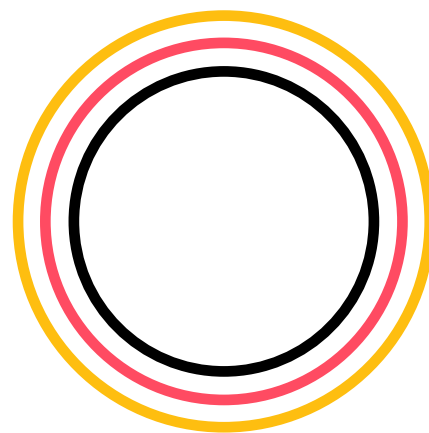
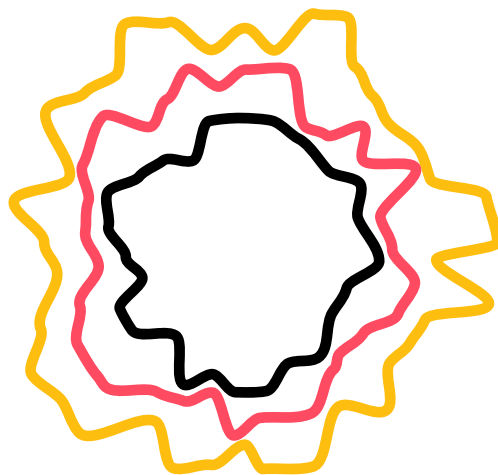
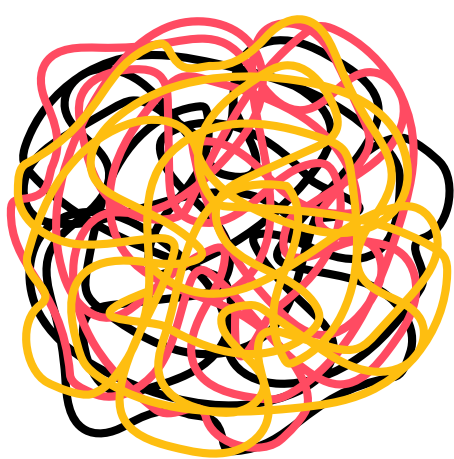


Darin Briskman



The Chief Purpose **Behind** **Analytics**

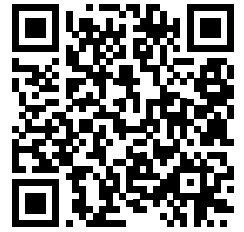
ISTMO EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

«The organizations that are high-performing are those who take that data and turn it into information to help everyone make decisions, not just the executives».

Darin Briskman worked as Product Manager at Amazon Web Services, improving and evangelizing services for data and analytics. His work focuses primarily on database analytics, machine learning, and blockchain services. Mr. Briskman specializes in understanding what customers want to make sure that what the company can provide is exactly that,

helping companies achieve the lowest sustainable price and the highest sustainable quality, ultimately providing reliable security, privacy, and operational excellence.

Mr. Briskman talked to us about the vital role of data and analytics for businesses to survive, emphasizing that the purpose of using analytics is to help humans make better decisions. Data



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must be turned into information to help everyone make decisions, not just the executives. Ultimately, he claimed, analytics is just a tool, so it all comes back down to the humans and how to make better decisions. Thus, a lot of the challenges with analytics are how to make sure that, in the process of doing analytics, we don't violate the trust of the humans that we work with.

What is the potential of using data in companies?

The question is how to use data in a way that helps people make decisions. Everyone in every organization makes decisions every day. In many cases, the data they have to use is from their gut, because they do not have access to the information data gathered elsewhere in the company or the organization. The organizations that are high-performing are those who take that data and turn it into information to help everyone make decisions, not just the executives. Indeed, the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Financial Officer need to make decisions, but so does everyone who drives a truck, and everyone who cleans a floor, and everyone who talks to customers. The real value of data is analytics.

The last ten years have been about the maturation of the internet and the development of cloud, but the next ten years are going to be about analytics everywhere. And we are going to move from most people making most decisions with only what they know –the data from the history in their head– to most people using data to help them make useful decisions.

«The goal is not innovation. The goal is to identify how you can better serve your customer»

What could happen with businesses that don't use data analysis?

They go away. It is the same as what happens with businesses that don't use electricity. There were many who chose not to use electricity. They are not here anymore. Analytics is about making better decisions, and businesses that make bad decisions stop being businesses. But it is not just businesses. It is any organization with a mission. This applies to government, health-care, and schools. It applies to everyone.

What challenges is data analytics facing today?

A key piece is realizing that analytics is meant to help humans make better decisions. If humans think that you are trying to replace them with a computer, they will never use it. They will fight it. People need to learn how to make decisions with data. But a lot of the work lies in making it available so that they can actually do that.

Another challenge is ethics. As humans, our data needs to be private. When people go to Amazon and buy something, they are giving the company some personal information. They are telling Amazon about their name, their address, what they like to shop for, what they buy, their financial information. But the company has an ethical responsibility to keep that private, to keep that secret and not share it even with other people inside Amazon. Many of the challenges facing analytics are associated with how to make sure that, in the process of doing analytics, we do not violate the trust of the humans that we work with.

In what other circumstances are businesses taking advantage of data?

Amazon, for example, uses it throughout the organization. It has been using machine learning for optimization of workload. A machine learning model helps the company calculate how much capacity it needs, enabling it to significantly lower that to cover the requirements, and thus lower costs. And whenever Amazon lowers costs, it lowers prices, because its promise to customers is to give them the lowest sustainable price possible. This has allowed Amazon to continuously reduce prices on almost everything it

offers. Thus, whether it is something deeply technical like workload management or something almost trivial like the movie you want to watch today, it's all about better decision-making.

How can you bring innovation in such a rapidly changing area?

The goal is not innovation. The goal is to identify how you can better serve your customer. We like to think that innovation is a combination of both the ideas and the execution. A good idea that is not executed is nice for drinking with your friends, but that is not actually innovation. You have to do it. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, data analytics, computers, they are all just tools. Machine learning is fantastic, but it is just an analytics tool. It all comes back down to humans and to how to make better decisions. It really just comes down to the same route. </>



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