

Enterprise SaaS Company Hits 28 of 30 Quarters using RevOps

ayeQ RevOps Discipline Delivers Accelerated Growth, Predictability, and Alignment

GOAL → Optimize resources and budget to achieve 25+% YoY growth



BACKGROUND

Bizzdesign is a leading SaaS platform in the enterprise architecture domain. Their Chief Revenue Officer, Greg Jones, has led their team on a multi-year growth trajectory with forecast accuracy and annual yield projections within 10%, meeting or exceeding expectations each year. He attributes his company's success in large part to the discipline that RevOps has created in their culture. Christoph Risch has led the formation of the RevOps function for Bizzdesign. These are their perspectives on the journey, in their own words.

What is Bizzdesign's approach to RevOps planning?

Answered by Greg Jones, CRO:

The enterprise architecture space is complicated. It's a highly consultative enterprise platform sale with long cycle times and a relatively small average sales price (ASP) to get started. As the adoption curve grows, we get a larger share of wallet over time, so bookings can be a little bit lumpy. We rely on the law of large numbers to smooth out the lumpiness. RevOps has become a central component to helping us drive better productivity and predictability as we do planning across our revenue streams.

RevOps and ayeQ help us reverse engineer our required performance levels from our bookings and growth goals, and validate our year-over-year assumptions. The top-down business plan that RevOps gives us provides a picture of what investments will be required, what resources we need, and what every team needs to deliver. Modeling in this way requires knowledge of historic win rates, cycle time, sales velocity, pipeline size and growth performance, along with some other dynamics. Using that intelligence, we use our models to look at the likelihood and risk of getting from point A to point B.

In the past, many companies would attempt to do this type of planning on spreadsheets, using extracts from tools like Salesforce.com or other CRMs and marketing automation systems. But these approaches simply don't have the level of sophistication that ayeQ and mature RevOps modeling provides. Bringing the discipline of revenue operations to the table has made us much more fact based and data driven.

We build a business plan that incorporates the entire value chain from lead to renewal. At the front of that value chain, our chief marketing officer understands the marketing qualified lead (MQL) counts required relative to the conversion of MQL to sales accepted lead (SAL) to sales qualified lead (SQL). When we apply our win rates and conversion rates, we know that if we do X on the front end, we are pretty sure Y will drop out on the back end. That level of muscle tone did not exist before RevOps. It has fundamentally changed our approach to how we run our company.



“Our board has said they run 30 portfolio companies, and they’ve never seen Bizzdesign’s level of consistency in the market. I attribute a lot of that to the RevOps best practices we have implemented, and the discipline that is reenforced with ayeQ.”

– Greg Jones, CRO, Bizzdesign

How did Bizzdesign’s RevOps journey evolve?

Christoph Risch, RevOps Leader:

Dialing back the clock a few years, Bizzdesign was running a lightweight CRM for both for marketing automation and salesforce automation. The data in that system wasn’t clean. While we were able to run a pipeline and maybe a forecast out of it, we were lacking a lot of information that we really needed to inform how we were performing and how the revenue streams or the pipeline was performing from start to repeat revenue. So, a few years ago we switched and went with Salesforce.com.

One of the first things we did was make sure we had a strong RevOps process in place. We were using opportunity stages the way they’re supposed to be used, with exit criteria to enforce the required discipline – holding the team accountable for good pipeline hygiene. At the same time, we set up Salesforce.com so we could start collecting information to get sales velocity insights, like win rates, sales cycle times, average sales price (ASP).

We did some modeling on spreadsheets, which gave us some initial insight into sales velocity performance. But when you’re trying to model things in Excel, you get to a point where it doesn’t work anymore. This is where using the ayeQ platform makes it easy. If we know our historic performance, we can plug that into the ayeQ modeling module, and then we understand things like, based on historic performance and what our pipeline is right now, what our bookings will be by revenue stream. We can also see, if we have a certain booking target for next year, how many MQL’s need to be produced by quarter. Then we can have real conversations and take the guesswork out of planning.

