GoodData

Giving the GED a Grade A Upgrade

GED TESTING SERVICE®

Customer Since:
2012

Solution:
Powered by GoodData

Use Case:
Performance Analytics

Favorite Metric:
GED® Test Taker
Performance Distribution

Best Feature:
- Date range change and drill down
- Ability to create reports for PDF, CSV, Excel
- Pixel Perfect Printing

Results:
- Near real-time access to operational data
- Report generation increased from once a year to on-demand
- More time IT can focus on customer needs and analysis vs. maintaining a data center

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Raising Employment Standards for 70 Years

Originating in 1942 after WWII so GIs could continue their education as adults, the general education development or GED® test has opened doors to better jobs and college programs for more than 18 million graduates. In 2013, nearly 800,000 adults sat for the GED test, which is accepted by virtually all US colleges and employers. The GED Testing Service is a joint venture between the American Council on Education (ACE) and Pearson, the world's largest education and testing company.

In 2011, this public-private partnership set out to adapt the 70-year old GED test to the skills needed in the 21st century. The new assessment recently launched after years of work and tens of millions of dollars spent overhauling the test and building a program from the ground up, specifically for adult learners.

Today, the new standards-based and technology-enhanced test is helping open the doors for millions of adult learners to college courses, apprenticeships and job training—the pathway adults need to gain knowledge, fill close to 4 million jobs waiting for qualified candidates, and care for their families. Of course, all those tests generate a lot of data…

From Once-a-Year to Self-Service Analytics

In the past, all test scores were fed from various states downstream to a legacy data warehouse that the GED Testing Service would use for statistical analysis and to confirm accuracy of test scores. Using a defined set of demographics metrics, the service would then compile an Annual Statistical Report they used for program improvements. "It was a fairly detailed slicing-and-dicing of how test-takers performed based on criteria," said Sarita Parikh, Director of Technology and Operations for the GED Testing Service. "Historically it was very helpful data, but the report was created only once a year."

One of the major changes made by the GED Testing Service from the old to new model was to centralize testing via authorized testing centers that enable the service to provide truly significant quality control for scoring, monitor for fraud detection, and distribute practice tests anywhere to any platform. As the test and the testing model were being overhauled, Parikh's team turned to GoodData for improved access to performance data and to increase the frequency at which they could analyze that data.

"With fast access to actionable insight, states can now quickly optimize GED success rates to help improve higher-paying job prospects for millions of US citizens."

Sarita Parikh
Director of Technology and
Operations GED Testing Service

They had two main goals for their internal audience within the GED Testing Service. First, they were looking for a way to avoid the overhead of building a custom data warehouse. Secondly, they wished to equip personnel with self-service analytics while reducing the need for IT staff to "pull reports" for the Operations and Marketing departments. GoodData's cloud-based advanced analytics solution and its simple, intuitive user interface enabled the GED Testing Service to solve both problems.

First, they were able to bypass internal data center expenses. "We avoided a $2M investment in a data center, while getting really impressive security on our data, plus anytime availability, and the flexibility of a fully-scalable cloud-based analytics platform," said Parikh. And secondly, the GED Testing Service was able to quickly empower individuals with self-service analytics to substantially reduce time to insight. Internal dashboards are now being used and are easily customizable for personnel in Operations and Marketing. Instead of waiting until the end of the year to get their hands on performance data, service personnel can complete internal analysis on a daily basis, compare state and national data on demand, spot performance trends, and uncover actionable insight.

"This access to data that was never available before helps states gain visibility into their testing programs, and quickly optimize them to create the most success possible, for the most citizens."
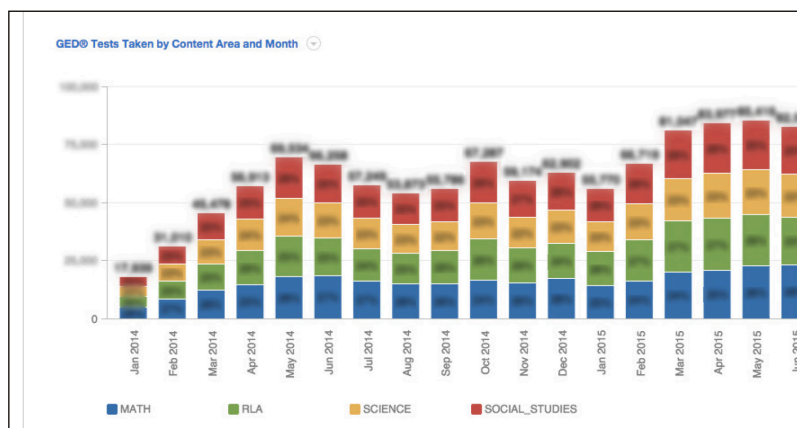
This can literally be life-changing for people on the job market, and fundamentally shift a state's employment rates. But the sudden changes that accompany how much data is available at their fingertips, can prove overwhelming to states. As Parikh explains, "It's a big leap, if all you've ever had is a list of names of who passed, and now you can suddenly jump into correlation analysis." To aid states in maximizing their optimization efforts, the GED Testing Service has used GoodData to create dashboards that allows states to progressively unearth more details as they delve into and examine their data.

"States love how accessible the data is and how fast they can get to actionable insight," reports Parikh. "And they're discovering clever ways to use that insight. And it's comforting that GoodData's almost-impermeable security model gives us, both internally and externally, complete confidence that our data is protected, nationwide."

Life-Changing Insight for Every State

Every state that's a customer of the GED Testing Service has different demographic and budgetary challenges. They all expect to know what is going on with their programs, yet have historically had only a once a year view into crucial data. By implementing a Powered by GoodData solution, the GED Testing Service has now empowered every state with unprecedented access to data and self-service analytics. With near real-time data updates, states can see clearly year-round who is testing, how and where the testers are performing, how that compares with prior performance, and what specifics are trending.

"The ability to look at a significant set of data from different perspectives, then lay it out in a hierarchical way that shows what they want to see the way they want to see it is simply phenomenal," reports Parikh.

Additional resources

If you'd like to discover more about embedded analytics and the GoodData platform, we have a number of additional resources available.

Learn more
Visit GoodData's **embedded analytics** website to learn more about different types of embedded analytics, solutions, benefits, and additional customer success stories.

Embedded analytics trial
With the **embedded analytics trial**, you can see GoodData's analytics platform embedded in an application's user interface so you can get a clear example of what embedded ad hoc data discovery looks like. Explore a demo application enhanced by analytics visualizations, then create analytical insights using an intuitive drag-and-drop experience.

Get more information

Have a question or want more information that we didn't cover here? Our team is happy to **schedule a call.**

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