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November 2022



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DIUC22 Presentation: Accelerating Your Analytics Journey through an Application-Based Strategy

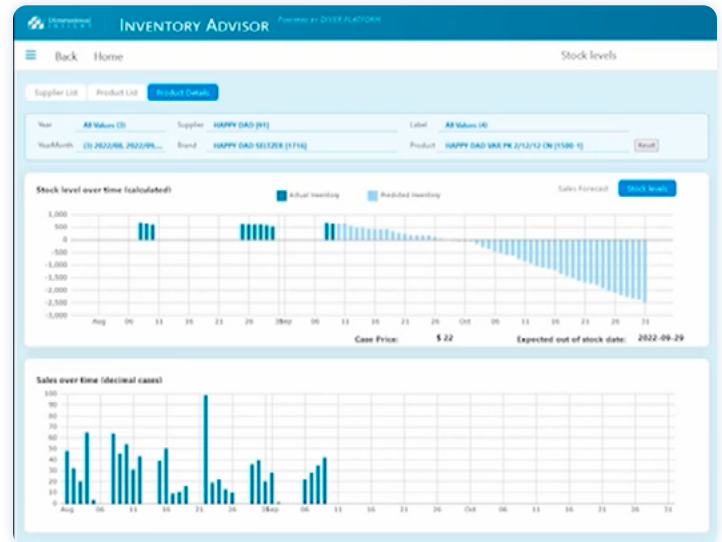
Michael Brockway

Vice President
G&S Consulting



How can you fast-track analytics ROI and reduce the amount of work in development? Learn how an application-based strategy can help you achieve analytics success across the enterprise. [Watch the recording of this DIUC22 presentation.](#)

Duration: 33:36 



Michael Brockway

VP, G&S Consulting, Dimensional Insight

How Distributors are Using Analytics to Tackle New Challenges

Trevor Branch

Marketing Writer
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The past few years have been particularly volatile for the beverage alcohol industry, with many companies forced to abruptly change their business strategies to reflect the new status quo. Increased pressure from shifts in consumer behavior, along with the expansion of e-commerce and the emergence of major disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have all put serious strain on the traditional three-tier system.

In an effort to shift their strategies from reactive to proactive and meet the demands of the modern age, beverage alcohol distributors are seeking tools that allow for more-informed decision-making and in a timelier fashion. Subsequently, more than ever before, they are investing in the power of their data and are using analytics platforms to help bring together their fractured company architecture and drive results that align with their marketing, sales, and financial initiatives.

Survey strategies

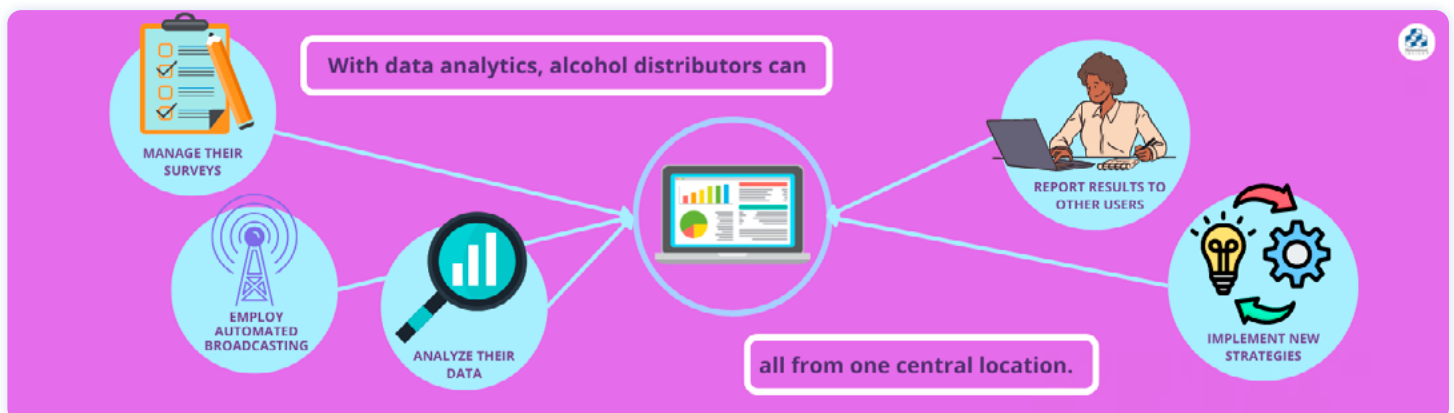
In order to ensure their sales and inventory strategies align with market demand, distributors have to gain insight into how their products are performing at retailers and what factors may be contributing to these results. Central to these insights are the use of surveys.

