Machine Learning Hackathon Challenge Held at IIT Madras

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Passion for analytics took **Vijendra Kumar Saini**, Senior Product Manager - IT M&S and **Vibhaas Vinay Kotwal**, Product Manager Analytics - IT M&S of FBS IT, to the finals of Machine Learning Hackathon. Held on January 6, at Shaastra-2020, IIT Madras. Let us hear their experiences, learnings, and key take away from the event.

Shaastra at IIT-Madras is a tech-fest celebrating the Spirit of Engineering and creating buzz in next-gen for last 20 years. Shaastra-2020 had variety of events ranges from Sports tech to Robo Wars, Talks by National leaders to Workshops.

One of the key events - Data Analytics Hackathon challenge was to predict the future behavior of customers based on what purchases they have done in the past. This focuses on identifying the trends in a provided dataset. This was a three-step competition: Prelims, Predictions and Presentations. Team progresses to the next level as they qualify in each level.

In first round, Prelims abstract paper was submitted based on understanding of problem, data and solution approach. Python with Alteryx and Tableau were used for data wrangling and visualization.

In second round, Predictions were made on large data set with over 1 Million transactions of over 20K customer. Linear Algebra, creating Feature vectors and various classification algorithms were the key Machine learning concepts we used for making predictions. Moving to the Final round, we presented the solution and interactive discussion with market experts in the panel. Panels were very much impressed with our approach and solution.

Curious behavior always inspired us to learn and experiment with new concepts and technology. Even after being SMEs of our functional area with command on technology and delivery processes, we decided to venture out in an unknown territory outside our comfort zones. Ford certainly provides a **Vibrant Workspace** where employees learn, grow and thrive. Power-Up time helped us to hone new technical skills while DCDS program at M&S IT provided exposure to data analytics. Coding Hackathon was a perfect opportunity to contribute to external community where we could unleash the Applied Statistical diploma and Machine learning experience.

Competing with smart brains in market and solving complex Machine Learning problem in 24hrs hackathon gave us not only the great experience but also confidence to apply ML knowledge to real life business problems and Creating Value at Market Speed. This experience and confidence will certainly help us to bring new perspective and insights performing the current role.

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