



BI Predicted To Go Big In 2013

By predicting the election before it began, Nate Silver created a watershed moment for data analytics. As the world watched Chicago celebrate President Obama's victory on broadcast television, data enthusiasts were celebrating Silver's victory across media threads, social feeds and mobile devices. Silver's true believers knew the real political swashbuckling – gobs of polling data neatly shaped by regression models and algorithms – took place well before the major networks went on air.

C-level types took notice. If one data wonk can run the election table by accurately forecasting 50 out of 50 states using sound analytics, imagine what it can do for my business?

Using Nate Silver as a poster boy, Nucleus Research predicts enterprise will find a lot more true believers in BI and predictive analytics in 2013.

Why Now?

Based on ease of use, lower-cost options offered by the cloud and SaaS, and vendors pushing BI capabilities deeper into traditional enterprise functions, Nucleus expects BI adoption to double worldwide in 2013. "The great potential ROI opportunities from pervasive BI will make 2013 the watershed year for BI adoption," according to Nucleus.

So Silver's moment may have ignited BI investment throughout the coming year. Or, a simpler explanation may be the 2012 mad emergence of big data. Companies simply need new tools and expertise to capitalize on insight hidden in petabytes of data overflowing from disparate sources, now from every department in the organization.

Regardless of inspiration, applications around pervasive and predictive analytics are quickly becoming budget line items.

Here's why Nucleus thinks BI is poised for a huge 2013:

#1 Usability advantages and adoption patterns

Analytics are simply more available. Although BI is not new, companies are doing more with raw data and visualization tools.

Nucleus argues BI practices have gone more mainstream and will impact more industries because ROI for analytics tools and analysis can be viewed as a company-wide pursuit. Not just the domain of data geeks and IT.

In addition, decision makers are buying in more based on tangible results of data initiatives. Upper-level management is growing more comfortable with analytics, too.

As technology matches up with needs, vendors will continue to make it easier for the masses to take advantage of opportunities to employ analytics.

#2 Time is now to hire a data rock star

Finding the right data talent, especially for SMBs, has hamstrung a lot of companies wanting to build a more data-driven culture. Here, Nucleus makes pop references to The New York Times' Nate Silver and Moneyball's Billy Beane as examples of data stars fluent in analytics and statistics. "The increased availability of analytics has led to a new sort of statistics-driven genius."

If analytics pick winners in politics and baseball, then why not manufacturing, retail, finance and health care. McKinsey Co. reported a mega shortage of analytical talent in the U.S. In fact, those with "deep analytical skills" will be fielding up to 190,000 job openings by 2018.

Northwestern, NYU, North Carolina State and the University of Texas are busy building advanced-degree programs in analytics, and will soon be churning out graduates trained to mine and make sense of big data. In the interim, IT gurus say pluck your analytical talent from within. Look for a deft mix of mathematics, statistics and programming languages, if not a gift for finding patterns and trends in mountains of data.

#3 Big data value is found in unexpected places

Nucleus warns the biggest value proposition for big data won't come from compliance, risk management and social media, but external sources that embody today's customer-centric mindset. "Big data will help companies that have greedily latched onto every piece of data that they can grab from customers, partners, markets, and the outside world."

Nucleus calls these massive collections of data "a dragon's den of accumulated treasure." Treasure, of course, if you have the right tools for the job. Look for search and analysis solutions to support these "data hoarders" tasked to filter and translate petabyte-scale volumes of both structured and unstructured data. Then, having the speed and strategy to impact revenue-producing operations on a real-time basis.

With bigger adoption and better use, more data scientists, and big data in strange places, 2013 should be a breakout year for BI. Time to channel your own inner Nate Silver.