

Rise up from the dark with impactful data

This week, Caroline Franczia, founder of Uppercut-First, puts her finger on a goldmine that is one too many times overlooked: the need to build up a data culture from the earliest stages of the company life to avoid working from the shadows. To lead the way, you will need a superhero who's not afraid of the dark and can manage tools like no other, a revenue operation officer – or Batman (The Dark Knight Rises).

As you start a company, you have the undeniable competitive advantage of starting with a blank page. Nevertheless, a lack of time and resources often leads to making sacrifices when it comes to the monitoring of critical data. The downside is that you are driving blind. If you tend to be sloppy in managing and pulling impactful data, you will undeniably have trouble identifying issues before symptoms occur.

Alfred: 'Aren't the police supposed to be investigating them?'

Bruce Wayne/Batman: 'They don't have the tools to analyse it.'

Alfred: 'They would if you gave them to them.'

Bruce Wayne/Batman: 'One man's tool is another man's weapon.'

The proactive capability to redirect and rewrite your go-to market strategy on the go and the immediacy notification if something wrong occurs is a crucial differentiator for your current and future investors, for yourself, and your customers.

Lucius Fox: 'The reactor is beneath the river so it could be instantly flooded in the event of a security breach.'

Miranda Tate: 'Is Bruce Wayne really that paranoid?'

Lucius Fox: 'I'm gonna plead the fifth on that one.'

Culture of data & success

However, according to a recent McKinsey Analytics survey, only 8% of companies achieve analytics at scale. In a data-driven company, executives can save time by asking the right questions and optimising their decisions by challenging external recommendations with backed up arguments, not just intuition.

Bruce Wayne/Batman: 'You got anything on Bane's whereabouts?'

John Blake: 'Yeah, I've got five hundred pages of tunnel records and a flashlight. I could use some help, actually.'

When data culture is clearly defined and the useful information is made readily available, employees are not only aligned on a corporate mission. They also measure against it. Embedding data in an organisation's identity, even a young one such as a startup, is not as easy as it might look. And the reason is that the trilogy of people, process, and technology is very rarely freely available.

People, Process, Strategy, Technology

A tool is just a tool. No matter how good or how easy to implement it is, if there are no executives involved for adoption and no processes in place, it will remain just that – a piece of technology. Rather than the much-needed solution to an internal problem.

It is quite rare for a startup to invest in sales operations, customer success operations, and marketing operations. Yet, a revenue operation is critical to the success of the business. Here's why:

1. Customer-facing departments and marketing departments rarely have the time to properly assess what tools are best suited for their needs and the company's future growth.
2. Business people tend to believe that a software solution will solve all of their problems often because they are told so by its vendors. Nevertheless, it's rare that vendors proactively engage in deployment, adoption, and KPI monitoring requirements – leading to low usage of the solution and return on investment.

Lucius Fox: 'After your father died, Wayne Enterprises set up fourteen different defense

subsidiaries. For years I've been shuttering and consolidating all the different prototypes under one roof. My roof.'

Bruce Wayne/Batman: 'Why?'

Lucius Fox: 'To keep them from falling into the wrong hands.'

3. Time is of the essence. By definition, in the startup world, business people are overwhelmed with their projects. Deploying a tool that may help them is necessary, yet not essential to their day to day activities. Last but not least, they rarely have the skills for it.

Commissioner Gordon: 'We were in this together... then you were gone.'

Investing in a person responsible for deploying the relevant technologies, coming up with proper KPIs to monitor and a process to implement, and, more importantly, actually adopting all of this, is essential. Furthermore, data is not supposed to be stuck in one department. It should be shared wisely and widely across teams.

Alfred: 'You two should exchange notes over coffee.'

Suppose a person is responsible for the general overview of the data and its centralisation. In that case, that person can better understand how the team

works and what information and data they need to improve. The company will then be data-driven and use impactful data to think and act strategically.

Since the revenue stream is strategic for the startup's growth, it is only logical that a revenue operations officer is the owner of this specific role for a general understanding of where your revenue could find a potential bottleneck: lack of pipeline generation, lack of conversation, increased churn, and more.

Your revenue operation officer will:

- Identify the impactful data your company needs to operate seamlessly and make impactful decisions

- Define an adequate strategy to implement the tools required to collect, store and visualise the data

- Select the best technology to deliver according to a data source, strategy, and the available resources

- Leverage ambassadors within each department to boost adoption and work closely with their business interests

Bruce Wayne/Batman: 'A hero can be anyone, even a man doing something as simple and reassuring as putting a coat on a young boy's shoulders to let him know that the world hadn't ended.'

Do not underestimate the task. Becoming a truly data-driven company requires a change of habits, possible change management so that people are encouraged to provide and use data, and work with others to do the same.