Unfortunately, surveys can be labor-intensive and time-consuming, and may not be fruitful if users don't know proper



methodologies. Other times, distributors lack a strategic plan and aren't sure what to do with their data once they've acquired it. Gathering information from internal and external audiences can provide context for decision-making, but analyzing the results with tools that don't include robust analytics can cost the company even more time and resources.

With data analytics, alcohol distributors can manage their surveys, employ automated broadcasting, analyze their data, report results to other users, and implement new strategies, all from one central location. This helps alcohol distributors collect more meaningful data and in turn drive sales through better-informed decision-making. The less time you spend trying to process and understand your data, the quicker you can begin to act on it. Collecting more meaningful data means more-informed decision-making and more sales.





Actionable data can provide distributors with the context needed for better warehouse management

and enable improvements in areas such as



and order processing.

Warehousing

As the alcohol industry grows increasingly complex due to advances in technology and the demand for better products and services, so do warehouse operations. Making the most of your capacity and managing the many data feeds associated with the supply-chain requires flexible and comprehensive analytics. Actionable data can provide distributors with the context needed for better warehouse management and enable improvements in areas such as shipping, inventory management, productivity, and order processing.

However, without a dedicated analytics platform, businesses often lack the visibility to turn this data into tangible results. Furthermore, any warehouse-based business understands the value in proper space utilization and optimized scheduling. At the end of the day, the faster you can get your product in the hands of your client, the faster you can bring in more revenue.

Distributors don't have the time or resources to waste on a disorganized and inefficient warehouse. Thankfully, with AI-powered analytics, distributors can evaluate how to make the most of their available space as well as streamline incoming and outgoing shipments.

Labor shortage analysis

Major disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in a substantial labor shortage in the United States—an event now referred to as The Great Resignation. Due to the expensive costs associated with recruiting and onboarding new

employees, more and more distributors are turning to HR data analytics for retaining their workforce.

With analytics, distributors can measure their turnover and retention rates, providing insight into how many employees have left their company over a set period of time. These numbers can be further broken down by whether or not the turnover was voluntary, how well-performing those employees were, and how turnover rates compare between different departments and managers.

In order to evaluate the risk of future resignations, distributors can measure employee satisfaction and intent to stay through surveys, as well as evaluate compensation to ensure that employees aren't leaving due to inadequate pay.

With all that said, resignations are inevitable, and distributors should be tracking metrics related to current openings and weaknesses in their workflow to identify where they need to direct their recruiting resources.

Learn more

With every passing year, a host of new challenges and opportunities arises in the beverage alcohol industry. In order to navigate these novel circumstances, alcohol distributors need a powerful analytics platform that I can provide actionable insights. To learn more about how distributors are using analytics in the modern age, check out our white paper—[“5 Ways Analytics Supports the Modern Beverage Alcohol Distributor.”](#)

With analytics, distributors can measure their turnover and retention rates.



These numbers can be further broken down by:



whether or not the turnover was voluntary.



how well-performing those employees were.



how turnover rates compare between different departments and managers.



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What a Successful RTD Cocktail Looks Like

Trevor Branch

Marketing Writer
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Making their entrance in the market only six years ago, RTD (ready-to-drink) cocktails have grown to become one of alcohol's biggest success stories. The combination of convenience, wide flavor variety, and appeal to younger demographics has allowed RTD cocktails to grow 226 percent in sales from 2016 to 2021, according to data from Mintel.

With this in mind, many businesses are hoping to cash in on the RTD craze with their own canned cocktail—but creating a record-setting beverage is easier said than done. To fully capitalize on the potential of the growing RTD market, businesses have to make sure they're using the right formula for success.

