

Open Data;

Open Data

- According to one estimate, mankind created 1,200 exabytes (billion gigabytes) in 2010. If we consider, that the amount of digital information increases tenfold every five years, the projections are just unthinkable.
- The ability to generate and analyze massive amounts of data today demands that executives rethink the role of information in customs.

Open Data

- A few industries have led the way in their ability to gather and exploit data, for example, credit-card companies monitor every purchase and can identify fraudulent ones with a high degree of accuracy, using rules derived by crunching through billions of transactions.
- Governments on their side are belatedly coming around to the idea of putting more information—such as crime figures, maps, details of government contracts or statistics about the performance of public services into the public domain.

The data advantage

- We have had a revolution in measurement, over the past few years, that has allowed customs to understand in much more detail what their users are doing, what their processes are doing, what their employees are doing.
- The research has found a shift from using intuition toward using data and analytics in making decisions.

Becoming data driven

- The prerequisite, of course, is the technological infrastructure.
- The harder thing is to get the set of skills.
- That includes not just some analytical skills but also a set of attitudes and an understanding of the business.
- Then the third thing, which is the subtlest but perhaps the most important, is cultural change about how to use data.
 - The cultural change is for managers to be willing to say, “You know, that’s an interesting problem, an interesting question. Let’s set up an experiment to discover the answer.”

Becoming data driven

- You have to have a different kind of confidence to be willing to let the data speak.
- It's up to managers now to seize that opportunity and take advantage of this very fine-grained data that just didn't exist previously.

Required skills

- Sampling methodologies, designing experiments, and working these very, very large data sets without becoming overwhelmed.
- We are moving from just financial numerical data toward all sorts of nonfinancial metrics.
- Often, the nonfinancial metrics give a quicker and more accurate measure of what's happening, but for example satisfaction metrics may be much quicker and more precise metrics of what's happening in response to some of the policy changes that we may put in place.

The path ahead

- The good news is that technology's not slowing down, and the pie is getting bigger.
- Bad news; a lot of people don't have the skills to take full advantage of this technology. And, unfortunately, I don't see that changing any time soon unless we have a much bigger effort to change the kinds of skills that are available in the customs workforce.
- Good news again; we can develop it!

