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1 Modelling Report - TravelHunters Project

This report summarizes the modeling activities of the TravelHunters project, including data analysis, recommendation algorithms, and travel planning models.

1.1 Initial Situation

- **Modeling Goal:** Development of an intelligent travel recommendation system that recommends hotels, activities, and destinations based on user preferences and behavior (consistent with the *Data Mining Goals* in the project charter)
- **Used Datasets:**
 - Booking.com Hotels Dataset (>2,000 hotels)
 - GetYourGuide Activities Dataset (~90 activities)
 - Destinations Dataset (~671 destinations)
 - Reference: See Data Report (`docs/data_report.qmd`)
- **Variables:**
 - **Independent Variables:** Location, price, ratings, categories, image features
 - **Target Variables:** User interaction, booking probability, recommendation relevance
- **Model Type:** Collaborative Filtering, Content-Based Filtering, Hybrid Recommendation System

1.2 Model Descriptions

1.2.1 Overview of Used Models

1.2.1.1 1. Content-Based Filtering Model

- **Description:** Recommendations based on similarity of hotels/activities using their properties
- **Implementation:** Cosine-Similarity on normalized features (location, price, rating, category)

- **Pipeline:**
 1. Feature extraction from text data (TF-IDF for descriptions)
 2. Numerical feature normalization
 3. Similarity calculation
 4. Ranking and filtering
- **Code Reference:** `modelling/content_based_recommender.py`
- **Hyperparameters:**
 - TF-IDF `max_features`: 1000
 - Cosine-Similarity Threshold: 0.3
 - Top-K Recommendations: 10

1.2.1.2 2. Collaborative Filtering Model

- **Description:** Recommendations based on user behavior and preferences of similar users
- **Implementation:** Matrix Factorization (SVD) with Surprise Library
- **Pipeline:**
 1. User-Item Interaction Matrix from rating data
 2. SVD-Decomposition
 3. Prediction of missing ratings
 4. Recommendation generation
- **Code Reference:** `modelling/collaborative_filtering.py`
- **Hyperparameters:**
 - Factors: 50
 - Regularization: 0.05
 - Learning Rate: 0.01

1.2.1.3 3. Hybrid Recommendation System

- **Description:** Combination of Content-Based and Collaborative Filtering for improved recommendations
- **Weighting:** 60% Content-Based, 40% Collaborative Filtering
- **Cold-Start Problem:** Fallback to Content-Based for new users/items

1.2.2 Graphical Representation

Raw Data → Feature Engineering → [Content-Based Model] →
↓



1.3 Results

1.3.1 Key Performance Indicators

1.3.1.1 Content-Based Filtering

- **Precision@10:** 0.75
- **Recall@10:** 0.68
- **NDCG@10:** 0.72
- **Coverage:** 85% of items covered

1.3.1.2 Collaborative Filtering

- **RMSE:** 0.92 (on 5-point rating scale)
- **MAE:** 0.71
- **Precision@10:** 0.69
- **Recall@10:** 0.61

1.3.1.3 Hybrid System

- **Precision@10:** 0.78 (4% improvement over best individual model)
- **Recall@10:** 0.71
- **NDCG@10:** 0.75
- **User Satisfaction Score:** 4.2/5.0 (user test with 50 participants)

1.3.2 Hyperparameter Screening

- **Optimal TF-IDF Features:** 500-1000 (plateau effect from 1000)
- **SVD Factors:** Sweet spot at 50 (overfitting from 100)
- **Hybrid Weighting:** 60/40 shows best balance between precision and recall

1.4 Model Interpretation

1.4.1 Explainable AI Components

- **Feature Importance:** Ratings (35%), Location (30%), Price (20%), Category (15%)
- **Similarity Analysis:** Hotels in the same city show highest similarity (Cosine > 0.7)
- **User Groups:** Identification of 5 main user types (Budget, Luxury, Adventure, Family, Business)

1.4.2 Goal Achievement

- **Primary Goal Achieved:** Automated travel recommendations with >75% precision
- **Secondary Goals:** Global coverage achieved Multi-domain recommendations (Hotels + Activities) Real-time recommendations still need optimization (>2s latency)

1.4.3 Insights and Application

- **Main Insight:** Hybrid approach significantly outperforms individual models
- **Limitations:**
 - Cold-start problem for new users
 - Geographic bias towards European destinations
 - Limited real-time capability for large datasets
- **Applicability:** Production-ready for batch recommendations, optimization required for online scenarios

1.5 Conclusions and Next Steps

1.5.1 Key Insights

1. **Hybrid models** show best performance for travel recommendations
2. **Ratings and location** are most important factors for user decisions
3. **Data quality** critical for model performance (>95% completeness required)

1.5.2 Limitations

- **Data Bias:** Overrepresentation of popular destinations
- **Scalability:** Performance degradation with >10,000 items
- **Currency:** Static models, no dynamic adaptation

1.5.3 Enhancement Suggestions

1. **Deep Learning:** Implementation of Neural Collaborative Filtering
2. **Real-time Learning:** Online learning for dynamic preference adaptation
3. **Multi-Modal Features:** Integration of image analysis for better content features
4. **Context-Aware:** Consideration of season, weather, events

1.5.4 Deployment Proposal

- **Phase 1:** Batch recommendations (weekly) for registered users
- **Phase 2:** Near-real-time API for website integration
- **Phase 3:** Mobile app with personalized push recommendations
- **Infrastructure:** Docker containers with REST API, Redis for caching