Correct market positioning

Generally speaking, customers are picking RTD cocktails from store shelves for two primary reasons—they act as either a healthier alternative to other beverage options, or their higher proof serves as a replacement for those missing the bar experience. Regardless of which category a cocktail fits into, the end result is the same—premiumization.

Over the past few years, millennial purchasing trends have driven a strong demand for health-conscious beverage options, specifically those that are low-alc or low-calorie. As a result, RTD cocktails that cater to this new “healthy living” craze are starting to dip into the traditional beer and mixed drink consumer base. Also competing for this demographic are hard seltzer

RTD COCKTAILS FALL INTO TWO CATEGORIES:



A HEALTHIER (LOW CALORIE/ABV)
ALTERNATIVE TO OTHER BEVERAGES



A HIGHER PROOF COCKTAIL THAT
REPLICATES THE BAR EXPERIENCE

companies like Truly and Whiteclaw, which have cemented themselves as the go-to option for those looking for lighter beverage options. This means that in order to establish a strong footing in the current market, RTD cocktail brands have to emphasize their market advantages, such as no artificial sweeteners or only organic ingredients.

Likewise, millennials' desire for a more "authentic" drinking experience provides distilleries with a unique opportunity to occupy a niche that beer and hard seltzers struggle to gain traction in. Premium ingredients and higher ABV allow consumers to replicate the experience they'd have on-premise, all from the comfort of their couch. This has also opened up an opportunity for smaller brands to enter the market with craft products by capitalizing on the recent interest in local flavors and small-batch producers.

Choosing the right base

Unlike seltzers and beer, RTD cocktails have a range of options for choosing their alcohol base, each of which provides its own flavor, ABV, cost, and calories. These options can be divided into sugar brew, malt, spirits, and wine.

Although alcohol laws differ from state to state, malt- and sugar-based beverages are generally permitted at grocery stores, opening up a much broader range of retail opportunities than just wine and liquor stores. Additionally, malt and sugar brew tend to be the most cost-effective options available, making production significantly cheaper. As an added bonus, sugar brew is naturally gluten-free and has a neutral flavor.

However, it's difficult to create an authentic-tasting vodka-soda or gin and tonic without using actual vodka or gin. This is where spirits begin to shine. An RTD cocktail utilizing genuine spirits allows for a far more premium end-product and typically lends itself to better marketing for businesses looking to capitalize on the demand for higher-quality beverages. That said, true spirits are often more expensive and can be subject to stricter laws and regulations.

Though less popular than the above options, wine has also witnessed some success as a base within the RTD market. Which wine (and harvest) you use can have a dramatic effect on the end-product's color and flavor, lending it to customers who consider themselves more "drink-savvy" than your average consumer. However, like spirits, using wine as a base can have greater legal and tax implications.

FOUR DIFFERENT AVAILABLE BASES:



MALT - CHEAP AND
WIDELY USED IN OTHER
RTD BEVERAGES



SUGAR BREW - CHEAP,
NATURALLY GLUTEN FREE,
AND HAS A NEUTRAL FLAVOR



SPIRITS - HIGHER QUALITY WITH A
MORE AUTHENTIC FLAVOR. BUT
MORE EXPENSIVE AND STRICTER
REGULATIONS



WINE - UNIQUE FLAVOR
PROFILE. BUT ALSO MORE
EXPENSIVE AND STRICTER
REGULATIONS

The right packaging


As they are drawn to most markets experiencing premiumization, consumers are also drawn to products with packaging that reflects their superior-quality contents. This means that if your drink is all about catering to the health craze of the millennial demographic, then your packaging must look the part. Consumers looking for a classier or healthier beverage aren't likely to go for the drink with neon colors or comic-style lettering (looking at you, Four Loko). The importance of appropriate branding has only grown amidst the rise of the younger demographic.

