

Ocean exploration and enabling data driven decisions

The ocean is the life force of our planet. It encompasses over 70% of Earth's surface, regulating temperatures, influencing weather patterns, and sustaining all forms of life. Throughout history, the ocean has played a pivotal role in providing food, facilitating transportation, fostering commerce, enabling communication, inspiring innovation, and serving as a source of inspiration.

Yet, more than 80% of the ocean remains uncharted, unobserved, and unexplored. There is much to be uncovered by delving into the enigmatic depths, from identifying and describing the biological, physical, chemical, geological, and archaeological aspects of the ocean to comprehending its dynamic processes

Depth sounding

Throughout history, determining water depth has held paramount significance in naval operations. A precise knowledge of depth was indispensable for ship captains to avert potential disasters or to establish their vessel's exact location.

For millennia, depth measurement relied on the practice of depth sounding, also known as 'sounding.' Sailors employed a lead line or sounding line, a rope adorned with a weighted lead object attached at one end and marked at regular intervals, typically every fathom (approximately 1.8 meters). The lead line was cast overboard, while a vigilant sailor counted the marks until the lead touched the seabed.

Sounding lines served a dual purpose. They were often coated with animal fat or wax. Upon reaching the ocean floor, the lead collected samples of seabed materials like sand, pebbles, clay, and shells. Armed with knowledge of both depth and the seabed's composition, captains could make informed decisions about their course of action. The data was logged and stored for future reference. However, the amount of data collected was limited and imprecise.

This method of seafloor mapping proved laborious and time-consuming, particularly when charting deeper waters. Moreover, it only provided insights into nearby regions, as the lead covered only a small portion of the seafloor. This technique endured until the early 20th century when modern, more efficient devices began to replace it, offering automated, broader-area coverage. Nevertheless, to this day, vast stretches of the ocean remain unexplored.

Benefits of a data-driven decision-making approach

Why all this emphasis on the ocean? Well, it serves as a compelling analogy for the importance of data-driven decision making (DDDM). DDDM is a

practice where data is meticulously gathered, analyzed, and decisions are crafted based on the insights drawn from this wealth of information. Moreover, data-driven decisions harness historical data to forecast future developments.

The primary advantage of DDDM lies in its alignment of business choices with analytical insights. By relying on data and factual information, not only are better outcomes likely, but the decision-making process also gains a significant boost in speed. This results in swift, reliable decision-making, fostering a team's ability to make confident choices.

Furthermore, data-driven decision making often enhances teamwork and engagement by fostering greater transparency and accountability within the team. Additionally, this approach promotes coordination and automates tasks and activities. Improved coordination ensures a higher level of consistency in the services and processes delivered and evaluated. Ultimately, the goal is to enhance efficiency and leave a meaningful imprint on the decisions made by the team, enabling them to adapt and thrive within a dynamic environment.

Nonetheless, the success of data-driven decision making hinges on the method of data collection and the quality of the data used.

Establishing capabilities for becoming data-driven

Fundamentally, embracing data-driven decision making means striving for key business objectives by harnessing verified, analyzed data rather than merely testing the waters. It involves gathering data aligned with measurable goals or KPIs, scrutinizing insights to identify patterns and facts, and leveraging these findings to formulate strategies and decisions.

In our conversations with brand protection teams from various industries and regions, the most prevalent concern we encounter is their struggle to obtain even the most basic data. Gaining access to high-quality, trustworthy data can be a significant challenge when information is scattered across disconnected sources. Many brand protection teams lack a suitable digital platform for data collection.

Much like old-time ship captains, brand protection managers often find themselves sounding for individual case or suspect data without the broader perspective. They lack the proper tools for collecting, storing, and analyzing critical data necessary for decision-making. Their existing digital tools and processes often fall short in terms of encompassing the breadth and depth of required information, hindering their ability to aggregate data, visualize insights, and uncover details and patterns.

Brand protection is a multifaceted business function that demands data mapping, observation, and exploration. Gathering the right data is pivotal to the analytical process, and data collection should commence promptly if it isn't already underway. It's advisable to initiate with data sources that offer high impact and low complexity. Modern brand protection

platforms facilitate structured data collection, followed by integration with multiple data sources and the establishment of a data warehouse for storing, sharing, and analyzing vast amounts of data.

A data-driven approach empowers your brand protection team to make informed decisions, effectively clearing the deck of counterfeiters!