Data Science and Analytics with Python

用Python进行数据科学与分析

1. Trials and Tribulations of a Data Scientist

数据科学家的试验与磨难

The ever increasing availability of data requires the use of tools that enable businesses and researchers to draw conclusions and make decisions based on the evidence provided by the data itself. From performing a regression analysis to determining the relationship between data features, or improving on recommendation systems used in e-commerce, data science and analytics are used every day by all of us. This book is intended to provide those interested in data science and analytics a perspective into the subject matter using Python, a popular programming language available for various platforms and widely used both in business and academia.

工具的使用使得数据能够不断发挥越来越大的价值，帮助企业和研究人员基于数据本身提供的证据来做出结论和决定。从进行回归分析到确定数据特征之间的关系，或用于改进电子商务所用的推荐系统，我们每个人每天都会用到数据科学和分析。本书旨在为那些对数据科学和分析感兴趣的人提供一个使用Python的视角来了解主题，Python是一种流行的编程语言，可用于各种平台，并广泛应用于商业和学术界。

In this chapter we will cover what data science is and how it related to various disciplines from mathematics to business intelligence and from programming to design. We will discuss the characteristic that make a good data scientist and the composition of a data science team. We will also provide an overview of the typeical workflow in a data science and analytics project and shall see the trials and tribulations in the work cycle of a data scientist.

在本章中，我们将介绍什么是数据科学，以及它与从数学到智能商业，从编程到设计的各个学科之间的关系。我们将讨论如何成为一个好的数据科学家和构建一个数据科学团队。我们还将概述数据科学和分析项目中的典型工作流程，并将以此感受到数据科学家在工作中的所遇到的各种挑战和磨难。

* 1. Data? Science? Data Science!

数据？科学？数据科学！

The use of Data as evidence in support for decision making is nothing new. You only have to take a look at the original meaning of the word statistics as the analysis and interpretation of information relating to states such as economic and demographic data. Nowadays, the word statistics is either understood as a branch of mathematics that deals with the collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data; or more colloquially as a fact or figure obtained from a study based on large quantities of data. Simply take a look at the news on any given day and you will surely get to hear about statistics, proportions and percentages, all in support (or not) of a new initiative, plan or recommendation. The power of data is all around us and we use it all the time.

使用数据作为支持决策的证据并非什么新鲜事。“统计学”的原始本意，就是分析和解释与国家有关的信息，如经济和人口数据。现在，“统计学”被理解为数学的一个分支，它涉及数据的收集、分析、解释和呈现；或者更通俗地说是基于大数据得研究从而获得某些事实或直观的数据呈现。只要看一看任意某天的新闻，你一定会听到有关统计数字、比例和百分比的消息，关于支持（或不支持）某项新举措，计划或者提案。由此可见，数据的力量无处不在，我们一直在使用它。

Now, what about the word science? Well, you may remember from your school days that science is system that enables the organization of knowledge, based on testable evidence and predictions. Notice that key word evidence mentioned there again.

那么，什么是“科学”？好吧，你可能还记得在你上学的时候老师教的定义：科学一个[建立](https://baike.so.com/doc/6247046-6460455.html)在可检验的证据和(对[客观事物](https://baike.so.com/doc/1292750-1366818.html)进行)预测的知识系统。注意这里又提到了关键词-“证据”。

No surprises here so far, right? From a very simplified point of view, the scientific method makes use of data and their analysis to acquire, correct and integrate knowledge. Nonetheless, data science is not just simply the direct use data science of statistics, or the systematization of data. How shall we understand that much loved combination of the words data and science?

到目前为止，并没有什么让人吃惊的，对吧？从简单的角度来看，科学的方法是利用数据及其分析来获取、修正和整合知识。然而，数据科学不仅仅是简单的统计数据或直接分类数据那么简单。那么我们应该如何理解“数据+科学”？

* + 1. So, what is Data Science?

