

IN BRIEF

THE AGE OF ANALYTICS: COMPETING IN A DATA-DRIVEN WORLD

Data and analytics capabilities have made a leap forward in recent years. The volume of available data has grown exponentially, more sophisticated algorithms have been developed, and computational power and storage have steadily improved. The convergence of these trends is fueling rapid technology advances and business disruptions.

- Most companies are capturing only a fraction of the potential value from data and analytics. Our 2011 report estimated this potential in five domains; revisiting them today shows a great deal of value still on the table. The greatest progress has occurred in location-based services and in retail, both areas with digital native competitors. In contrast, manufacturing, the public sector, and health care have captured less than 30 percent of the potential value we highlighted five years ago. Further, new opportunities have arisen since 2011, making the gap between the leaders and laggards even bigger.
- The biggest barriers companies face in extracting value from data and analytics are organizational; many struggle to incorporate data-driven insights into day-to-day business processes. Another challenge is attracting and retaining the right talent—not only data scientists but business translators who combine data savvy with industry and functional expertise.
- Data and analytics are changing the basis of competition. Leading companies are using their capabilities not only to improve their core operations but to launch entirely new business models. The network effects of digital platforms are creating a winner-take-most dynamic in some markets.
- Data is now a critical corporate asset. It comes from the web, billions of phones, sensors, payment systems, cameras, and a huge array of other sources—and its value is tied to its ultimate use. While data itself will become increasingly commoditized, value is likely to accrue to the owners of scarce data, to players that aggregate data in unique ways, and especially to providers of valuable analytics.
- Data and analytics underpin several disruptive models. Introducing new types of data sets (“orthogonal data”) can disrupt industries, and massive data integration capabilities can break through organizational and technological silos, enabling new insights and models. Hyperscale digital platforms can match buyers and sellers in real time, transforming inefficient markets. Granular data can be used to personalize products and services—and, most intriguingly, health care. New analytical techniques can fuel discovery and innovation. Above all, data and analytics can enable faster and more evidence-based decision making.
- Recent advances in machine learning can be used to solve a tremendous variety of problems—and deep learning is pushing the boundaries even further. Systems enabled by machine learning can provide customer service, manage logistics, analyze medical records, or even write news stories. The value potential is everywhere, even in industries that have been slow to digitize. These technologies could generate productivity gains and an improved quality of life—along with job losses and other disruptions. Previous MGI research found that 45 percent of work activities could potentially be automated by currently demonstrated technologies; machine learning can be an enabling technology for the automation of 80 percent of those activities. Breakthroughs in natural language processing could expand that impact even further.

Data and analytics are already shaking up multiple industries, and the effects will only become more pronounced as adoption reaches critical mass. An even bigger wave of change is looming on the horizon as deep learning reaches maturity, giving machines unprecedented capabilities to think, problem-solve, and understand language. Organizations that are able to harness these capabilities effectively will be able to create significant value and differentiate themselves, while others will find themselves increasingly at a disadvantage.

