

The next wave of technology innovation; advanced data insight and visualisation

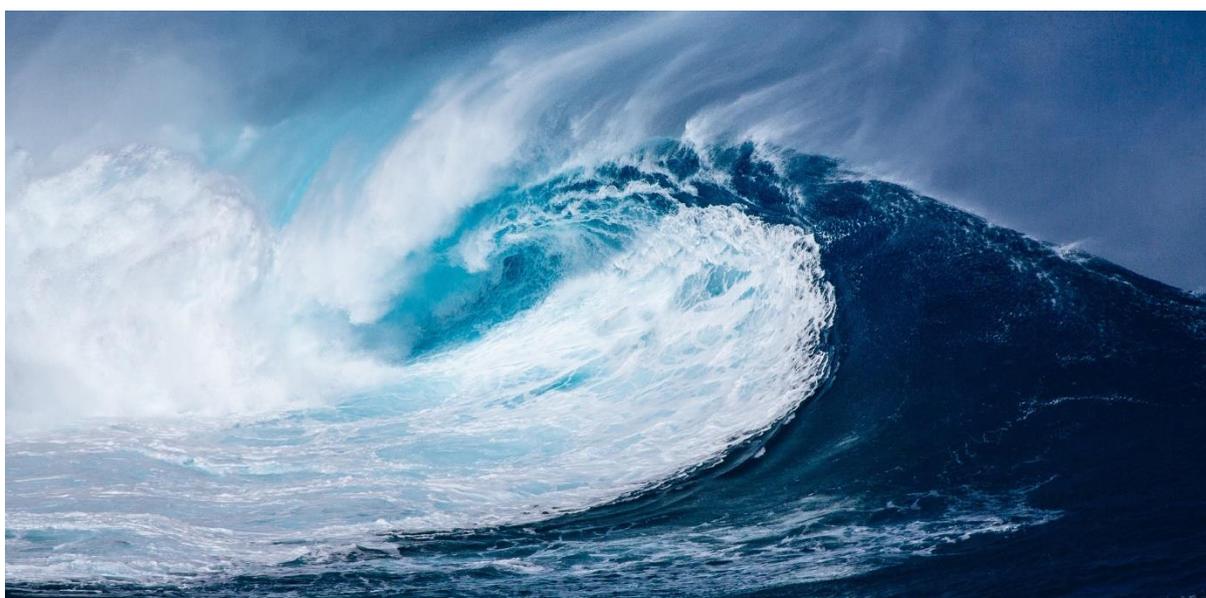
Published on July 2, 2018



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Ever since I started working in software for the arts, culture, entertainment and leisure sector, back in 2012, I have been acutely aware of the shifts in culture around technology, software and innovation that have occurred and shaped our working practices significantly. Whether this was the mass move away from desktop applications to browser-based systems; the breaking through of the fear of anything hosted in the cloud; or the outsourcing of various aspects of an organisation, from income generation and fundraising to HR and accountancy. All of these shifts seem to come in waves, building slowly as the pioneers express their satisfaction at being the first to resolve a long-held issue, the momentum increasing as this knowledge and excitement spreads throughout the industry and finally a loud crash as even the longest established bastions of culture and heritage acknowledge the need for modernisation.



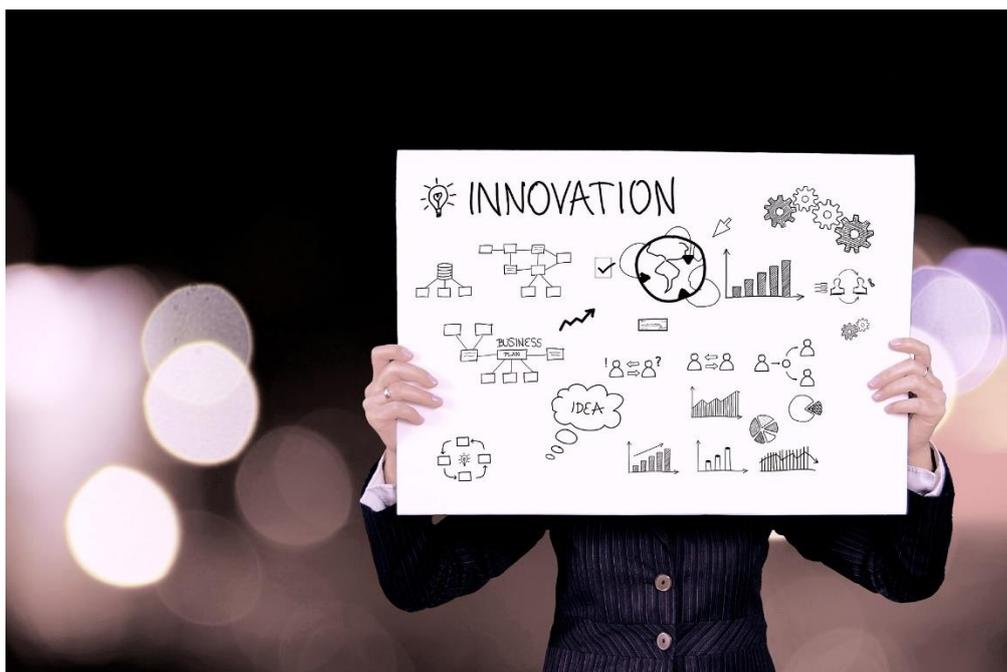
Usually these waves are very exciting and positive and benefit the industry overall, however occasionally there can be waves of fear and trepidation as well – for example, our good friend GDPR.