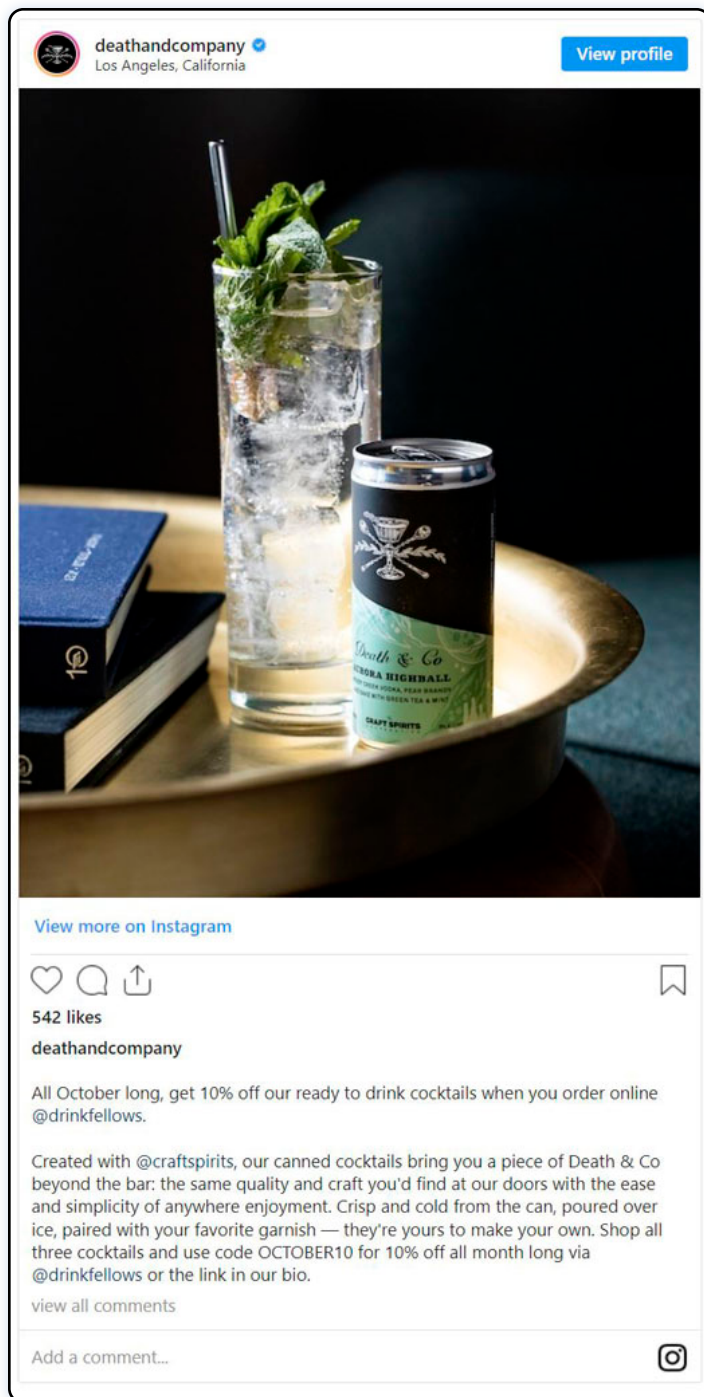
Additionally, while RTD cocktails have become almost synonymous with canned packaging due to its versatility, they are by no means the only option. Other forms of packaging, such as Tetra Pak, provide the same convenience as cans while also providing a more environmentally-friendly alternative, further catering to the millennial demand for brands who practice sustainable business practices. Cartons also have the added benefit of being resealable if consumers don't feel like finishing their drink in one sitting.

So you think you've found the winning formula—what's next?

The moral of the story here is to know your targeted demographic and have a strong game-plan before entering the market. The RTD cocktail segment is loaded with potential for innovative and forward-thinking brands, but going in blind will yield little more than stagnant shelves and overstocked warehouses. So, the question is, how do businesses gain visibility into such a competitive market?

The solution lies in your data. With the right analytics platform, you can view marketing, sales, and inventory data all from one central location to determine what's working and what's not, and why. Perhaps a specific marketing campaign has brought in an influx of new customers, or maybe a newly released flavor just didn't hit the mark, but you won't know for sure until you look at the data.

