



# Capturing the big data opportunity in media and entertainment



8x increase

Projected increase in volume of structured and unstructured data from 2010 to 2015.<sup>1</sup>

Successful big data initiatives identify the data that matters and puts it into the hands of those who can act on it to benefit the business.

Successful use of big data has become an essential competitive differentiator for media and entertainment companies. Publishers, gaming companies, broadcasters, cable companies, and news organizations alike are striving to maximize audience value, content engagement, and advertising opportunities. Across all industries, big data investments continued to rise in 2013, with 64% of organizations investing or planning to invest in big data technology compared to 58% in 2012.<sup>1</sup>

The reality is that big data should be prioritized as part of an overall digital capabilities strategy to maximize investments in digital technologies. For many however, the concept of big data is just that—a concept without fully understood methods of implementation and best practices. In addition, the benefits of leveraging big data are often unclear. A primary challenge remains in empowering digital content managers and marketing managers to truly understand how to tap into big data’s potential to transform their efforts and optimize every consumer interaction.

## What is big data?

In straightforward terms, big data involves capturing, managing, and analyzing large amounts of various data—consumer behavior, visit frequency, content consumption, demographics, and many other data types. From an overall industry perspective, global research and advisory firm Forrester Research defines big data as the techniques and technologies that make handling data at extreme scale affordable.<sup>2</sup>

| Defining structured and unstructured data |   |
|---|---|
| Structured data                           | Data that resides in fixed fields within a record or file, including data in relational databases   |
| Unstructured data                         | Data that does not reside in row-column databases; it includes data types such as multimedia content, email messages, word processing documents, videos, audio, and other common business content |

The data can come from CRM, content delivery, e-commerce, and other internal systems, as well as third-party providers. Technologies such as Hive, Aster Data, and Hadoop are commonly used to help organizations deal with their continually growing volume of structured and unstructured data.



Structured and unstructured data combine from multiple sources, adding to the big data challenge.<sup>3</sup>

## A data deluge

For media and entertainment companies, the volume of data can be daunting. Imagine trying to track and analyze the number of tweets, YouTube video views, articles read, movies watched, or songs downloaded by any single person along with all of his or her unique attributes, such as age, income, and location. Add to that things like attendance at theme parks and movie theaters where consumers also engage with their favorite media and entertainment brands. All of these interactions make media and entertainment awash in data.

With access to so much data from so many sources, quick, actionable insights are often difficult to unearth. Traditionally, tapping into big data to answer essential consumer engagement questions required specialized skills with SQL or other query languages. As a result, trying to find the right data to answer even seemingly straightforward questions—such as what new content is most popular among which audiences right now—could take weeks, an unreasonably long time in an industry where consumer sentiment changes daily and lucrative ad opportunities may exist for only hours.

## Volume + Velocity + Variety = Big Data 3Vs<sup>4</sup>

By efficiently managing and analyzing huge data volumes, media and entertainment companies can identify critical behaviors and quickly respond by delivering the right content to the right audiences.

## From big data to actionable insights

The good news is that there are solutions that allow chief digital, revenue, and marketing officers to distill mounds of data into actionable insights before an opportunity passes. Today's integrated digital marketing platforms do not replace existing big data technologies. Instead, they enhance them by coalescing disparate data, providing more manageable tools and interfaces that transform big data into a visible course of action.

Part of the strategy is to right size data and apply best-of-breed tools that give the teams who need it the flexibility to act immediately on changing opportunities. In many ways, it's akin to thinking of content authors and digital marketers as breaking-news producers who need to instantly deliver accurate, trusted content—and can't afford to delay research and analysis even for a few minutes.

Because big data has limited use without a way to right size it for real insights, many media and entertainment companies are adopting cloud-based solutions that supplement purpose-built, big data technologies such as Hadoop. According to IT research and advisory company Gartner, big data technologies supplement existing information management and analytics. As a result, cloud-based solutions provide the action-based technology that companies are using to derive value from big data.<sup>1</sup>

## Digging deeper into data

When devising a big data action strategy—either for initial rollout or to improve returns on existing efforts—the first step for media and entertainment companies is to gather and categorize existing data sets to determine what is available. Companies can then define what complementary data assets are needed to inform more accurate, holistic, and valuable segmentation schemas.

By industry, media leads the way in adopting and investing in big data. The number one use case for big data is to garner clear audience data to sell more relevant, compelling advertising. However, the top challenge is finding a way to derive value from big data initiatives.<sup>1</sup>

Knowledge of audience is paramount, but for media and entertainment companies, critical factors extend beyond traditional demographic and intent data. It is no longer enough just to consider age, gender, income, and location when reaching audiences. Instead, it's essential to go deeper within audience segments and consider such factors as social network activity, content engagement, ad exposure, and other online activities.

