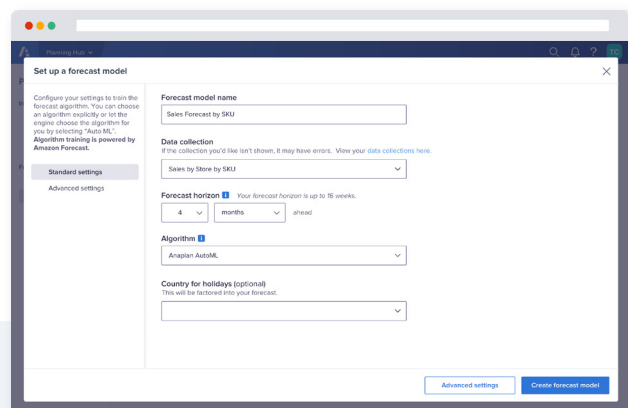# Anaplan

Anaplan PlanIQ™ with Amazon Forecast

Drive accurate decisions with seamlessly integrated ML-based forecasting

Executive summary

Business leaders face an ever-growing set of challenges spanning from the need to rapidly grow business, accurately predict future demand, and anticipate unforeseen market circumstances. With increasing volumes of data across the organization, it can be difficult for decision-makers to zero-in on the necessary data and extrapolate the proper insights to make a positive impact on planning cycles and outcomes. To further exacerbate the problem, many analytics tools leverage primarily high-level historical data, forcing decision-makers to re-forecast from scratch as soon as unforeseeable market shifts hit.

With Anaplan PlanIQ™ with Amazon Forecast, teams across finance, supply chain, sales, and human resources can make highly-accurate decisions with machine learning (ML)-driven forecasting. This joint solution combines Anaplan's powerful Connected Planning platform with Amazon's intelligent ML capabilities and deep learning algorithms to generate accurate future forecasts, fast.

Anaplan PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast overview

The PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast solution brings together best-of-breed capabilities so teams can make more informed predictions while expending fewer resources. In 70% of predictions, ML or statistical-based forecasts are proven to deliver either the same or greater accuracy than an expert.[1]

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast can ingest up to three types of data to deliver a predictor. While only one type of data is required to forecast, adding two other sets can help the forecast learn and output more tailored forecasts to a specific scenario. ML capabilities work to automatically learn and train forecast models to increase accuracy. This also allows users to create new forecasts with recent data, eliminating the need to retrain new models at each time.

Key decision-makers can rely on Anaplan platform capabilities within PlanIQ to get a deeper understanding of future drivers, predictions, and understand the impact of "what-if" scenarios. PlanIQ enables planners to model multiple scenarios to shape future demand across a variety of industries and use cases, helps speed analysis, optimize plans, and eliminates siloed decision-making—all without requiring data science expertise.

> In **70%** of predictions, ML or statistical forecasts deliver the same or greater accuracy than an expert.[2]

Speed intelligent, accurate decisions

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast delivers three key benefits that help teams achieve intelligent decision-making. Teams can improve accuracy of their predictions, make forecasting more accessible, and automatically track new insights.

Accurate and predictive

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast has the power to improve forecast accuracy by up to 50%. Backed by ML capabilities via the industry-leading Amazon Forecast engine, decision-makers can evaluate multiple scenarios, predict, and drive future outcomes based on greater volumes of historical, internal, and external data.

In addition, teams can create forecasts fast, regardless of data set size and complexity. In fact, they can seamlessly increase data volume to make predictions more accurate and continuously improving forecasts. The more data teams have, the better the outcomes with PlanIQ.

Accessible and simple

Decision-makers can easily access intelligent insights via PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast. Since this solution doesn't require any expertise from data scientists to configure, deploy, and operate, it helps democratize ML forecasting, empowering more users to unlock new insights. Now, decision-makers can visualize and examine results in Anaplan from every angle to fully understand key the drivers behind their choices.

Teams can also easily convert customer data into a forecast engine-friendly format, completely avoiding tedious manual data preparation processes and saving time. A simplified process for integrating first and third-party data into forecasts means that teams can spend less time processing data, and more time analyzing and making more informed decisions.

Automatic and iterative

Make decisions and take action about the organization's future with confidence thanks to the automated analysis and inference features of PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast. Teams can take large volumes of data and run automatic analysis and inference to uncover hidden insights. This allows business users to automatically choose the best predictive model per forecast with ML guidance.

Teams can also rely on PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast to validate data and compare planned versus actuals, pinpointing and surfacing potential problems for teams to address. Moreover, with continuous ML, these capabilities will evolve and adjust over time to further streamline processes and deliver greater insights.

Key PlanIQ features

- Easily select Anaplan data for model training

- Train forecast models automatically or manually

- Attain highly-accurate metrics in an accessible format

- Gain transparency into automated configurations

- Validate model training data automatically

- Schedule operations to match your forecasting cycle

- Support ad-hoc predictions

- Compare forecasts with actuals automatically

Derive greater insights across industries

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast works across a range of industries and can help teams realize a breadth of new use cases. Teams across finance, human resources, sales, and supply chain can harness the power of ML-driven forecasts.

Finance: Financial planning

Financial planning can be a lengthy process that produces variable results. With so many categories, it's impossible to deliver accurate manual forecasts due to the quantity of drivers that can impact results.

