FIVE DRIVERS FOR HUMANISING ACTIONABLE DATA

By Helen Zeitoun | February 2020

Data for the sake of data is over. Data actionability is the urgent need for enabling growth. Both tech and market research companies need to accelerate their data actionability, and for this they must build humanised data models.

Tech companies focused on platforms, AI and big data are missing the human side in their technology-driven outcomes and aspire to "deep-tech models". Meanwhile, market research companies focused on measuring human aspects of opinion, emotions and behaviour during purchases, consumption and societal contexts are missing the tech scalability. Both need to structure "humanised data models" while coming from these different angles in order to support "knowledge-based" transformation strategies.

WHY?

Today's modern brands and organisations will reach exponential growth if they can leverage the full value chain of "deep-tech" or "humanised data". Indeed, they are rebuilding their foundations to compete in the era of data and advanced analytics, defining their new business opportunities with the rise of AI at their core, and shifting from AI tactics to full, AI-driven data transformation, in which changes in technology and the nature of business competition connect. But organisations must accelerate on this path: a recent MIT and BCG 2019 study reveals that only 20% companies have completed their data transformation (with both teams in AI

and some AI products at scale), accounting for a mere two-point increase on 2018. In this way, there is a critical need to create competitive advantage and value beyond algorithms. We must avoid getting stuck with algorithms and legacy around the algorithms that revolve around a "so what" issue, disconnected from business people within the organisation, from customers and citizens in markets and society, and from the human dimension. The challenge for data and AI is not to develop the next AI feature, but to move from tactical goals to strategic objectives, from capturing and targeting customers to holistically understanding and predicting customers, from fragmented data and AI projects to embracing critical mass and making the real change within the whole organisation.

WHAT?

In this context, market research and data insights companies have a responsibility to shift to a humanised data model, to accompany private and public organisations in their data transformation with a people centric approach (consumers, customers, citizens, employees). Ipsos is highly involved in building a humanised data model within its "Total Understanding" global transformation programme. We are leveraging data from society, markets and people and pioneering in market research (MR) with a new Global Science Organisation established in September 2019, committing experts in data science and AI, academics and partnerships to be a part of the whole research value chain.

HOW?

So how do we humanise data in a tech environment? I would like to share a synthesis of thoughts based on my experience within Ipsos, conversations with many clients from different industries, exchanges within a tech company roundtable I participated in at Websummit 2019 on "making the most of data" and from a workshop I animated at the Corporate Innovation Summit on "what is human data".

Firstly, humanised data requires to create a specific company environment, skillset and culture, and to more specifically create:

- An environment of trust with an organisation relying on ethical AI.
- A "data-inspired" business organisation where tech/AI informs, educates and inspires business, and business shares and inspires tech with regards to its market, product, competition issues.
- An organisation without silos with a horizontal culture, mirroring the horizontal essence of data and inspiring HR to evolve from individual performance evaluation systems to a personal drive of collaborative performance in leveraging data.

Secondly, humanised data is about integration, hybridation, the connection between data and knowledge about business/people. The data challenge will not be solved with tech start-up magic only. It relies on harnessing the full potential of digital data for competitive advantage and growth. It is enabled by a smart bridge between tech start-ups and large companies or SMEs with the vision and capabilities to integrate data and technology into their value chain.

