AN INDEPTH SPOTLIGHT

Becoming an Analyst

After graduating with a master’s degree in business intelligence, she began to work as a research analyst. Later, this experience segued into a position as a data analyst with Cirque du Soleil, where she created and began to work with a data science team.

But what attracted Marie to data analytics in the first place? “I really like using numbers and statistics to better understand things, hence my background in finance. I like to use solid facts and numbers to support my own decisions as well as business decisions.”

A Typical Day

“As a data analyst, every day is variable,” Marie says, “I typically spend my day working on bigger projects that take me a few months to complete, interspersed with smaller requests.”

In her role, she analyzes different data sources to support these varied initiatives. She creates visualizations, helps support new strategies, monitor certain trends, and keep track of the marketing industry and different sales initiatives. She’ll also use her programming skills to automate certain tasks, something that Python is great for.

Required Skills

Marie believes that there is a trinity of skills a good data analyst should have: analytical skills, technical skills, and communication skills. Analytical skills are important for a data analyst because they need to be able to make analyses and interpret results. Technical skills are also very important, because a data analyst will constantly be acquiring and cleaning data. What may be surprising is that communication skills are also very valuable for a data analyst.

As a data analyst, you’ll need to be able to effectively communicate with others “both to understand the context of their situation and what they need, as well as to present information to them,” says Marie.

Marie’s Why

Marie enjoys her role as a data analyst. She understands that it is a really valuable industry to start a career.

“Data analysis is relatively new, so there’s a lot of demand for data analysts,” says Marie. “Data analytics can also be incorporated into every industry and every department.”

The reality of today’s workforce is that many companies want to become more data-driven, but they don’t necessarily know how to make that shift. “And that’s where data analysts can come in,” says Marie. “I love helping La Presse develop data-driven ways to make smarter decisions.”

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A DATA ANALYST

By: Nour Abi-Nakhoul, Lighthouse Labs

Marie Gallagher is a data analyst within the Integration, Analytics & Data Science team at La Presse. She leverages data to support daily business decisions, collaborates with business partners, extracts insights, and develops new initiatives that guide strategies.

Data science is a field of study that’s applicable to so many different industries. From HR to agriculture, supply chain management to the restaurant industry, there are innumerable places and people that can and do benefit from the use of data. Because of this variability, there’s no one way a career in data looks. Data analysts can spend their days compiling biological data for scientific research or cleaning up information for a furniture company.

A lot of people might have difficulty imagining what the day-to-day life of a data analyst is like — who are these number-crunching professionals that walk among us, and how do they spend their days? To help you better envision what a career in data could potentially look like, we spoke to one data analyst about her career trajectory and day-to-day life.

Read on to learn about how Marie got involved in data, what her life looks like now, and what advice she has for aspiring analysts.