

OPPORTUNITY #45

WHAT IF DATA DIDN'T MATTER ANYMORE?

THE END OF DATA AS CURRENCY

A world where data is open and available to all, disrupting business models based on arbitrage or mass data capture

WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

Data is everywhere.

On Facebook alone, with the participation of more than 3 billion people and 200 million businesses, more than 100 billion messages and 1 billion stories are shared every day.⁴⁵⁰ In one minute, 167 million videos are watched on TikTok followed by 44 million videos on Facebook live.^{451, 452} Also in 1 minute, 12 million messages are sent on iMessage, 668,000 messages sent on Discord, 5.7 million searches made on Google and 575,000 tweets published.^{453, 454}

The amount of data created over the next three years is expected to be more than the data created over the past 30 years, and the world will create more than three times as much data over the next five years as it did in the previous five.⁴⁵⁵

The ratio of unique data (created and captured) online to replicated data (copied and consumed) is 1:9 and the trend is towards less unique and more replicated data, reaching a 1:10 ratio by 2024.⁴⁵⁶

Data related to the Internet of Things (IoT) and increasing amounts of metadata (data about data) are growing rapidly and will soon surpass all other data types. The growth of rampant information gathering creates dilemmas such as video surveillance at a time when jurisdictions are also acting to protect personal privacy. Finding an acceptable balance between security, personalisation, efficiency and privacy rights will be one of the great challenges for the coming decade.⁴⁵⁷

Despite many governments signing the Open Data Charter⁴⁵⁸ or adopting the G20's anti-corruption open data principles,⁴⁵⁹ fewer than one in five datasets are open and little progress has been made in the last decade.⁴⁶⁰

SECTORS

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THE OPPORTUNITY TOMORROW

Aside from the volume of data, opening data and unlocking it for the world to use can add \$3 trillion in economic value globally each year through provision of readable information that can be shared and distributed at little or no cost. The sources of value from open data include new or increased revenue; savings or economic surpluses in consumer finance; consumer products; education; electricity; finance; health; oil and gas; and transportation.⁴⁶¹

Increased availability of data, combined with wide access to powerful modelling capacity, can lead to everyone being equally able to assess useful information from education resources to details of the value and risks associated with a financial asset.

Business models that are based on asymmetric information will no longer be commercially viable. Data-harvesting and arbitrage industries, such as insurance and finance, that have depended on such unequal access to information will need to find new business models.

With fewer inefficiencies, societies can fully share the benefits of data. Open data access accelerates the rate of discovery, providing scientists with more resources to fuel their work. It makes it easier for researchers to identify trends and gives them more evidence to support their findings. Open data access also encourages transparency as it is critical to data integrity and good science practices.

BENEFITS

Freely accessible information means that individuals can make more informed choices about their investments and futures, bringing them greater agency and autonomy. Governments and organisations can improve their forecasting and strategic decision-making.

RISKS

Risks include people's privacy being affected by the disappearance of digital rights and less emphasis on protecting data, given its ubiquity. The capacity to innovate also becomes less of a source of competitive advantage, as everything can be copied or replicated.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

The disappearance of digital rights may impact on people's privacy.