ANALYTICS

D4C uses Qlik to drill deep into data

Pediatric dental network uses Qlik Sense to optimize business operations

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DENTAL BRANDS

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A patient-first approach to oral hygiene

Most dental practices will state a firm commitment to dental hygiene. D4C Dental Brands also firmly believes that the best way to ensure a lifetime of oral health is to start young.

D4C is a specialist pediatric dental and orthodontic network. It takes a patient-first approach to supporting the delivery of high-quality services and raising standards in children's oral healthcare.

D4C's origins are in Atlanta and the US southeast, but the business expanded rapidly into the Midwest, Texas and California, and now supports practices across the US. Much of this expansion has been achieved by affiliating with established dental practices, helping them develop their management and administration and allowing healthcare professionals to focus on what they do best.

"We exclusively focus on supporting pediatric dentistry and orthodontic work," says Stefan Sanchez, Senior Business Intelligence Manager at D4C Dental Brands. "Taking care of and delivering value to the day-to-day business side of things, like HR or billing or marketing, makes it easier for the doctors to focus on patients."

Focusing on performance and opportunity

For D4C, measuring, managing and ultimately improving the patient experience through how its business performs and the people within it goes beyond canvassing opinions or nebulous feedback. It has developed a raft of key performance indicators (KPIs) and other metrics that enable staff and managers to monitor performance and patient journeys and identify opportunities to improve the support it provides to clinicians.

Solution Overview

Customer Name
D4C Dental Brands

Industry
Healthcare

Geography
North America

Function
Finance, HR, IT, Marketing, Sales

Business Value Driver
Patient Intelligence, Reimagined Processes

Challenges
- Data sources from newly acquired business were scattered and disconnected
- Reporting was cumbersome and time-consuming
- KPIs and key metrics were difficult to track and manage

Solution
D4C deployed Qlik® Sense® to manage the ETL process and enable clinical and operational staff to access critical data and insights across the business.

Results
- Data from multiple disparate sources can now be accessed and processed
- Staff can benefit from key insights quickly and easily
- Critical performance information enables D4C to build its business and reputation

However, D4C's rapid expansion has meant accessing and centralizing this data can be challenging. The business is affiliated with around 40 practices a year, each of which operates its own systems, data storage and collection processes. The process of assimilating these into D4C's platforms can be complex and time-consuming.

"When you have people on multiple different platforms, it makes it exceptionally hard to know what you're actually looking at," explains Sanchez. "Individual doctor offices, for example, can often use very old software, certainly nothing cloud-based."

Added to this was a growing realization at D4C that the out-of-the box reporting and analytics capabilities offered by standard dental software didn't meet the business's high standards. D4C contacted trusted IT consultancy IPC Global to find out whether a better solution was possible.

A complete solution

Long-standing and Qlik® Elite partner IPC Global is a diverse, nationwide team of experienced data analytics consulting and system integration experts. Also based near Atlanta, it provides advisory, consulting and managed services, specializing more specifically in enterprise intelligence. IPC Global has been active for over 20 years and has been a trusted Qlik partner almost since day one.

IPC Global immediately saw an opportunity to introduce D4C to Qlik Sense®. As a forward-thinking, data-driven and target-led business, D4C was ideally suited to the insights, visualizations and response speeds that Qlik Sense offers.

"The analytics side and dashboards for reporting were clear advantages, but not having a warehouse structure in place on the D4C side could have been a problem," says Sanchez. "Having a tool that could handle both the data transformation and the reporting, and do so without needing to build out multiple teams and processes, was obviously very appealing."

Louis Ho, Solutions Architect at IPC Global, adds: "Qlik is not just data analytics and a front-end tool, and that was crucial for D4C. Without the extraction, transformation and loading (ETL) and data scaling power, Qlik Sense wouldn't have been a complete solution. Its ability to extract, consume, store and warehouse data was a huge differentiator here."

The two businesses worked together quickly, and within just a few months of D4C's contact with IPC Global in 2018, an initial deployment of Qlik Sense was in place.

Moving above and beyond

Using KPIs and mission-critical metrics enables D4C to further develop and optimize its service. Using Qlik Sense, D4C's ability to quickly and seamlessly merge data from newly affiliated businesses is now an important component of its wider strategy.

It also allows end users from middle management to senior leadership at D4C to define and develop their own highly specific and sophisticated metrics that go far beyond the out-of-the-box functionalities of standard dental platforms, ultimately increasing the patient experience.

Complementing both of these areas, D4C can now marry multiple data sources, including HR, financial and operational data from multiple different platforms, to provide a unified picture of how individual offices and the business as a whole are supporting the delivery of high-quality care. Critically, D4C's clinical leadership team now has access to key metrics and data with just a single click that previously would have been impossible to acquire and calculate, or would have involved pulling together hundreds of reports using manual processes that would not have been sustainable on a long-term basis.

"It's ultimately about streamlining the process, whether it's on the accounting, revenue cycle or finance side, or on the clinical side," says Sanchez. "A range of different end users now have the ability to quickly pull data for reporting or run processes. Qlik Sense gives them granularity that doesn't exist on other platforms."

New standards and benchmarks

The reporting, dashboards and analytics elements of Qlik Sense are now used across D4C's operation.

On the practice management side, D4C is now using the information supplied to deliver improvements in appointment scheduling and management, onboarding new patients and planning treatment programs. HR managers can ensure that staff costs and employee resources remain within budget, while also ensuring that clinical and operational personnel are available when patients need treatment.

Qlik Sense also enables D4C's supported doctor owners to establish a range of standards and checkpoints to analyze the performances of individual clinical staff members and help improve the quality of care they deliver to patients.

"Ultimately it gives accountability to the doctors and shows them how everyone else is performing within those same parameters," says Sanchez. "It provides an evaluation process that wouldn't exist without the ability to make those comparisons."

An enhanced reputation

On a broader level, the improved patient journeys that D4C now enables are further enhancing an already highly enviable reputation for professionalism, which also makes D4C attractive to other potential sellers and further stimulates business growth.

Qlik Sense's ease of use also means D4C staff can quickly pick up the required skills to use it effectively, and business intelligence specialists such as Sanchez can become more independent in their roles while still counting on the counsel of Ho and IPC Global for additional development work and new challenges.

"We're benefiting from the ability to change different KPIs at will and being able to update them as new initiatives or directions come into play," says Sanchez. "Those areas are evolving very quickly and Qlik Sense means we can handle them with ease."

The keys to success

10 staff workloads now handled by Qlik

40 affiliates a year added to D4C's network

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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. A private company, 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.
qlik.com

About IPC Global

IPC Global is a diverse team of experienced, engaging and effective data analytics experts. IPC Global provides advisory, consulting and implementation services, managed services (multi-cloud) to solve organizations' greatest Enterprise Intelligence challenges. For more than 20 years, IPC Global has been the go-source for Business Intelligence: data visualization, Big Data analytics, Data Integration, ETL, and data warehousing design.
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