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast pulls in data from Anaplan models and automatically chooses the best ML prediction model for the data, saving hours of manual effort. Meanwhile, ad-hoc analysis allows analysts to determine the drivers that increase prediction accuracy.

Human resources: Workforce planning

The sheer volume of variables required for manual workforce planning makes it difficult to predict. For example, forecasting the number of skilled dialysis staff needed at a clinic during the holiday season can be a time-consuming process that yields inaccurate results.

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast transforms workforce planning from a time-consuming manual exercise to one that is flexible and quick. Organizations can leverage a transparent, automated process to accurately predict future staffing needs.

Sales: Sales forecasting

Sales forecasting is often an instinct-based and error-prone exercise. Individual salespeople are expected to accurately predict the customer's propensity to buy, as well as interpret market dynamics that may affect when and how purchasing decisions are made.

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast allows companies to use large sets of data to make accurate predictions. Salespeople can quickly pinpoint when deal will commit and how long it will take to convert to bookings.

Supply chain: Demand planning

Rapidly changing market dynamics make it difficult to accurately predict the demand for a specific product. For example, inaccurate predictions about the amount of a product needed in a specific store results in excess waste of resources and reduced margins.

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast enables users to connect large volumes of historic data with internal data to accurately forecast demand for a product, decreasing waste. The ability to run ad-hoc analysis on key drivers means that demand planners can optimize their plans to successfully meet business goals.

Use cases across fuctions

Finance
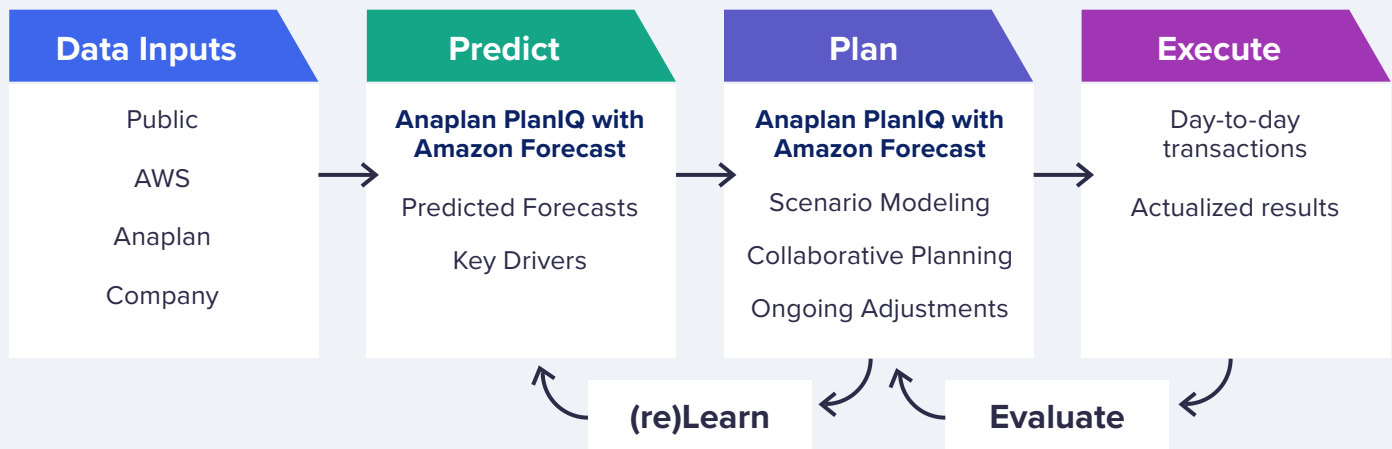- Revenue forecasting
- Financial planning

Sales
- Sales forecasting

Supply Chain
- Demand planning
- Inventory planning
- Operations planning

Human Resources
- Workforce planning

Data Inputs	Predict	Plan	Execute
Public	**Anaplan PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast**	**Anaplan PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast**	Day-to-day transactions
AWS			Actualized results
Anaplan	Predicted Forecasts	Scenario Modeling	
Company	Key Drivers	Collaborative Planning	
		Ongoing Adjustments	

(re)Learn → Evaluate

Conclusion

The mounting pressures decision-makers face to expand business in the midst of volatile markets is not expected to ease anytime soon. The only choice is to adapt to a new reality of unforeseen changes, which can be easier said than done. However, the peace of mind that a powerful ML forecasting solution two industry leaders can help decision-makers gain a competitive edge.

PlanIQ with Amazon Forecast empowers teams to more nimbly anticipate change and make more informed plans. Embedded ML-driven forecasts from Plan IQ with Amazon Forecast provides the continuously accurate predictions and automated analysis to a larger set of business users—delivering everything key leaders need to not only keep pace, but stay ahead.

---

[1] Marc Rodt and Gerhard Unger, *"The Power of Algorithmic Forecasting,"* BCG, December 5, 2019.

[2] Ibid.

About Anaplan

Anaplan, Inc. (NYSE: PLAN) is a cloud-native enterprise SaaS company helping global enterprises orchestrate business performance. Leaders across industries rely on our platform—powered by our proprietary Hyperblock® technology—to connect teams, systems, and insights from across their organizations to continuously adapt to change, transform how they operate, and reinvent value creation. Based in San Francisco, Anaplan has over 20 offices globally, 175 partners and approximately 1,500 customers worldwide.

To learn more, visit anaplan.com