



Sustainability Analytics

The three-minute guide





Why it matters now

Sustainability isn't just good for your corporate image and conscience. It's good for your bottom line.

At first, many companies pursued sustainability because it was good for their public image and seemed like the "right thing to do." But over time, more and more businesses found that sustainability was also a great way to reduce their operating costs and insulate themselves from resource shortages and price shocks.

Why sustainability analytics

Knowledge is power

Now that companies have discovered the business value of sustainability, they want to make the most of it. Sustainability analytics helps them do just that. By collecting and analyzing data on a wide range of sustainability-related factors—including energy and resource use, greenhouse gas emissions, and supply chain performance—companies can generate the deep insights they need to guide their sustainability-related initiatives and improve their overall resource efficiency.

Plus, thanks to the latest tools and techniques, companies can now conduct real-time (or near real-time) sustainability analysis on vast quantities of data in three dimensions of time: past, present, and future.

The benefits

Minimize price shocks and supply disruptions

Sustainability analytics can help companies reduce resource use, making them less vulnerable to price and supply volatility. It can also help them anticipate future changes in supply, demand, and price, so they can hedge their resource purchases and lock in supplies at lower prices.

Stay ahead of the competition

Thanks to social media and the Internet, sustainability-related misdeeds deep in the supply chain can instantly tarnish the image of even the most revered brands. With advanced analytics, a company has the hard data to show prospective business partners and customers that its sustainability practices are more than just talk.

Understand emerging risks

A company can use advanced analytics to identify future risks in areas such as resource use, environmental impact, and labor practices—both inside its own organization and across its extended supply chain. These insights can help manage and mitigate risks before they become headline news.

What to do now

Don't leave the past behind

Even in today's real-time world, analyzing past performance can produce valuable insights. Examine the historical performance metrics you are currently measuring and ask whether they are still relevant to your sustainability goals.

Understand the present

Tools and techniques for analyzing sustainability have advanced by leaps and bounds. Can your current systems generate insights in real time (or near real time)? Are they fully automated and linked to performance dashboards? Do you have clear mechanisms for governing and managing sustainability data? If you answered "no" to any of these questions, it might be time for an upgrade.

Model future sustainability landscapes

The latest tools also include modeling and scenario analysis that can help you understand the complex interplay of economic, social, and environmental factors that affect your future sustainability strategies and performance.

What to do now, continued

Consider non-sustainability data

Sustainability analytics has traditionally focused on resource-related factors such as materials consumption, energy use, and water use. But now, a variety of other factors that can affect sustainability performance are also being incorporated. These factors include operational data such as employee headcount, hours of operation, production levels, facility productivity, and sales volume, as well as external data such as weather. The resulting analysis is much more accurate and relevant to real-world conditions.

Turn insights into action

Analytical results are useless if they aren't implemented properly. People are often part of the problem, so they need to be part of the solution. Awareness and training programs help encourage employees to do the right thing.

Constantly refine

Your business—and the business environment in general—is constantly in flux, and your sustainability programs need to follow suit. Government policies and incentives are always changing. So are economic factors, such as fuel prices and supply levels. And technology advances offer a never-ending opportunity to improve performance at a lower cost. A static sustainability program is yesterday's news.

Time's up



A business-first approach to sustainability

Sustainability analytics can help companies understand the cost, impact, and performance of their past and present sustainability initiatives—and anticipate future conditions and requirements—helping them unlock hidden value and build a more resilient enterprise.

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