The data footprint for customer segmentation typically involves several layers:

- **First-party, (proprietary) data:** Audience information contained within CRM, website analytics applications, or other systems. This information is typically readily available and accessible for use in broader big data initiatives.
- **Second-party data:** Entities such as email marketing partners, survey firms, premiere ad partners, and others can help fill in the gaps and provide valuable answers when trying to reach the most appropriate audiences.
- **Third-party data:** This data is derived from marketplace players that sell data about consumer types or behaviors. These data sources can be extensive and contribute substantially to the big data challenge and opportunity. Third-party data can allow media companies to efficiently combine external profiling data with first-party data to build look-alike models of valuable audiences and target them with relevant content and ads.

By combining trusted data sources and applying proven digital marketing tools, editors, researchers, marketers, and ad operations staff can quickly answer questions such as:

- What does my audience look like today?
- How can I actively optimize ad yields by driving people to the types of content that I think will interest them and have high value?
- What types of links and content should I be showing to frequent site visitors?
- What channels and devices are most effective at reaching distinct audiences?
- What are all the costs—and subsequent returns—on content delivered?

Today, many media and entertainment companies are seeing the benefits of their big data analytics strategies. Condé Nast, for instance, uses a combination of data from its own CRM and sweepstakes registrations systems. The company then relies on Adobe Marketing Cloud, including Adobe Analytics and the audience management capability in Adobe Media Optimizer, to generate audience segments and deliver more targeted and effective advertising and content based on these insights. For more details about Condé Nast's use of Adobe solutions, please view the *Adobe video* or written *success story* on Adobe.com.

## Big data, step by step

Given the challenges facing media and entertainment companies, it can be helpful to think of addressing big data in the following steps:



This process lets research and marketing teams identify the data that matters and deliver it to people who can act on it. Adobe Marketing Cloud solutions, including Adobe Analytics, Adobe Media Optimizer, Adobe Target, and Adobe Experience Manager, allow media and entertainment brands to better understand and monetize content and audiences, regardless of the big data and other platforms they use. At the same time, Adobe Marketing Cloud core services such as mobile services, master marketing record, and data connectors enable companies to manage data across solutions to maximize their return on investment.

## Leverage insights, safeguard privacy

Adobe Marketing Cloud includes the following support and capabilities that address the big data support needs of media and entertainment companies:

- No personal information is collected to help ensure individual privacy.
- Strict privacy and data-use policies are enforced, including the fact that the media and entertainment companies own the data, not Adobe.
- Data from multiple sources can easily be combined and quickly analyzed to gain insights to deliver more optimized experiences across digital channels.
- Data distribution is streamlined through dashboards and reports, enabling more people to make data-driven decisions.
- Targeted segment offers and tailored experiences across devices can be delivered with ease through integration with targeting and web content management systems.

For media and entertainment companies, the opportunities and benefits associated with big data are tremendous. Where consumers are open to providing personal information, they expect highly personalized experiences in exchange for the ability to interact easily with their favorite media companies. With Adobe Marketing Cloud, media and entertainment organizations have an integrated set of solutions to access and maximize the rewards of big data, including increased customer loyalty, competitive differentiation, and improved monetization of advertising.

### About the author

As senior manager, media and entertainment industry strategy and marketing at Adobe, Michael Goldstein works with the largest media, entertainment, broadcast, and publishing brands in the world, bridging digital technologies to help solve issues around content distribution, audience development, and monetization. Prior to joining Adobe, Goldstein held consumer marketing and business development roles in publishing (Condé Nast, Source Interlink) and recorded music marketing and retail (Jive/Zomba, N2K/Music Boulevard).

#### For more information

[www.adobe.com/solutions/digital-marketing.html](http://www.adobe.com/solutions/digital-marketing.html)

[www.adobe.com/solutions/media-entertainment.html](http://www.adobe.com/solutions/media-entertainment.html)



**Adobe**

Adobe Systems Incorporated  
345 Park Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95110-2704  
USA  
[www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)

<sup>1</sup> "Survey Analysis: Big Data Adoption in 2013 Shows Substance Behind the Hype," Gartner, Inc., September 2013.

<sup>2</sup> "Expand Your Digital Horizon With Big Data," Forrester Research, Inc., September 30, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> Enterprise Management Association and 9sight research; Hybrid Data Ecosystem; John Meyers blog, December 2012.

<sup>4</sup> "3D Data Management: Controlling Data Volume, Velocity, and Variety," Doug Laney, Gartner Inc., February 2001.

Adobe and the Adobe logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

© 2014 Adobe Systems Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

91096048 8/14