The age of analytics: Competing in a data-driven world

Only a fraction of the value we envisioned in 2011 has yet been captured

European Union
public sector



10–20%

United States
health care



10–20%

Manufacturing



20–30%

United States
retail



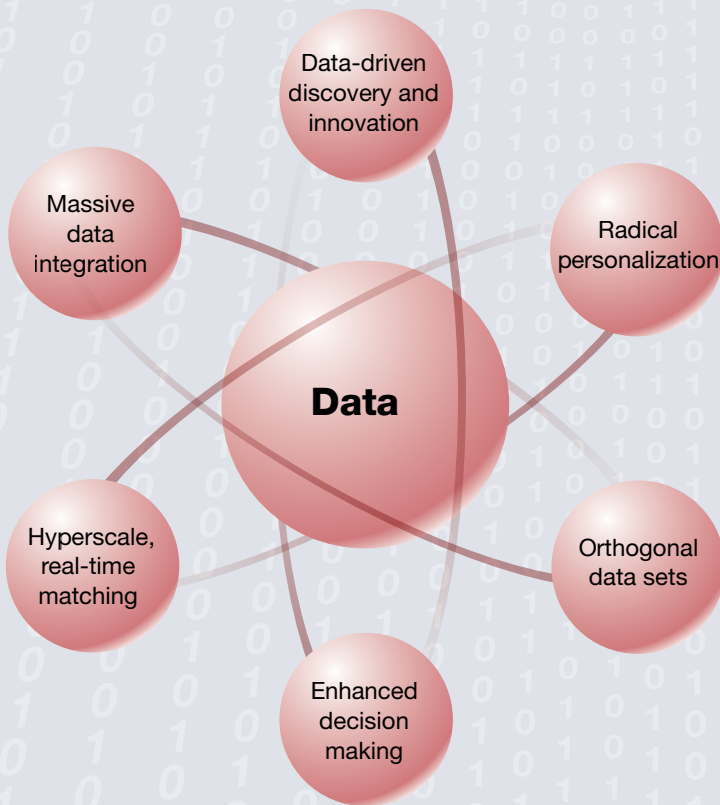
30–40%

Location-based
data



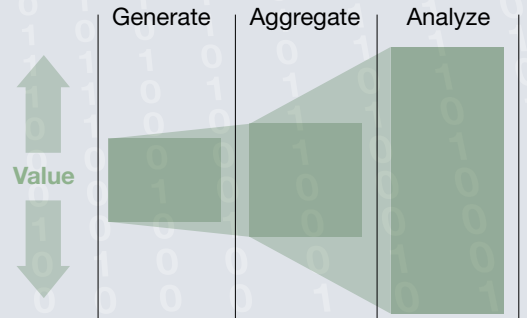
50–60%

Data and analytics fuel 6 disruptive models that change the nature of competition

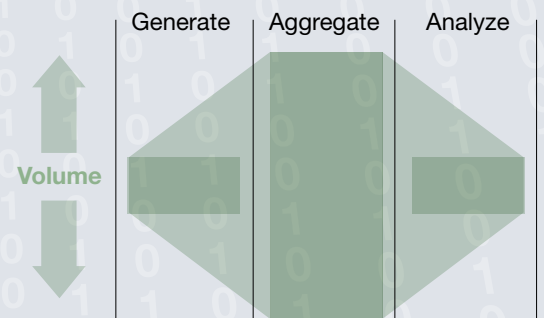


As data ecosystems evolve, value will accrue to providers of analytics, but some data generators and aggregators will have unique value

Value share



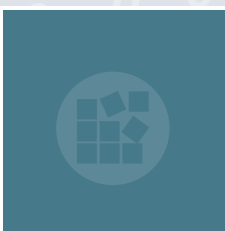
Volume of data and use cases per player



Machine learning has broad applicability in many common work activities

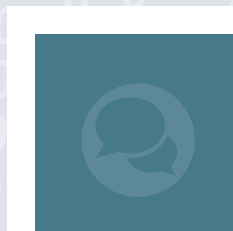
Percent of work activities that require:

Recognizing
known patterns



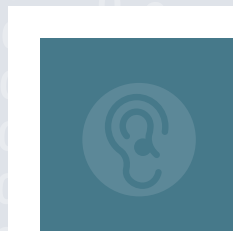
99%

Generating
natural language



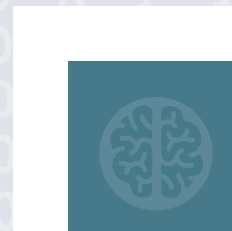
79%

Understanding
natural language



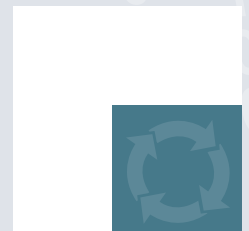
76%

Enhanced sensory
perception



59%

Optimizing and
planning



33%