And third, MR agencies are today in a unique position to act on humanized data because of their original skills in the knowledge about people, citizens, consumers. For them, data is both micro and macro, it is individual, small or massive, passive real-time or interview-based, and is accelerated with the revolution of IoT, of data accessed through the cloud, of capabilities to code voice data, neuro-reactions, photos and videos in addition to structured codes (opinion, CRM…). Furthermore the powerful deep learning approaches change the game of their analytics. When data is humanised, its impact and decisive power is fully maximised. For this, my recommendation is to consider five drivers of data actionability.
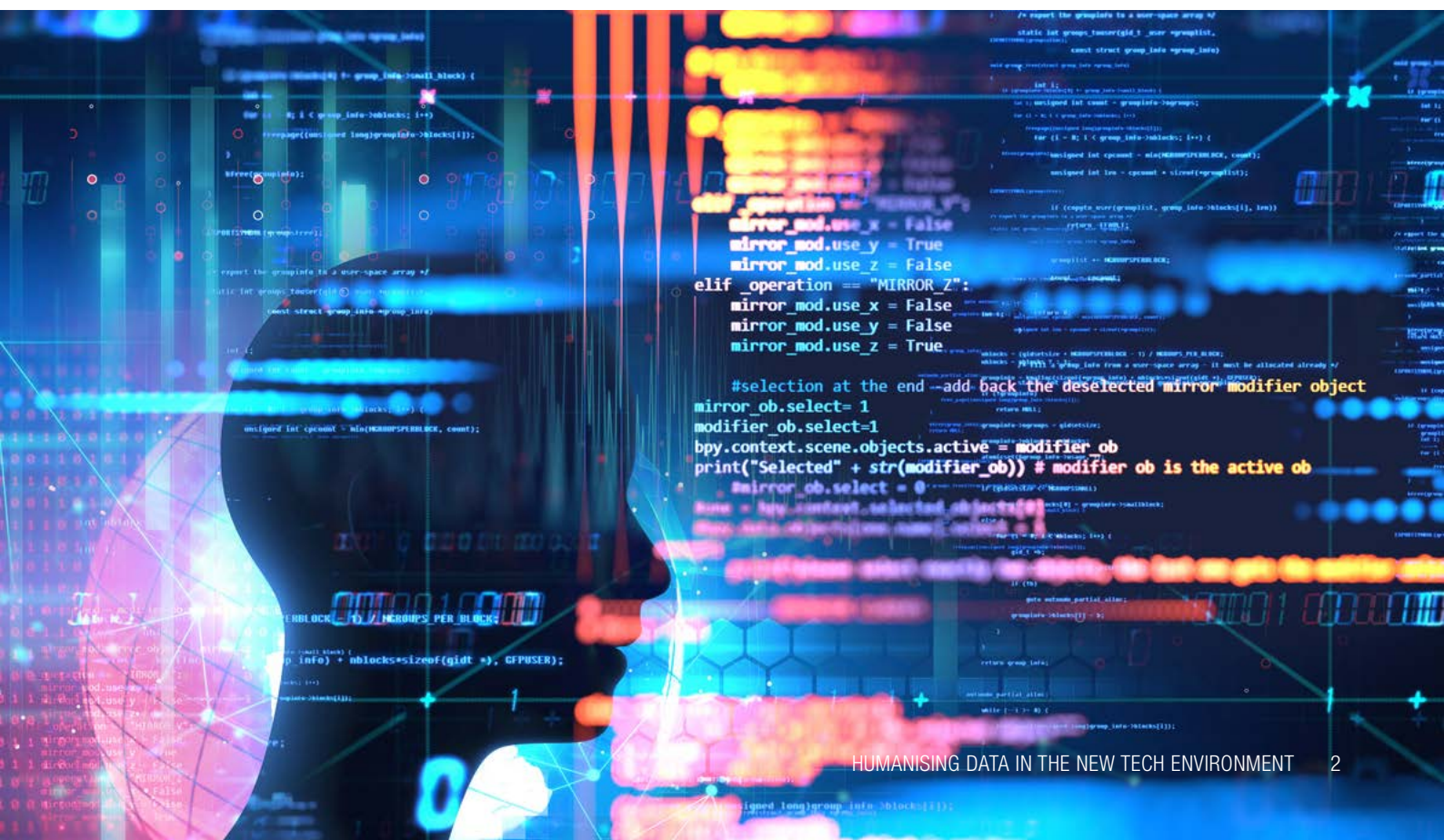
THE FIVE DRIVERS OF DATA ACTIONABILITY

Humanised data relies on enabling five drivers of data actionability (T.R.A.K.I): Truth, Relevance, Accuracy, Knowledge and Integration:

1

TRUTH: Managing ethical data and ethical AI

The human approach to selecting data that respects people's rights, running algorithms that minimise cognitive bias, mixing gender, age and culture. This is naturally aligned with industry professional standards (ESOMAR) and GDPR. It also calls for a true understanding of patterns, making data scientists aware of their own personal bias that must be overcome.

2

RELEVANCE: Selecting relevant data

The human approach to selecting the right data source for the right business purpose. This is the reverse of the traditional big data robotic approach that brings all available data together to search for "some" patterns.