因此，到底什么才是数据科学？

Data science and analytics are rapidly gaining prominence as some of the more sought after disciplines in academic and professional circles. In a nutshell, data science can be understood as the extraction of knowledge and insight form various sources of data, and the skills required to achieve this range from programming to design, and from mathematics to storytelling.

数据科学和分析在学术和专业领域中正在迅速地获得突出地位。简而言之，数据科学可以理解为从各种数据来源中获取知识和相关洞察力，实现这一目标需要各种技能：从编程到设计，从传统数学到如何生动的讲述该故事(数据)。

There is no doubt that the term data science is a true neologism of our time. The term has started being used and, to a certain extent, even abused. As we have mentioned before data science is rather more than the sum of data on the one hand and science on the other one, although it is inevitably related to both concepts.

毫无疑问，数据科学一词是我们这个时代特有的新词。然而，这个词已经开始被使用，甚至在某种程度上被滥用。正如我们前面提到的，数据科学比数据和科学的涵盖面要广，尽管它不可避免地涉及到这两个概念。

Currently, data science can be considered a budding field with applications in a wide range of areas and industries, as well as in academic research. It is fair to say that it is elusive to define this emerging field, and throughout this book we shall consider data science and analytics as a portmanteau for a number of overlapping tasks related to data-from collection, provision and preparation, analysis and visualization, curation and storage-that exploit tools from empirical sciences, mathematics, business intelligence, machine learning and artificial intelligence. The aim of these tasks is to enable effective, pragmatic and most importantly actionable decisions.

目前，数据科学可以被认为是一个萌芽领域，广泛应用在各个行业，以及学术研究领域。可以公平地说，这个新兴领域的定义是难以捉摸的，在本书中，我们将把数据科学和分析看作是与数据相关的一系列任务的叠加：如数据收集，提供和准备、分析和可视化、管理以及储存，然后利用经验科学、数学、商业智能、机器学习和人工智能来开发相关工具。最终通过这些任务的形成有效、务实以及可采取具体行动的决定。

The motivation for data science and analytics in deriving valuable insights from data is great, and widely welcomed by businesses. However, this is a very challenging task. Companies such as Google, Netflix and Amazon have demonstrated that careful storage and analysis of data delivers a very competitive edge. These days there are easier and cheaper ways to collect large amounts of data than ever before, and mobile is becoming a ubiquitous presence. This have allowed companies, particularly start-ups, to develop in-house data science capabilities.

对于企业来说，如何应用数据科学和分析在数据中获得有价值的洞察力的商机巨大，并且受到广泛欢迎。然而，这是一项非常具有挑战性的任务。谷歌(Google)、Netflix和亚马逊(Amazon)等公司已经证明，对用户数据进行存储和分析将提升品牌的竞争力。如今，收集大量数据的方法比以往任何时候都更容易、更便宜，并且移动设备正在成为一种无处不在的存在。这使得公司，特别是初创企业，具备了能够在家就开发数据科学的能力。

Typical examples of data science products are better explained by the questions they aim to answer; these questions are the drivers to the acquisition and selection of the appropriate data to be interrogated in order to provide insight into an area of interest. I am sure you can come up with a few of examples relevant to you, but there are some that come to mind:

* What product will sell better in conjunction with another popular product?
* Who will be declared Prime Minister (or President, or winner; depending on the flavor of the government system of interest) in the next general election?
* How can customers be encouraged to spend a longer time in an online portal?

典型的数据科学产品的例子将更好地解释他们(企业)所想要回答的问题; 这些问题是获取和选择要询问的适当数据的驱动因子，以便对该领域提供有价值的洞察。我相信你也可以拿出一些相关例子，下面是我所想到的：

* 哪种产品与另一种受欢迎的产品结合起来会卖得更好？
* 下一届谁将当选为总理(或称为总统以及胜利者，基于政府利益体系的价值最大化)？
* 如何吸引客户在线门户网站上花更长时间？