How has RevOps changed the culture of Bizzdesign?

Greg Jones, CRO:

Probably the central question to ask is what has happened culturally at Bizzdesign. Even in contrast to my past experience at companies like Cisco and Dell, many organizations lack an accountability model. Without a clear picture for everyone to align with, people don’t know what to expect or even how to talk to each other. At Bizzdesign, we can set expectations clearly, know when we have a stop light green/yellow/red, where we are at any point in time relative to our current region pipeline to target. When everyone sees exactly what needs to be done, there is definitely a cultural shift and a much better sense of teamwork and alignment.

To have that level of optics applied through that lens for running a business, where you know where the finish line is and what’s required to get there, that takes out a lot of ambiguity. I would say that ambiguity describes my past experience at other companies, where you just did the best you could through brute force. Today it’s much more fact based and data driven. That combined with the taxonomy and the language we use, it’s a cultural shift. It really is fantastic.

Christoph Risch, RevOps Leader:

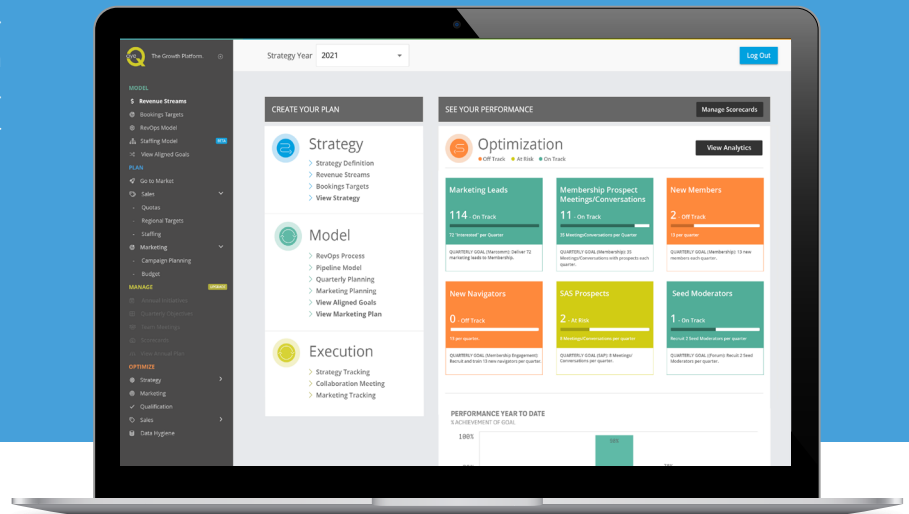
I concur with the cultural shift. If you take a disciplined approach to RevOps, it does help with alignment and it does help to make sure that your marketing leader, your sales leader, and your customer success leader – that they’re talking to each other, and they’re talking about how we drive revenue, how we accelerate revenue, how we optimize our resources. I think that the cultural component is a big one.

I would also say that using a platform like ayeQ adds a whole new level to driving RevOps and culture. ayeQ really creates a forcing function to identify all the revenue streams that perform differently and think through the dynamics.

During the last round of planning we went through, I realized that we had a good portion of revenue coming in that wasn’t really forecastable. These were expansion orders that came in and closed very quickly. We need to take that into consideration when we think about how much pipeline we need, because a certain portion of bookings will come in from pipeline that doesn’t exist at the start of the quarter. That was one of the bigger “aha” moments using ayeQ.

“For any high-growth company, if you haven’t invested in a RevOps function with a best practice approach and methodology, and combined that with sophisticated tooling like ayeQ, I think you’re shortchanging your organization.”

– Greg Jones, CRO, Bizdesign



How has RevOps and ayeQ impacted business planning and Board accountability?

