user adoption. Success here often relies on fostering a culture of continuous improvement to reach marginal gains – stay close to those improvements and enable a regular process to recognise and celebrate those small but incremental wins.

- The enthusiasm for data from the business users often comes with "it would be interesting to know" type of requirements. Don't build data solutions around those and keep your focus on the initial objectives aligned with the business and tech team at a strategic level.

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Remember – tangible actions should be the ultimate output of any data analytics & insights work.

Unlocking the true potential of your membership organisation requires more than just collecting data – it demands a strategic approach to create sustainable value. Discover how harnessing the power of your data assets can propel your organisation forward, revolutionising the way you comprehend, oversee, and cater to your members. Our team of consultants can guide your journey to not just stay ahead but to lead the way in providing unparalleled value and service through insightful data utilisation.

For more information or help on your journey to Membership in the Digital Age, email contact@masonadvisory.com to discuss further.

Author

Tom Poundall
Principal Consultant
email: contact@masonadvisory.com

About Mason Advisory

Mason Advisory has offices in Manchester and London and employs over 100 staff, with plans to continue its expansion. We enable organisations to deliver value through digital & technology transformation, solving complex business challenges, and helping clients set strategy through the intelligent use of IT resources including architecture, cyber, operating model and organisational design, service management, and sourcing. We operate in sectors such as financial services and insurance, legal and law, government, health and social care, emergency services, retail, FMCG, transport, and not-for-profit.

Contact us

To get in touch, please email contact@masonadvisory.com or call +44 333 301 0093

MANCHESTER
Landmark
St Peter's Square
1 Oxford Street
Manchester
M1 4PB

LONDON
Bush House
North West Wing
Aldwych
London
WC2B 4PJ

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