

Media

Big & Fast Data: The Rise of Insight-Driven Business



The consumer-created digital universe is likely to reach >10ZB (total universe >44ZB) by 2016

Capgemini view

Media companies are, at least in theory, well placed to leverage oceans of data. They now have access to unprecedented quantities of both consumption data and user-generated content on social media and elsewhere.

Disruption is a high risk as the public's media consumption habits evolve rapidly, potentially changing the fundamental shape of entire business, revenue and cost models. The opportunities arising from big data are also significant, from improving content creation and management and monetizing new data feeds, through to analyzing social media interaction and monitoring user behavior to get a more accurate understanding of what consumers want today and predict what they will want next week.

Newer players (e.g. Facebook, Google, Netflix, YouTube) have invested heavily in embedding data science, platforms and processes into their business models, treating data as a primary asset across silos. With the consumer-created digital universe likely to reach >10ZB¹ (total universe >44ZB²) by 2016, they are in a strong position to create and monetize products and services based on insights drawn from their data.

By contrast, there is evidence from our findings (which largely looked at traditional media players) that they can find themselves in a weak position to take advantage of big data trends. Their data collation can be fragmented, the data is frequently held in silos, and the organization structure does not support an analytics-centric culture. These organizations face a two-fold challenge: They need to evolve both their organizational structure and their technology landscape to enable them to realize the benefits of big data. Without this evolution, they risk extinction.

¹ 1 petabyte = 1 million gigabytes.
¹ zetabyte = 1 million petabytes

² <http://www.emc.com/leadership/digital-universe/2014iview/executive-summary.htm>

Perception of big data as a disruptor

Surprisingly, perhaps, a substantial proportion of media companies in our sample were not yet experiencing or expecting significant disruption. In our study, respondents in the media industry were more likely than average to say that they hadn't experienced significant disruption over the previous three years: 50% said they had not, compared with 42% overall. However, this of course means that half of the companies had experienced significant disruption.

There was more expectation of future disruption, with only 44% of media companies saying they did not expect significant disruption over the next three years (average 38%). Around 23% of companies anticipated disruption from start-ups over the next three years, although only 14% had experienced it in the previous three years.

Awareness of big data opportunities

On the whole, respondents in media tended to be relatively unexcited about the opportunities arising from big data, with just 18% strongly agreeing that big data provides new business opportunities (compared with an average of 32%), and 12% strongly agreeing that big data is becoming a revenue driver in its own right (average 23%).

It is possible that these findings reflect the difficulties that traditional media companies are experiencing in seizing the opportunities of big data, as noted above, rather than a belief that the opportunities do not exist. However, there was also below-average agreement that decision-makers increasingly require data in real time (media 30% compared with average 42%).

Implementation approach

Only 58% of media organizations were in some phase of implementing big data technology – significantly lower than the 71% average across industries. Moreover, an unusually high percentage of those in media said that they had no plans to implement big data technology (24% – double the average of 12%).

Media organizations were among the least likely to have put in place specific big data technology and policies, but interestingly restructuring/reorganization was the measure most likely to have been taken, suggesting that some companies are planning to step up their activity. Indeed, half of media organizations in the study planned to increase investment in big data over the next three years.

As in other industries, the big data agenda is most commonly driven by IT. Unusually, however, personal initiatives by the CEO/COO are the second most commonly mentioned driver in media firms.

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