I enjoyed being able to see AI discussed from a legal standpoint today – usually when I’m discussing the field of data science with someone it’s from the technical standpoint. I found it reassuring that intelligent people such as Naim were tackling the issue of legality and ethics within the field of AI (it seems like quite the task).

What stuck with me the most about Naim’s lecture was applying principles to law involving technology. It sort of reminded me of what a country’s constitution is meant to be – a broad set of rules that need to be interpreted by officials taking into context the current state of the culture. He’s right – you can’t be too specific in regards to technology or else people will work around them.

I did not agree with him on his sentiment towards how tech companies will adhere to broad regulations because they are more marketable as a firms that abide by common courtesy. Perhaps it’s my pessimism but I don’t believe the consumer base is knowledgeable enough to make decisions on products based on data security and privacy (nor do I see us shifting towards a culture that cares about these things).

I think we as a culture have yet to incentivise behavior that promotes responsible data governance. I do believe we can achieve this goal but it needs to be a bottom-up approach rather than top-down. What I mean by this is instead of banning certain behavior (top-down) we need to provide financial incentives that stimulate favorable parts of our culture. If governing bodies gave out grants to companies demonstrating secure data governance then a variety of business would start lining up to provide this service to the public.

Until today I had no idea the city of Montreal had gone to such lengths to leverage their data. I had worked on a project similar to house fire prediction at my old engineering firm: we were attempting to classify forest fires in Calgary based on telemetry and meteorological data from satellites. The reason I mention attempting was because we conducted some market research and discovered that the issue isn’t predicting the fires its putting them out (fire fighters from the region said if you can’t already predict where these fires will occur then you’re not worth your salt).

During Martin-Guy Richard’s lecture he had mentioned in passing that 90% of data warehouse projects end in failure. Had there been a Q&A period at the end I would have asked him but instead I’ll query you: what (specifically) do people mean when they say data warehouse? A single source of information for all company data? What makes these sorts of projects fail?

Thanks,

-Oliver