

DSC 630 Predictive Analytics

Assignment 5.1: Advancements in Predictive Analytics

Introduction

This paper will provide a brief summary of some existing laws/policies on data privacy, data protection, and data sharing. It will also go over gaps that currently exist in legislature for the consumer and organizations as it pertains to data.

Why We Are Here

Data privacy and the laws that pertain to it is one of the biggest topics of interest for me, and one that really played a large role in me pursuing my MSDS degree here through Bellevue University.

As just one example of the importance of data privacy and ramifications, the 2016 presidential election has been discussed ad nauseam, and one of the takeaways from it was the finding in 2017 that the use of big data, analytics, and bots helped drive misinformation and spread propaganda through social media. The questions that have come out of the finding of Cambridge Analytica's use of Facebook user data has led the world at large to wonder just what we as a society, as businesses, and as

governments can — and should — do about preventing things like this from happening again.

What is Truth?

When the primary benefit of being able to quickly learn and share digital bits of information and knowledge have become degraded and drowned out by bits that aren't truthful, aren't vetted for accuracy, or have no means of being prevented from even being posted or spread, what can be done to remedy it? Laws, that's what.

Now, I'm not advocating for everything in this country to be vetted by the government; however, there should be a happy medium somewhere that prevents bots and false information and fake photos and doctored videos from drowning out truth. And that is what I am expecting out of all of this: truth. I am not against one party or candidate or company so much as I am against the death of truth and actual facts.

Currently in the United States, there is not an over-arching law or set of rules that regulate how online businesses such as Facebook and Twitter can and should operate, or what is posted via their products. Right now, there is not much as far as tools go that can legally stop conspiracy-driven websites and posts from popping up and spreading like wildfire. Yes, "businesses" like InfoWars and their conspiracy-peddling content have been banned from social media, and had their apps removed from Apple's and Google's stores, but it took a very long time for that to happen. We are not China, we have free speech, and it is wonderful freedom to have. We just need something that helps to keep free speech honest when it is blasted through apps and sites that are now considered "news" and the primary ways that humans now consume information.

Data Privacy and Laws

With the lack of hard-hitting data privacy laws in this country, organizations like Facebook can pretty much do whatever they want and run afoul of data privacy laws,

and so far the only real ramifications of such are paying fines. In fact, they were levied a 5 billion dollar fine for issues related to data privacy, but that is a tiny fraction of their business income that is generated mostly by advertising — you know, the content you see in your feed that is one of the largest uses of mis-information.

California has recently passed legislation that protects its residents, and offers a multitude of options and ramifications; the European Union in 2016 passed The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and their law states:

“The regulation is an essential step to strengthen individuals' fundamental rights in the digital age and facilitate business by clarifying rules for companies and public bodies in the digital single market. A single law will also do away with the current fragmentation in different national systems and unnecessary administrative burdens.”

Here in the United States, thing will continue to progressively get worse unless something happens at the federal government level to stop businesses from using or selling our information without our knowledge or consent. Right now, over 80 countries and independent territories, including nearly every country in Europe and many in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa, have adopted comprehensive data protection laws. The United States is notable for not having adopted a comprehensive information privacy law, but rather having adopted limited sectoral laws in some areas. This needs to change.

Conclusion

Data privacy is a huge topic in this country, for numerous reasons. Right now, there isn't a full-blown digital privacy law or laws to protect citizens from the damage that large businesses inflict by using and selling our digital information without our knowledge or consent.

Resources

https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection/data-protection-eu_en

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_privacy_law