



Benefits

1. Improve operational efficiency - Developing intelligent alerts to detect out-of-control or non-random events
2. Avoid false positives - Only sending data out to the field when it is necessary and avoiding false positives through intelligent alerting
3. Lower the cost of getting data out to the field - Stop paying for expensive licenses for users who only need personalized alerts with defined actions and are not performing analysis

Overview

The Serenitee Restaurant Group consists of nine distinct restaurants north of Boston, with its headquarters in historic Gloucester at 185 Main St. Each of the group's restaurants has its own personality with a unique experience and menu. The Serenitee Management Corporation acts as a consultant for human resources, IT, purchasing, marketing, and accounting.

Challenge

As part of their modern approach to restaurant management, Serenitee uses analytics to help monitor and grow their business through strategic data-driven decision making. Before working with RelayIQ, Serenitee developed very attractive dashboards to help get analytic insights into the hands of their decision makers in the field. Serenitee CEO Mark McDonough quickly realized that nobody was looking at the dashboards, and it was likely impossible to track changes across so many of them. McDonough shares:

"I was one of the people who built the gorgeous dashboards and said, 'These are amazing.' But everybody is too busy to look at them. I actually had an application that had 300 visualizations, and there is no way anyone will go looking through those 300 visualizations. I wanted something equivalent to the autonomic nervous system [which controls and regulates the internal organs without any conscious recognition or effort by the organism]."

While McDonough still loves dashboards, he realized they were the wrong form factor to deliver insights to his decision makers in the field who did not want to mess around with filters and analysis and simply wanted alerts telling them what to do next based on the data.

Serenitee also struggled to find a cost-effective license that would empower them to get their

intelligence out to everyone in the field. Most BI tools operate on the assumption that everyone looking at dashboards wants to conduct analysis and they charge accordingly. Serenitee simply wanted to send personalized alerts with defined actions without having to buy an expensive license for each alert recipient in the field. However, when they did their homework and evaluated alert systems for dashboards, they found them all to be very rudimentary and highly susceptible to “false positives.”

Solution

After deciding that no alerting system would meet their needs, Serenitee decided to work with RelayIQ to help build the next-generation system they were dreaming of. They made this investment in RelayIQ specifically because they were very impressed with chief product officer and Tableau veteran Anthony Chamberas. “Anthony is an amazing individual. Anthony is a man with a great heart and a smart head, and he is committed to making sure everyone is happy,” said McDonnough.

RelayIQ’s Alert product is rapidly adding the functionality Serenitee needs to send context-sensitive alerts to everyone in the field when and where they need them. Serenitee will no longer have to worry about people ignoring their dashboards or failing to mine them for insight. RelayIQ’s new Blast feature auto-generates images from dashboards based on various filter combinations. They can even then package the generated images into a single PDF and send a link to a distribution list via e-mail, Slack, and SMS.

According to McDonnough, the biggest win is lowering the cost of getting data out to the field. He shared, “With RelayIQ, we can stop paying for analyst licenses for users who only need the alerts and are not performing analysis.”

McDonnough further explained, “BI tool licenses are designed for people who specifically want to look at data. But I have a use case that is much lower-level than that. My team is operationally fixated and they only want alerts when something is bad. They don’t want to manipulate any filters. They just want it to show up so they can say, ‘Hey, look at this. Fix it.’ With RelayIQ’s capacity to send pictures of graphs to these operational people for much less than the cost of a BI license, it significantly brings down the cost of bringing data to the decision maker in the field. What the BI tool vendors don’t realize is that these people who make decisions with data don’t want to know anything about data analysis, they just want to know what to do.”

Moving Forward

Moving forward, Serenitee will be collaborating closely with RelayIQ to develop the next generation of intelligent alerts with thresholds built on standard deviations. McDonnough is particularly interested in implementing the Western Electric rules for his teams alerts. These are decision rules in statistical process control for detecting out-of-control or non-random conditions.

McDonough explains, “In my data I can see when someone is not performing. I have servers in my restaurant and I measure their performance based on tips averages. They might have a bad month and then be great the next month. If I told them they were performing poorly after that first month, it would either make them or my data look bad. I want to identify the servers who are consistently bad performers or consistently good performers.”

McDonough is working with RelayIQ to build alerts that trigger based on how many times a given metric falls one, two, or three standard deviations outside the norm. McDonough believes this will empower Serenitee to know when something is “outside of spec” and will eliminate, or at least greatly reduce, the false positives rampant in other alerting solutions.

“One of the things I found is that the standard alert system that is out there now is really primitive and would produce too many false positives. The standard is when the signal goes over a limit it sends a message. I believe that is going to send out too many false positives.”

McDonough was ultimately so impressed with the RelayIQ product and team that he became an investor. When asked why, he responded, “The market is still in the gee-whiz faze of ‘isn’t this cool?’ and ‘aren’t these beautiful dashboards?’ I think RelayIQ is ahead of the curve in knowing that making gorgeous data is not enough.”