

Q&A with Brad Smith | Dimension Data Australia

With a credit-orientated CV including stints at GrainCorp and Network Ten, Dimension Data Australia's National Credit Manager Brad Smith has experienced the sector from a range of unique perspectives.

What does your role with Dimension Data Australia entail?

As national credit manager I look after a team of eight credit controllers. Basically, we're in charge of cash flow from the receivables asset. We try to minimise the over-dues and the bad debts and try to give as much certainty as we possibly can to the broader finance team.

What's been the biggest challenge you've faced in your role so far?

December marks my one-year anniversary. I understand I was the first national credit manager that Dimension Data have ever hired from outside the organisation. Normally, a person in this position would have had years of experience with the company's processes and procedures. In a short time, I've had to try and understand what is a very complex business before pushing for the things that I think need to be changed. There's plenty of things we get up to across the information-communication technology space, such as professional services, technology infrastructure, sales, and then managing those assets on behalf of those customers.

Is there anything you feel that the credit management sector could do better?

Technology is a massive game-changer and it's something that excites me. I came into this industry expecting to see the avant-garde, cutting-edge of systems and processes. But that wasn't the case. I believe that the industry isn't utilising systems and processes as much as it could be. If we did, we could really start adding value, especially when it comes to managing working capital more efficiently and effectively.

How did you get into credit management?

Total accident. I worked as a cadet accountant straight out of school in Dubbo, where I grew up. During the next five-years I also started playing in bands, and at age 23 I thought something had to give. So I gave up my degree and the job to do music full-time. It all went pretty well – until the gigs ran dry. I decided to finish with music and get a day job. One came up in accounts receivable and I went for it. I wasn't even sure what I was getting myself into. I just got in there and had a go. The rest is history.

**Brad was the winner of an Apple Watch Series 3 at the Insolvency Intel booth at the 2017 AICM conference.*