

Providing a Robust Statistical Basis for D&I Decisions at a Leading North American Retailer

Equipping the Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) team with the data to improve analytics and drive diversity strategies.

Industry

Big-box retail

Headquarters

United States

Affirmity Solution

CAAMS software and Diversity Insights benchmarking, analysis, and reporting solution

Client Since

2019

A Retailer Ready to Advance Its D&I Program

A big-box retailer with in excess of 2,000 retail stores across North America and a large network of support and distribution centers to service them, this retail organization employs over 300,000 people. One of the biggest retailers in its sector globally, the organization is committed to building a [diverse and inclusive environment](#).

This is both an enormous area of potential, and inevitably a challenge. The D&I team focuses primarily on three critical pillars—talent, culture, and business—and aligns its plans with those of talent acquisition and the wider business. Due to its scale, the business generates enormous amounts of data relevant to these efforts. This presents a resource with significant potential that is nonetheless challenging to fully utilize.

“Before anything else, before any strategy or assessing the recruiting model, you must have executive or C-Suite sponsorship in order to get the proper buy-in and support along the way. After that, find your “north star”: what is your strategy specifically? Because this conversation is not easy. D&I is a very charged topic and people feel uncomfortable talking about it.”

- D&I representative

The Challenge:

Data Volume and a Lack of External Context

As part of its D&I program, the retailer was tracking workforce diversity demographics across its organization. However, it was only telling half the story. The D&I team lacked adequate benchmarks and struggled to prove the success of its programs—or highlight areas of concern as early as possible.

It also, perhaps as a consequence of the volume of data available, was focused entirely on tracking internal data. This meant the organization could miss important workforce trends that would give its competitors an edge, or help to contextualize shortfalls in its own plans.

With a new CEO enthusiastic about moving the organization forward from historically “neutral” messaging on diversity and inclusion, the team found the buy-in it needed at an executive level. It began looking for a partner to help deliver data, action, and guidance business-wide.

The Solution:

Telling the Whole Diversity Story to Every Part of the Organization

To take the program to the next level, the organization needed richer insights that told a complete story on how the diversity of store associates reflected the available labor market. Affirmity deployed its [diversity insights benchmark and reporting solution](#) which provides the organization with the ability to:

- **Efficiently analyze its workforce representation against census and industry benchmarks**
- **Customize reporting to its unique needs**
- **Design and execute plans across the talent lifecycle at both the store and role levels**
- **Identify gaps in representation and highlight opportunities in recruiting, promoting, and retaining for a diverse organization**

Data is a foot in the door for a D&I team keen to emphasize that it is a partner in the business looking for mutual gain. It assists the team in helping other departments see that biases exist, and lets them suggest how technology and best practices can help improve hiring and business outcomes. This allows an approach across talent, culture, and business areas to be developed fully and intentionally.



So how do we equip our leaders to talk about it? In order to do that you have to have courage. Continue to learn and help them understand why it's important, why has inequality persisted historically. This helps to build your own knowledge so you can build empathy and buy-in.

- D&I representative



The Result:

Building and Benefiting From a Diverse Workforce

The organization now has the tools and benchmark data to help it better align its business with the available labor market. This allows the company to create a more welcoming customer experience, enhance collaboration, increase community involvement, and strengthen the business. In broader terms:

- **Using the same methodology, another client was able to collapse its goal-setting within business teams from two months to less than an hour. For progress monitoring, the time spent putting together metrics and reports decreased by 90%.**
- **A study published in the [Journal of Management](#) found that having a racially diverse workforce can improve retail sales performance. It concluded that for each percentage point closer to matching the racial diversity of the community and workforce, a retailer can increase its sales by \$67,000.**



Contact Us

To learn more about Affirmity's Diversity Insights benchmark and reporting solution, call one of our experts today at **+1 800-782-1818** or email **info@affirmity.com**

About Affirmity

[Affirmity](#), a former division of PeopleFluent, provides expert analysis, consulting, training, and software to optimize affirmative action and diversity and inclusion programs. Our team of experts delivers diversity metrics and data-driven insights to manage and mitigate risk. Drawing on more than 40 years of experience, we guide HR and compliance teams through diversity goal setting. Affirmity empowers leaders with tools and dashboards to measure progress, and we help clients capture and communicate the positive business impacts of diversity initiatives.

A part of [Learning Technologies Group plc \(LTG\)](#), Affirmity serves more than 1,100 organizations—including global corporations, mid-sized organizations, and small businesses.

For more, visit affirmity.com.