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CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

HotelQuickly Satisfies the Need for Speed with Tableau

The revolution in data and analytics is changing what businesses know about their customers. At the same time, the growth of mobile use by travelers means that travel businesses have to engage and reach customers in an all new way.

The HotelQuickly mobile application helps people take advantage of hotel deals in more than 200 destinations across 15 countries in Asia Pacific, partnering with more than 6,000 hotels. As HotelQuickly's business is growing rapidly, the company wanted to make more use of its data. After choosing Tableau, HotelQuickly has reduced analytics timelines, enabled new ways of looking at data, and allowed for faster business response in a time-sensitive industry.

“Tableau has helped us stay competitive by automating reporting of key metrics and visualizing them in very attractive manner.”

-Peter Varga, Head of Business Intelligence, HotelQuickly



HotelQuickly
Hong Kong, China
www.hotelquickly.com

Accelerated reporting from days to minutes.

Allowed new ways of looking at big data.

Enabled mobile delivery of data analysis.



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HotelQuickly is one company that has combined mobility and travel with great success. The company taps into the spontaneous side of human nature by providing a mobile-only private sales channel that offers rooms only for the same day and one day ahead of checking in. As bookings are done very close to the actual day, hotels are willing to grant steep discounts to members of HotelQuickly.



Based in Hong Kong, the company currently serves the Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam markets, featuring more than 6,000 hotels. The app is localized to six different languages, including Bahasa, English, Thai, Vietnamese, as well as simplified and traditional Chinese.

HotelQuickly's expanding operations mean that the amount of data the team has to crunch—from customer information to hotel rates to—has also grown tremendously over the last two years. The company's largest data sets have hundreds of millions of rows in a single table.

One of the earliest business challenges the Business Intelligence team faced was to help management make fast and informed decisions.

“As we run many partnership campaigns, we have to analyze the performance of each campaign and share our findings on a weekly basis,” said Peter Varga, Head of Business Intelligence,

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Looking for a better solution

The team at HotelQuickly had started looking for the right business intelligence (BI) tool to support their work in the second half of 2014.

“We tried other BI software but found that most did not have good visual analytics capabilities and it was quite difficult to start working with them. I stumbled across Gartner’s 2014 Magic Quadrant for BI and Analytics Platform during my search, and saw Tableau in the top right quadrant, which effectively positions it as a leader in its space, and that piqued my interest. I reached out to few other leading companies in the Magic quadrant and after reviewing the competing products, Tableau felt clearly as a superior solution to our needs. By the time it took me to figure out how to even connect to data in other solutions I was already gaining interesting insights into our data in Tableau thanks to its simple, intuitive drag & drop interface,” Peter commented.

Peter went on to download the free trial version, and to his delight, he found it to be very intuitive. He then introduced Tableau to his BI team, which is made up of BI analysts and a developer:

“It’s the ability to connect seamlessly to the various data sources (Amazon Redshift in our case), do analysis and gain valuable insights very quickly that made Tableau very attractive to us,” said Peter.

Since choosing Tableau, Peter’s team has worked with as much as half a billion rows of data using Tableau. “I was very pleasantly surprised by the speed of Tableau and ability to interact with even big data in almost real-time fashion,” he said.

With a speedy tool like Tableau, we now take just 10-20 minutes to prepare monthly report for investors and have it ready the first day of the next calendar month,” he explained. “Tableau allowed us to gain insights into our customer cohort behavior key drivers that we just didn’t have before. This proved to be instrumental in our fundraising efforts and investor relations.”