The best way to ensure your business is investing your time and resources in the right place is by working with an analytics solution that doesn't just know the industry, but knows how to succeed in it. 



To read more about what's new in the wine and spirits industry, check out our white paper on the 5 Trends in the Beverage Alcohol Industry for 2022.

CHECK IT OUT

Meet the Dimensional Insight Team:

Rachel Donais

Dimensional Insight's InterReport program has undergone some amazing transformations over the years. As the company's software as a service program, there is a team of employees dedicated to serving customers who belong to the program. Employees supporting our InterReport customers are stationed in California and Massachusetts and include Rachel Donais, one of our InterReport Project Managers.

I sat with Rachel to discuss her responsibilities and role with customers.

Rose Curtis

Senior Marketing Manager
[LinkedIn](#)



Rachel, what do you do in your role at Dimensional Insight?

I'm a Project Manager. I work with individuals and companies to set up applications that help them improve their decision-making. My team focuses on our beverage alcohol customers with InterReport SaaS installations. We serve both distributors and suppliers.

My specific role is ensuring that apps and other reporting that customers contract for gets done. Sometimes I help define projects at the beginning. I coordinate who is going to work on each project and work with my team to outline tasks needed to complete it. If there are obstacles, I work with people inside and outside of my team to resolve them so we can keep moving forward. Last but not least, I update the management team with project statuses.

I do a lot of the coordination. My level of involvement depends on the consultant and the project. Some Senior Consultants are relatively self-sufficient. With them I tend to follow along and step in if things start to fall behind or something goes wrong, especially with smaller projects. Most of the time, I'm more hands-on in following up on tasks and clarifying what is needed, especially with larger projects.

How long have you been at Dimensional Insight?

It's so funny. One interesting thing is that I was always a job hopper. But once I came here, I stayed. I've been at Dimensional Insight for almost ten years. I am months away from my ten-year anniversary. A large part of why I stay is that I'm working with people I like. We all go out for lunch together about twice a month. I'm old enough that I can appreciate how much better life is when you work with people you like. When I was younger, I didn't.



What is it that you provide the customers?

We have two key applications.

- Some users get ProDiver downloaded onto their computer. This application allows users to conduct ad hoc analysis and dive down into the details of the data. Analysts are the intended audience for ProDiver.
- My team's newest application is Gateway. This includes web reporting, ProDiver reporting and an application we call DiveTab. This integration makes switching between apps seamless. So much so that users don't even know what's going on "under the covers."

What about your job may surprise people?

People may be surprised to learn that I'm on the team that created BeverageLink. We already have a few customers on it. The BeverageLink service is separate from our Gateway app. BeverageLink is a service that collects and processes distributor sales so that suppliers can monitor their products' performance.

One of the advantages is that we allow suppliers to view the data how they want to. So if the supplier would like something other than our default chain name for an account, we can give them the ability to change it to what they want it to be.

BeverageLink is my team's most recent service. And one of its most recent features is a notification system for when the distributor files are late. So, for example, if a distributor file is usually received daily, but it's been a few days, and we don't have one, an email notification goes out. The advantage of this new feature is catching issues before they matter. It also gives us extra time to fix them.

We are also working to develop other forms of early notifications, like when there are products that a distributor is reporting that we need help to link to a supplier item. Eventually, we'll provide proactive notifications for that.

Has our technology benefited customers?

Yes. One thing that stands out to me is our ability to improve data consistency, which improves analysis; of course, BeverageLink is one of many examples. So for every supplier product, there are multiple distributors. Each distributor has its different product names and descriptions. It would be highly time-consuming to link the distributor product descriptions to the supplier products manually, and it would be prone to inaccuracies. So instead, our team has written some code that reads the distributor's product name and product descriptions, then matches it to supplier items automatically. It is not one hundred percent accurate, but a human reviews the output matching for accuracy. This program has saved hundreds of human hours.

What are the most challenging and rewarding aspects of managing projects?


The most challenging aspect of my job can be allocating resources. For example, sometimes, the person I'd like to assign to a task isn't available when needed. So then, I have to balance when to delay the project and when to reassign it to someone else. Reassigning a job can be tricky because our customer's data is so nuanced that sometimes reassigning a task might take longer than waiting for the assigned person to become available.

