Deriving intelligence from a series of tubes

Nick B, 2013-02-05

When EE rolled out 4G in the UK, they commissioned Brendan Dawes to create a series of digital portraits to represent 11 cities across the country. He studied people, what they do and how they communicate to produce digital snapshots of the defining characteristics of our cities.

Of particular interest is that social media conversations and trending topics were a major component of these works. Extended further, what we do online – the content of what goes up and down the series of tubes that make up Ted Stevens' Internet – would incredibly revealing, about our public and personal lives and habits, about how businesses operate and sell, about the ways we communicate and what we use to communicate with.

It would be akin to the ability to eavesdrop on personal conversations on a grand scale, manna from heaven for sociologists the world over.

So Dawes's work is of real interest, allowing us to understand some of context of our existence. In the same vein, Cisco's dissection of global mobile data traffic in 2012 gives some great insight into specific aspects of networking applications and devices.

Each laptop in the world, for instance, generates seven times more Internet traffic than the average smartphone. By the end of this year there will be more mobile-connected devices than there will be people on Earth. The Middle East and Africa will see stronger mobile data traffic growth than Asia Pacific.

Understanding individual transactions on a grand scale is one of the keys to being successful in business. It's hard to pick out many organisations that will have no need to understand more about the context of how employees or customers think and act, and deriving this kind of intelligence from such huge datasets is what Big Data is meant to achieve.

In our own small corner of the industry, F5 play a part in delivering this kind of context. For service providers, for instance, understanding customers means understanding what devices they use to consume content, what kind of content are being consumed via what apps, how fast they want this content and how much they are willing to pay for it.

The benefits of gaining this understanding, for service providers, are revenue and profit –generating; customised subscriber services and rate plans become possible. And these benefits apply to every business in every industry.

More here.

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