3

ACCURACY: Aiming for granularity in data analytics

The human role in semantic models of social data for instance, valuing bottom up methods to raise fundamental truths rather than top down methods driven by robots that recognise words out of pre-coded libraries; this increases accuracy, especially with respect to cultural and language differences; the human role is also impactful in data cleaning, or managing GPS data from the perspective of micro individual decisions versus overall data flows that actually hide granular journey patterns.

4

KNOWLEDGE: Driving data analytics with an iterative approach using consumer or citizen knowledge

The human role in adjusting models with expert knowledge about markets, and in interpreting analytics in a grounded and sensitive way thanks to familiarity with society, markets, people. Knowledge of market sizing is also critical to assessing the quantitative impact of deep learning patterns.
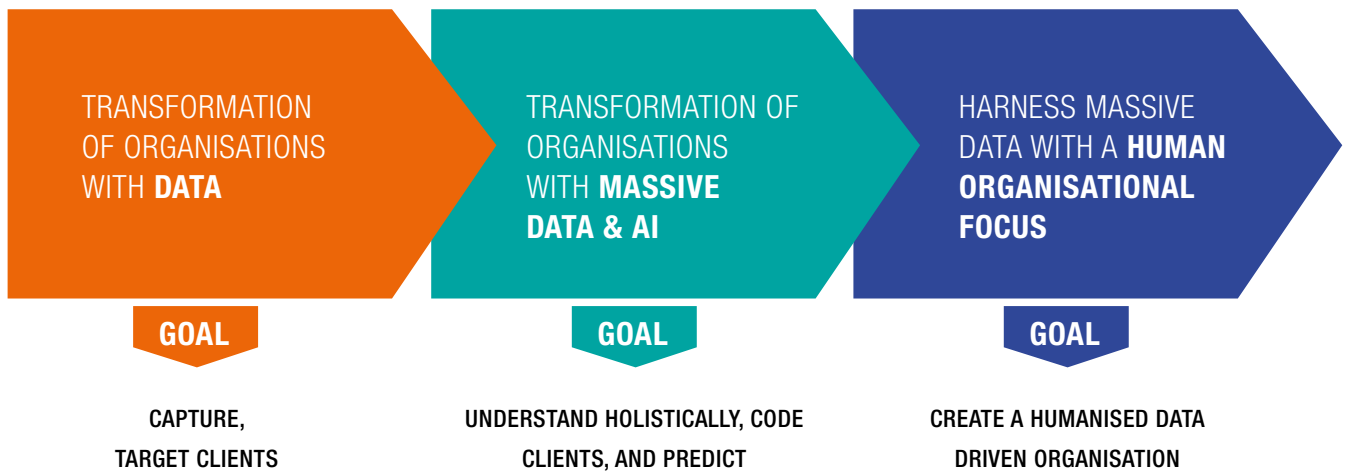
5

INTEGRATION IN THE VALUE CHAIN: Enables transparent and interactive Data Science and AI work between scientists and business analysts

Human interactions are critical in the process of algorithm and data integration. This applies to data scientists themselves (who need to share codes and working methods, challenge them openly and avoid making their work opaque and confidential), and between them and business analysts who need to have enough of a basic data culture to work on business challenges with data people. Humanised data is also about driving the data culture and communication within the MR organisation and with brand owners. This integration mindset is key to decision-making.

DATA, HUMAN AI & ORGANISATIONS: **AN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS**

TRANSFORMATION OF ORGANISATIONS WITH DATA

GOAL

CAPTURE,
TARGET CLIENTS

TRANSFORMATION OF ORGANISATIONS WITH MASSIVE DATA & AI

GOAL

UNDERSTAND HOLISTICALLY, CODE
CLIENTS, AND PREDICT

HARNESS MASSIVE DATA WITH A HUMAN ORGANISATIONAL FOCUS

GOAL

CREATE A HUMANISED DATA
DRIVEN ORGANISATION

Brands can access the power of humanised data. They just have to check that the MR and data agency process is following the T.R.A.K.I approach, that their basic equipment allows it, like working on Python, and that the humanised data use cases are scaled to a full new way of working. Humanised data for better decision is paving the way for a new complementarity between MR and data agencies, the GAFA, consulting agencies and advertising agencies. An opportunity for modern market research (today defined by ESOMAR as an $80 billion market) to play an even more central role in knowledge-based transformation strategies.

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