The most rewarding part of my job is a customer's smile when they tell me how much their product has helped them.

So are you in Zoom meetings with your customers?

We started meeting with customers over GoToMeeting years before the pandemic, and everybody started working from home. That is one of my claims to fame! I persuaded everybody in our department to use GoToMeeting so that we could use screen share. It helps when clarifying communications with customers. We can see what the customer sees. And during the development stage, we can show them our screens and say, "This is how you do this." Then, if they need clarification, they can show us the specific screen part in question.

Why should potential customers pick Dimensional Insight over our competitors?

We will go the extra mile to help customers succeed. It is what our company mission states: We support the customer and employee so that the employee and the customer can support Dimensional Insight. 

Note: [Learn more about other employees at Dimensional Insight on our Blog.](#)

What You Need to Know About President Biden's Marijuana Pardon



Rose Curtis

Senior Marketing Manager
[LinkedIn](#)



On October 6th of this year, President Biden publicly pardoned people held in federal prisons for the crime of smoking marijuana. There were three parts to his speech:

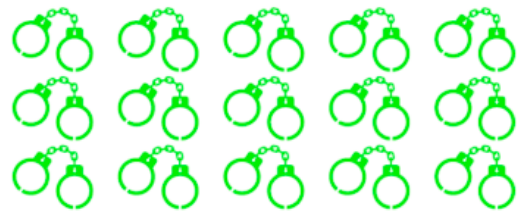
1. First, he pardoned anyone incarcerated for simple possession and use of marijuana.
2. Second, he encouraged states to do the same for state-level convictions.
3. Third, he asked the secretary of health and human services and the attorney general to review how marijuana is classified. Currently classified as Schedule 1, marijuana is considered more dangerous than fentanyl and on par with heroin, the most hazardous of classifications.

US opinion has changed from only **12%** in favor of the legalization of marijuana in 1972 to **68%** in 2021.





The pardons will clear **everyone** convicted on federal charges of **simple possession** since it became a crime in the 1970s.



That number is estimated to be about **6,500**.

Fifty years ago, popular opinion in this country held that marijuana was one of the most dangerous recreational drugs. But public perception has changed over time; according to Gallup, US opinion has changed from only 12% in favor of the legalization of marijuana in 1972 to 68% in 2021.

Currently, 19 states and the District of Columbia have legalized the recreational use of marijuana. And 38 states have legalized the use of medical marijuana. It is easy to imagine that if the current trend continues, eventually, marijuana use will be legal in all U.S. states. Just as prohibition no longer exists across the U.S., marijuana criminality is slowly being repealed.

Who will benefit from this pardon, and how?

Critics of the pardon point out that it will help very few people. So what is the benefit of Biden's announcement? Although small in number, it will help some people. According to an article in the New York Times, "The pardons will clear everyone convicted on federal charges of simple possession since it became a crime in the 1970s." That number is estimated to be about 6,500. Being cleared of federal convictions will help these 6,500 people to remove obstacles to employment, housing, or education.

What does Biden's marijuana pardon mean for federal legalization?

The more significant effect of Biden's announcement may be to lead to the legalization of marijuana use.

In an article for The Philadelphia Inquirer, Shekia Scott of the Philadelphia CannaBusiness Association shared her belief that Biden's action "sets precedent for future decriminalization locally and beyond."

Others agree that this could be the start of federal decriminalization. An article in Cannabis Business Times cites Kris Krane, a senior contributor for Forbes magazine, who says, "The first time a sitting U.S. president has acknowledged the failure of federal marijuana policy is a really big deal, especially coming from Joe Biden, someone who has traditionally not been friendly on this issue. It shows just how far this issue has evolved politically."

The Cannabis Business Times article explains, "There are two paths for cannabis to be rescheduled. One involves Congress, through legislation or amendments to the CSA, and the other, which Biden has just initiated, involves HHS and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA)." So Biden's request to review how marijuana is classified could bypass any delay presented by Congress. (The MORE Act is one example of such a delay. It was approved in the House in December 2020 but has yet to advance to the Senate.)

