Data vs creativity:
The last battleground?

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@beglen
Unlike just a few years ago, old media companies like book publishers and record labels are now swimming in data ...
“I make up my mind about whether a business proposal excites me within about thirty seconds of looking at it. I rely far more on gut instinct than researching huge amounts of statistics.”

Richard Branson

... but the really important decisions (which artists to sign or authors to publish) are still made almost exclusively by gut instinct, alone
Data can be used to help make even the most creative decisions. I’ve seen it in the businesses I’ve worked in. (Sometimes more successfully than others). What follows are some lessons I’ve learned along the way.
One lesson is to focus data science on creating genuine insights

Insight

Deep intuitive understanding

... comes to mind quickly
... without much reflection
Pre-loading people with insights, ready for when they need to make quick decisions: Clustering data is a great way of leaving users with insights they can carry in their heads.

Audience of

Who is in the audience? Who (therefore) is not?

Relationships.
Sizes.

Can be used to help make content, editorial, commercial partnership decisions.

by Affinio

#StrataHadoop @beglen
Snoop Dogg would say the same. He loved the consumer segmentation we did for him. And wholeheartedly went after one of the segments – and, in doing so, grew his audience.
Another key lesson is to distill complex work down to very simple conclusions. Sometimes BIG data, distilled to a single number:

Hundreds of signals: Massive collection of online piracy and engagement + Cutting edge data science: machine learning and artificial intelligence = One single ‘demand’ number per country
In creative businesses, it's all about the people. They make decisions, not spreadsheets or algorithms. So the job of data science: to help people to make decisions, not to tell them what decisions to make.
Some would have you believe that data science will take jobs away in creative businesses.

“In ten years time algorithms that will take complete control of the creative process could usurp advertising agencies.”

“Is good old-fashioned intuition out of date?”
When a computer beat a grand master at chess, it looked like computers really were going to take over, however …
The lesson from chess looks very different, a few years later:

Gary Kasparov last year:

I. PARTNER WITH DATA:

“… Teams of humans plus machines dominated even the strongest computers …
Human strategic guidance combined with the tactical acuity of a computer was overwhelming …”
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1. PARTNER WITH DATA:
   “… Teams of humans plus machines dominated even the strongest computers …
   Human strategic guidance combined with the tactical acuity of a computer was overwhelming …”

2. PARTNER WELL WITH DATA:
   “… a weak human + computer + better process was superior to a strong computer alone
   and, more remarkably, superior to a strong human + computer + inferior process …”
Creative people are using data tools to make decisions every day!

Note: the tools HELP you make decisions, not tell you what decision to make!
We’re using Rhiza to build data tools for the business. They allow workflow and process sharing across teams.
A lot has to come together to deliver a visualization that is successful.
When it all comes together, data science can make a real difference. Decisions that are faster, smarter, more global and bolder.
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