Big Data for Social Good

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ABSTRACT

Petabytes of data about human movements, transactions and communication patterns are being generated by everyday technologies such as mobile phones and credit cards. This unprecedented volume of information facilitates a novel set of research questions applicable to a wide range of development issues. In collaboration involving 237 mobile phone operators across 102 countries, Jana's mobile technology platform can instantly poll and compensate 3.48 billion active mobile subscriptions. This talk will discuss how insights gained from living in Kenya became the genesis of a technology company currently working with global clients in over 50 countries, including P&G, Google, Unilever, Danone, General Mills, Nestle, Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft, the World Bank, and the United Nations. After providing an overview of the mobile and social media landscapes in emerging markets, we discuss a system that implements polls and mobile subscription compensation. The presentation will conclude by emphasizing the value of consumer data in underserved and understudied regions of the world.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.2.8 [**Database Management**]: Database Applications--*Data mining*

Keywords

Mobile technology; polling systems; social media; emerging markets

Bio

Nathan Eagle is the co-founder and CEO of Jana, a mobile technology platform that connects emerging market consumers with global brands using mobile airtime. Nathan is also an Adjunct Assistant Professor at Harvard University, where he researches how data generated by human movements, financial transactions, and communication patterns can be used for social good. He has been named to Advertising Age's 40 under 40 in 2014 and MIT's TR35, a group of the world's top innovators under 35 in 2009. Nathan current serves on the World Economic Forum as Technology Pioneer. He holds a BS and two MS degrees from Stanford's School of Engineering as well as a PhD from MIT.