Whilst GDPR wasn't really anything to be scared about (if you had been following the previous DPA guidelines well, you really had nothing to worry about...) however the uncertainty about the guidelines (which existed a lot longer than it should have...) and the rumours of huge fines and depleted mailing lists gave the whole experience a much more negative tone than it needed to have. Thankfully the wave appears to have finally crashed (although the larger effects are still to be seen) and most of us have survived well enough.

For me, the real result of holding the GDPR lens up to ourselves is that we have realised just how much data we actually hold / collect and how we should probably put it to some good use, lest we find we no longer need it and should get rid of it (in accordance with GDPR). And what better use of data than to get genuine insight into how our customers / audience interact with us and how we can improve our business to server them better.

And so, it seems that now is the time for our heads to go up again and look out to sea, looking for the next wave to appear on the horizon. This time, I believe, the next new thing looks suspiciously like a pie chart!

A new culture for data analysis and visualisation?



As with any new wave of cultural innovation, there will be some who think they can carry on without it, who don't need the new gadget or gismo as they seem to manage perfectly well already. There will be some that engage for a bit but get distracted and never *quite* appreciate how much they could benefit from it and there will be some who embrace it straight away and push it to its limits as quickly as possible.

This is likely to be the same for advanced data analytics and visualisation in the early days and those that are on the front foot are very likely to gravitate to existing off the shelf data visualisation software solutions rather than invest in the best tools for the job.

And, surprisingly, this is where I find myself; in the unlikely position of stumbling across a world leader in data visualisation software, that isn't Microsoft, doesn't require a PHD to use and does what it says on the tin!

Qlik software has been around for quite some time now and has been constantly developing and improving, however it has timed its newest product, [Qlik Sense](#), to perfection as it arrives just when it is needed, at the very crest of the wave.

Combining a fantastically easy to use self-service interface with an incredibly powerful and flexible back end, Qlik Sense gives its users and administrators exactly what they want and need and moves their conversation straight to 'what is my data actually telling me?', rather than making them spend hours and hours gathering and processing their data.



It also resolves or reduces several key issues facing the industry today, such as the following;

Achieving a reliable single version of the truth

As many of you will know, it is very frustrating to constantly be given incomplete or unintelligible data sets, which neither make sense nor give you any useful actionable insight. It is also usually quite hard to compare data from multiple sources, as the terminology is often vastly different and the way the data is handled can conflict with what you were expecting.

[QlickiT](#) (the company I am now representing) are experts in bringing data from multiple systems into one central solution (the Qlik platform) and not just leaving it there but actively transforming it into useable, relatable and connected data, which gives you a real picture of what is happening across multiple data sources. This essentially creates a reliable, single version of the truth, free from confusion and false analysis.

After all, one of the scariest things to do in this world is make key decisions based on inaccurate or (even worse) false data!

The most exciting bit for me is that, once they have done this, there is no need to keep updating it or worrying about it, as the QlickiT methodology is so strong and reliable that you will always have your data presented to you in the correct way and you can always trust that it is reliable and accurate.

I can almost hear an audible sigh of relief from you...

No need to choose between 'best of breed' and 'integrated' system



Another result of Qlik's flexibility and ability to bring data together from multiple sources seamlessly is that it reduces the reliance on your existing system's (potentially quite limited) reporting capabilities.

Now, don't get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with system specific data and flat PDF or excel reports (Qlik even provides a bolt on service called [NPrinting](#) that will produce and automatically distribute simple reports straight from your interactive dashboards), however it is probably true to say that most reports are quite limited and leave out key data from other systems, even if they are integrated together somehow.

Qlik and QlickiT not only improve this situation dramatically, they also remove the need to choose between having one 'fully integrated' system (with not-so-fantastic reporting) or fulfilling the requirement to have a 'best of breed' system in every situation (whether this is ticketing, marketing, fundraising, CRM or EPOS for example) and then manually compiling reports from each system.

QlickiT's award winning methodology together with Qlik's world leading platform enables you to have the best software solution in every situation (including dashboard reporting and insight obviously) and produce a joined up, cohesive picture of your data, along with useable insight and interactive visualisations, to make key business decisions from a place of confidence.

Spend less time creating reports and more time using data to make key decisions



Overall, I would say the greatest advantage of Qlik's self-service data visualisation software is the sheer amount of time it will save you and your colleagues, when it comes to generating this month's (or years) reports. No longer will you have to wait for your data to arrive from every department, sort through it (again) and correct the data structure or format it (again...) before attempting to get the answers you need from it.

Using Qlik's unique 'in-memory' storage and associative engine, all your data will be quickly refreshed and available for you to start analysing as soon as you sit down at your desk – or even from your mobile device or tablet. Suddenly you will be answering questions at the speed of thought, failing faster, avoiding cognitive bias (speak to me about this for more detail...) and benefiting from this single version of the truth. All this adds up to less time spent waiting to make key decisions and more time actioning them!

All sounding good to you so far... interested in how to move forward?

How do I get on board?

There are a couple of ways for you to get involved at this stage;

1) If you know your organisation is in need of advanced data analytics and visualisation, please feel free to email me directly (graham.dowling@qlickit.co.uk) and I will be happy to start a conversation with you to see if QlickiT can be of service to you right now.

2) If you are interested in exploring further but need to spend some time thinking about it, why not have a look at Qlik Sense in action by checking out the video on our website;

<https://www.qlickit.co.uk/qlik-platform/qlik-sense>

Thank you very much for reading this article all the way to the end and may I take this opportunity to wish you all the best with your own data discovery adventure. Please do follow me on [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#) and keep an eye out for further updates from me about how Qlik and QlickiT can be of benefit to you and your organisation.