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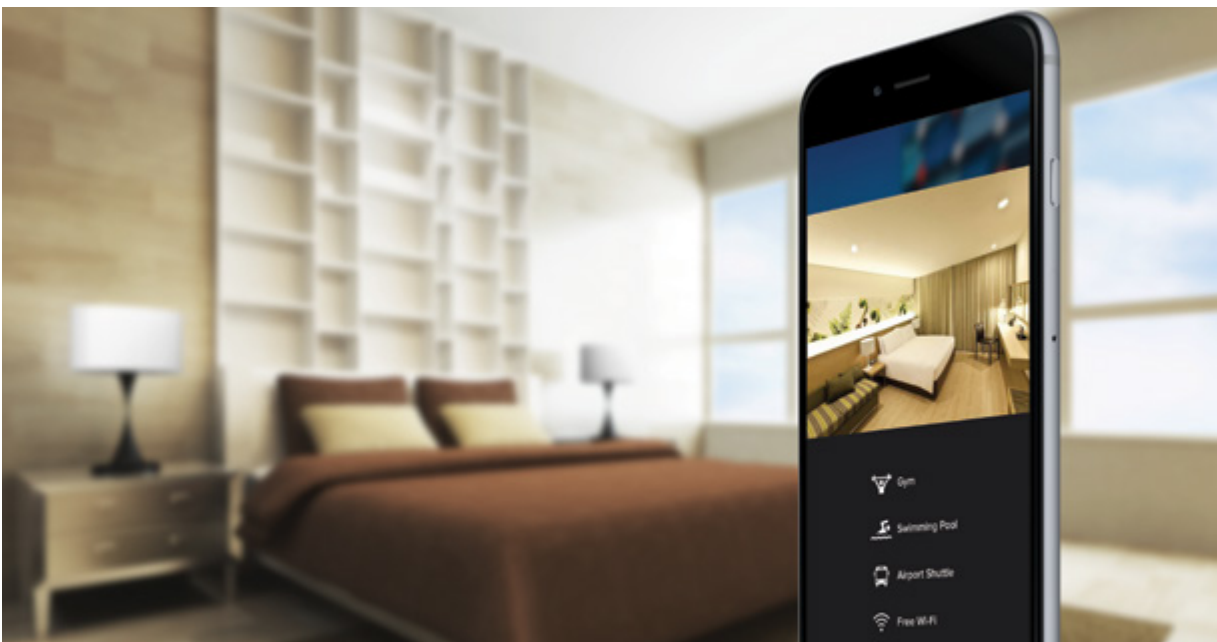
HotelQuickly. "We could not do this prior to having Tableau."

Another challenge was preparing reports for our investors in a timely manner. "We used to spend a lot of time exporting data to Microsoft Excel worksheets," said Peter. This left little time to spend exploring the data for additional insights.

Approval from the C-suite

The team has been using Tableau to develop weekly and monthly reports that they share with the entire company. The reports feature sales figures and updates from the top management and country managers, marketing and financial data, as well as growth updates. The comprehensive dashboards make sharing complex information with the rest of the company a much easier task.

Peter said: "Tableau has this ability to create 'stories' so I've started to create monthly data-driven 'Story of HotelQuickly in last month. This quickly became favorite monthly reading of company executive leadership getting company-wide acknowledgement as 'the best monthly BI update we've ever had at HQ—very insightful' from our CEO and CTO. This has definitely inspired me to keep pushing and innovating frontiers of what we are capable of doing in BI department."



HotelQuickly helps travelers get the best deals on last-minute hotel bookings in Asia Pacific.



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“People really love the ability to get fresh regular data-driven insights beautifully visualized. To give an example of how team members appreciate the data value Tableau allows – I’m now always invited to kick off the regular weekly marketing call with 5-10 minutes of data driven insights of last week,” he added.

Staying competitive

HotelQuickly has demonstrated how a mobile start-up can fully embrace data and analytics tools such as Tableau to stay ahead of competition.

“We pride ourselves on having the best prices in the market. Tableau has helped us stay competitive by making the time to develop and deliver insightful analysis and reports significantly shorter. We now have weekly reporting that details KPIs and shows us how the booking patterns have changed, details on revenue and commission, conversion rates and so on,” Peter elaborated.

“Our business, which is highly metric-driven, is optimized with Tableau’s rapid-fire data analytics and drag-and-drop functions as we can now compare period-on-period metrics,” he added.

According to Peter, Tableau is also a powerful tool because of its cross-platform adaptability. “Tableau is perfect for our business. Its beautiful dashboards can be mobile-optimized, which makes it easy for our colleagues to access the findings even on the go. Tableau basically has the power to give us any insights we are looking for from the data that we can get our hands on,” he said.

Forging Ahead

HotelQuickly plans to adopt Tableau more widely across its operations in line with its growth plans. Peter commented: “As we look to introduce changes in marketing, public relations and product development, we are definitely planning to expand the use of Tableau across different functions, using it in broader and deeper ways to extract the best insights for the team.”



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Peter is also impressed by the quality of customer service he received in the early days of using Tableau. “The account manager whom I was in touch with was very pleasant, helpful, even fun, and always responded to my queries in a timely and professional manner. The Tableau support team and online community are also really supportive by offering troubleshooting advice,” he said.

For companies that are looking for a BI tool for users who do not have prior analytics knowledge, Peter has some suggestions.

“Consider what you want to achieve with your BI tool of choice, then go ahead and try the free version out and see if you like it. With Tableau, you will see the difference quite quickly. The entire online training is free—I found the webinars to be really useful in helping my team and myself to pick up the tool quickly. Our new intern got from zero to ability to really contribute with Tableau

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