Ratifying the 21st Amendment to repeal prohibition took a long time. Although the House and Senate passed it in February 1933, it took nine months for states to ratify it and place it in the Constitution. Changing U.S. law is a slow process that takes time. And only time will tell whether current trends toward marijuana legalization will continue. ▢



Although the House and Senate passed the 21st Amendment in February **1933**, it took **nine months** for states to ratify it and place it in the Constitution.

Dimensional Insight Supports Women Leaders in the Wine & Spirits Industry



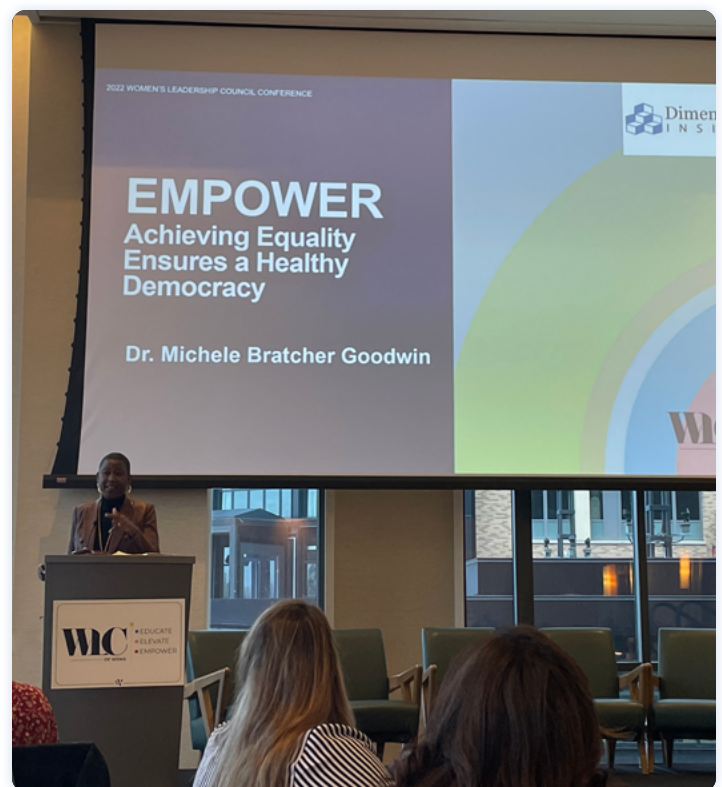
In early November, I had the great pleasure of attending WSWA's Women's Leadership Council (WLC) Conference in Washington, DC with my colleague, Tomeka Munford, training consultant at Dimensional Insight. Dimensional Insight has been a long-time WLC sponsor, dating back to the first event in 2016.

The theme of this year's conference was, "Educate. Elevate. Empower." Sessions focused on those three topic areas, and included experts who talked to us about topics such as the power of networking, advancing your career in the wine and spirits business, and equality for women.


Dimensional Insight sponsored the "Empower" session at the conference, which featured keynote speaker Dr. Michele Bratcher Goodwin, who spoke on the topic of "Achieving Equality Ensures a Healthy Democracy." Dr. Goodwin focused on her personal experiences as a law professor and how she works to empower other women. I found her remarks to be both thought-provoking and inspiring.

Kathy Sucich

VP, Marketing
[LinkedIn](#)



In advance of Dr. Goodwin's presentation, Tomeka and I delivered a presentation called, "Empowered Women Empower Women," in which we talked about our experiences as women leaders in business and the values we focus on in both our home and business lives to empower ourselves, our families, and our co-workers.

The WLC community is such a warm and welcoming group of women, and I came out of the conference energized and inspired. Thank you to WSWA for putting together such a great conference! 

Upcoming Events

MJBiz Con 22

Las Vegas Convention Center

November 15-18, 2022

Booth #2719



Learn more

DIUC22 Videos

If you missed any of the sessions at the 2022 Dimensional Insight Users Conference (DIUC22), you may want to catch up on what you missed by watching one of the session recordings.

All of the session videos are on one page of our website at:

<https://www.dimins.com/diuc22/videos/>