Greg Jones, CRO:

For me as CRO, there’s been many “aha” moments, but there have also been those moments for our board of directors and our executive team. I’m getting ready to close out my 30th quarter here. I’ve missed 2 quarters out of those 30, and our forecast accuracy has had a \pm 5% to 8% variance. That’s not because we’re that good, it’s because the discipline applied towards RevOps has allowed us to apply a model with a large enough pipeline that we are highly accurate. At the CRO level, to have that level of predictability, especially in a sales environment that has long sales cycles and bookings can be very lumpy, is unheard of.

In fact, our board has said they run 30 portfolio companies, and they’ve never seen that level of consistency in the market. I attribute a lot of that to the RevOps best practices we have implemented, and the discipline that is reenforced with ayeQ. But one thing I’m probably the most proud of is to be able to have confidence when someone wants to test your forecasting ability – like, could you do another 30%? I can go right to the model and say, boy I’d like to, but right here is where our constraints are. It removes a lot of the back and forth between a Board and a sales organization.

I like the ability, when you have those conversations, to be able to run scenarios on the fly – like ayeQ allows you to do. If you want this growth rate, what has to change in the model. And if that has to change in the model, what’s the investment required, are we resourced correctly, are we allocating those resources correctly, etc. If we know we’ve got to do something much greater, do our investments need to be directed to a new market or an emerging market?

That’s pretty key when you’re trying to scale a high-growth company to \$100 million. That’s a completely different level of sophistication in that conversation. You have a new level of maturity to be able to make those trade-offs and run those scenarios. For example, as opposed to doubling the number only to find out midway through the year you should have put pressure on the other parts of the world to close gaps – you can avoid setting a false expectation up front. You don’t leave quota hanging out there knowing you’re not going to get there. And you don’t turn down the morale of the team because they don’t see how they’re going to get to the finish line. You take out that emotion and that ambiguity. You have a fact-based discussion that reveals how you need to optimize your resources and where you need to invest to close potential gaps. That’s a whole different level of acumen at any level, whether it’s at the executive level or the board level or even down at the region level. It just doesn’t get any more powerful than that when you sit in this chair. And what’s required to get there is RevOps, and a completely metrics-driven model.

“Using a platform like ayeQ adds a whole new level to driving RevOps and culture. ayeQ really creates a forcing function to identify all the revenue streams, and helps with alignment so your marketing leader, your sales leader, and your customer success leader – they’re talking to each other, and they’re talking about how we drive revenue, how we accelerate revenue, how we optimize our resources. I think that the cultural shift is a big one.” – **Christoph Risch, RevOps Leader**

How has ayeQ impacted your RevOps journey?

Christoph Risch, RevOps Leader:

Well, we’ve established that you must have a metrics-based RevOps model to achieve the level of discipline and predictability that we’ve described. You can do a lot with Excel or even homegrown SQL databases, but there’s a steep learning curve. You’re going to spend a lot of time, you’re going to make a lot of mistakes, and it’s not very repeatable. If you’ve got more than a one-product company and more than two revenue streams, it’s almost impossible to do RevOps modeling in Excel. It breaks, and you can’t keep all of this in your head. ayeQ takes revenue modeling with the sales velocity concept to the next level.

We can go down to stage-to-stage conversion rates and lengths, trends and trajectories of those characteristics, and the behavior of different cohorts and segments based on different market. It gives us a level of granularity that I wouldn’t know how to do with any other tool. We have the sophistication to get very high forecast accuracy. I don’t know of any other way to do it other than using the ayeQ platform to do it for you.

Greg Jones, CRO:

For any high-growth company, if you haven’t invested in a RevOps function with a best practice approach and methodology, and combined that with sophisticated tooling like ayeQ, I think you’re shortchanging your organization.



About ayeQ

ayeQ™ is the first and only strategy automation platform, built to optimize revenue operations for the high-growth B2B enterprise. Led by veteran marketing and sales leaders with highly technical backgrounds, the ayeQ platform brings together decades of successful strategy methods into a scalable platform to guide B2B companies towards creating and executing successful growth strategies. ayeQ customers consistently outpace their competitors in gaining market share while operating in a constrained-resource environment.