

The Fingerprint Metric

Effectiveness of Use

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1 Introduction

Today, analytics and data mining are exploding. Businesses have never had a more sophisticated understanding of their customers. This understanding has already changed how products are created and consumed. And the possibilities of the information era have barely been scratched.

2 The Metric

Over the past eight weeks, our team explored how software might be managed in the information era. One of the ideas we developed was the Fingerprint Metric. The Fingerprint Metric describes an individual's interactions with a piece of software. It is a way of understanding usage and productivity.

The value of the Fingerprint Metric comes from the idea of comparison. Humans are bad at understanding absolute quantities. However, we have an incredible, intuitive ability to make comparisons. We can even make meaningful comparisons between things that are totally different.

What is the volume of 50lbs of marshmallows? You probably have no idea. Now imagine I first showed you 25lbs of marshmallows. Extrapolating from your understanding

of the smaller quantity is simple.

Now consider the following:

"Juliette entered the room like a hurricane."

Juliette and hurricanes are dissimilar, but by comparing the two we derive a shared understanding. This type of subjective comparison across disparate domains is a big part of how we learn and develop ideas. [1]

The Fingerprint Metric combines information about an individual's objective usage and subjective productivity. It allows the comparison of individuals, products, and teams. But before explaining the metric's applications, it is helpful to understand how the metric is generated.

fingerprint

[billy] = [27, 500, 60, 210, 25, 18, 43, 3, 0.3, 64]

- 27 graphs generated
- 500mb data uploaded
- 60 hours logged
- 210 terms searched
- 25 clicks per minute
- 18 min average time in program
- 43 log ins
- 3 projects impacted
- 0.3 time spent on home screen
- 64 min spent reading documentation

Let's look at Billy's Watson Analytics fingerprint. This fingerprint is composed of a