

Opening doors and creating opportunities with data insights

The Philadelphia Youth Network puts teens' talents and drive to work with help from data insights provided by Toad® Data Point.



“This tool has been instrumental in giving our leaders, our executives, the information they need so they can see and act differently. It has helped us become a data-driven organization.”

Michael Pompey, CIO, Philadelphia Youth Network

CUSTOMER PROFILE



Company	Philadelphia Youth Network
Industry	Nonprofit
Country	United States
Employees	46
Website	www.pyninc.org

BUSINESS NEED

Philadelphia Youth Network needed better data insights so they could better pinpoint inner-city neighborhoods with at-risk teens who would benefit from their jobs programs. The organization also needed to extract information for financial planning, invoicing and donor relations.

SOLUTION

Philadelphia Youth Network deployed Toad® Data Point to support employees at all levels of their organization with automated workflows, improved data quality and centralized reports.

BENEFITS

- Made PYN a data-driven organization through improved data quality
- Enabled accurate forecasting of finances, enrollment and recruitment
- Identified youth from low-socioeconomic backgrounds to target with job programs
- Kept social workers in the field rather than at the office
- Gained the equivalent of 1–2 full-time employees by automating workflows
- Saved 25 percent of CIO's workweek during busiest months

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

- Database management

The Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN) is one of the city's main sources of jobs for youth — more than 126,000 since the non-profit was founded in 1999. PYN connects and aligns all the different organizations and funding partners that can help a young person find a job — school districts, social services and hundreds of businesses. Its mission: to connect systems and leverage resources to equip young people for academic achievement, economic opportunity and personal success.

While PYN is acting locally, CIO Michael Pompey says the organization tries to think globally — and outside the box — about the future. More than just finding jobs for thousands of young people, PYN works to ensure that they gain experience preparing them for a career in the global economy. “At issue is just what works in the 21st century for a region and potentially a country.”

PYN is seeking to align corporate altruism with sound business sense. The assumption is that employing youth today will influence their future educational achievement. If students participating in PYN's program are more likely to attain a college degree, this could generate millions in additional income for the city of Philadelphia.

BECOMING DATA DRIVEN

Data is at the heart of what PYN does. Working for a nonprofit organization serving youth in diverse communities, with many different organizations and funding partners, PYN's employees rely on a complex data environment. Decisions on connecting youth with opportunities, tracking progress and results and evaluating programs all require specific and current information.

PYN knew they had to automate reporting. They chose Toad Data Point to help master this complexity, and the result has been to “move PYN to the next level with a lot of the work we do,” says Pompey.

“The agency as a whole benefits from the products that we've been able to build, deploy and automate with Toad. It really helped us make this leap.”

He estimates that Toad saves him 25 percent of his own workweek during his busiest months. “It's been my personal Swiss Army knife for anything database related.”

Data is stored in Oracle®, SQL Server® and MySQL®. PYN receives data from funding partners that has to be cleaned, formatted and merged into their systems. These are manual, time-intensive chores that would be a heavy burden — requiring the sacrifice of as much as two full-time employees — were it not for Toad. By deploying Toad, explains Pompey, PYN has been able to build and test a workflow just once. “And it just runs — and no one even thinks about it.”

Summer is the most challenging time of year for PYN. WorkReady, Philadelphia's summer employment program, facilitates thousands of summer jobs and internships in partnership with businesses across the city. This is the time, says Pompey, “for everyone to be all-hands available to troubleshoot anything that is registration-related, payroll-related and back office.”

But Toad has made summers at PYN much easier, according to him: “Investing in this technology has made it so people could not only leave at 5 p.m., but they can now take vacations during the summer. That was unheard of years ago. And that's directly related to Toad. It's a no-brainer for us. Anytime there is an update, I've got it. I can't imagine doing my work without it.”

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Philadelphia Youth Network*

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

SOFTWARE

Toad Data Point

PYN uses Toad alongside other business intelligence tools: Microsoft® SQL Server Reporting Services® (SSRS) as well as QlikView®. They use Toad to author, code and construct what they can and then migrate that over to SSRS. They use QlikView as a dashboard tool to give business users quick key performance indicators (KPIs). But it's Toad Data Point they use to build the queries and extracts.

WE'VE AUTOMATED THAT!

Toad's automation feature has been transformative for Pompey and his team in more ways than one. Instead of "crunching numbers, running back and forth and refreshing data," he simply looks at the tool to get the information he needs.

The automation feature "has been really helpful and useful over the years as far as getting us away from, you know, wrangling with a spreadsheet, being able to say instead, 'you know what, here's a centralized report, here it is! It's updated, it's fresh, it's posted.'"

Pompey has found that Toad can also be a powerful tool for SMS messaging, one that keeps social workers where they're needed most — meeting with young people in underserved neighborhoods — rather than back at the office. "If you've got folks whose job and responsibility it is to be out in the field working with youth, the last thing you want is to be dragging them in-house and sitting them around the table to look at and talk about a spreadsheet, right?" To keep people working in the field up to date, Pompey and his team have used Toad to design SMS data alerts: "They get beamed directly to a particular person's cell phone while they're out in the field. Everyone is able to see the data, when they need it, as they need it. This has been tremendously useful."

WHO GAVE YOU YOUR FIRST BREAK?

Toad has given the team at PYN more confidence in the provenance and quality of their data. Before its implementation, according to Pompey, there were always questions about where data came from: "Were the numbers real?"

Knowing the provenance of their data "has changed the conversation from technology, data and firefighting — to focusing on the business at hand and business strategy," says Pompey.

With the reports from Toad, the PYN team can do a better job forecasting enrollment and recruitment. The organization has become more proactive in financial planning and invoicing. It has changed the way it handles different funders.

Most importantly, Toad helps PYN pinpoint underserved areas in the city more quickly, target low-income teens and give more of them their first break in the job market. "This tool has been instrumental in giving our leaders, our executives, the information they need so they can see and act differently," says Pompey. "It has helped us become a data-driven organization."

ABOUT QUEST

At Quest, our purpose is to solve complex problems with simple solutions. We accomplish this with a philosophy focused on great products, great service and an overall goal of being simple to do business with. Our vision is to deliver technology that eliminates the need to choose between efficiency and effectiveness, which means you and your organization can spend less time on IT administration and more time on business innovation.

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