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CU I&E Submission: Democratization of Dashboards [1]

Category

Technology

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Project Description

We have received a lot of requests for dashboards and realized quickly that there was no way to satisfy everyone without making people wait based on priority. Thinking about it more, we realized that enabling everyone to build dashboards would dramatically speed up dashboard development and help smaller projects with important data needs accelerate their timelines, improving efficiency. Upon realizing this, we decided an experiment was in order, whereby we would upskill select team members on the PowerBI dashboard tool and provide a small amount of internal consultant time to guide them through their first dashboard implementation. The project proved to be successful, showing that people outside of traditional IT can build dashboards to meet their own needs.

Project Efficiency

The greatest efficiency is changing the narrative around dashboards and reporting tools and who can build them. Traditionally, IT teams take the time to build dashboards based on their management's priority. Instead, it is possible for disparate teams with their own dashboarding needs to build their own dashboards in parallel as long as they have a way to get source data. This 'democratization' helps the workforce increase their skills, moving us toward a team where data is everyone's responsibility.

Project Inspiration

The inspiration was the enthusiasm of Department of Psychiatry team members around dashboards after the business intelligence team in Psychiatry started to be built. Everyone had a request for a dashboard, and because the team is lean, there is only so much that can be done with time. Because of that enthusiasm and because Psychiatry already has a data-driven mindset, we thought that our team members could take on a challenge to learn something new with the promise that they could view their data via a dashboard exactly tailored to their needs--because they built it.

What Makes You Happiest about this Project?

Seeing how capable our non-IT team members are around dashboards and taking more direct ownership of their own data needs makes me happy. It really goes to show how capable our teams are and how they will rise to a challenge that they are given. It also means that our business intelligence team can focus on technical work that truly cannot be done by anyone else in the department, while handing off many things to the individuals who have dashboard and data requests, improving everyone's efficiency.

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