Data Dynamite: how liberating information will transform our world

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Data is compiled from every aspect of our lives. Yet, for too long, policies and technical obstacles kept you and me from access to it. Now, data can be shared instantly as it is gathered, but too many still act as if the old rules of data scarcity still prevail. When data*is* made available to all who need it and on a real-time basis, it becomes valuable information. How valuable? Think how the U.S.'s decision to allow free access to Global Positioning System data started a global location- based services industry creating billions of dollars of wealth and transforming our lives. *Data Dynamite* shows how a combination of proven tools let us "tag" data with information that is permanently attached to it, then lets the data be transmitted instantly wherever we insert those same tags. It describes new tools that let us analyze data collaboratively and visualizations that make it come alive. The book shows how the results of these steps can transform every aspect of our lives:

- Companies can streamline their supply chains, make better internal decisions, and even involve the public in finding creative new ways to profit from their data.
- Government can be leaner, regulations streamlined, yet actually do a better job protecting us. One expert says if such a system had been in effect in the mortgage industry, the global economic Great Recession could have been avoided.
- You and I can reduce our environmental impacts, simplify our lives, and even take charge of our health care by sharing data that we generate ourselves using smartphones and other devices.

Data Dynamite shows how a District of Columbia agency gives us a preview of what life will be like when data is available to all who need it and organizations become data-centric. Other examples detailed in the book include a hospital that has improved patient care, especially in life-or-death emergency situations, by creating unified online patient records; and a system that allows first responders and other officials to access a wide range of real-time information in a disaster or terror attack. Another life-or-death example allows patients with a wide variety of life-threatening diseases to share information about their conditions to speed development of cures. Another example describes "Internet of Things" pill bottle cap that automatically reminds your mother to take her pills, while also automatically notifying the doctor when she actually takes them. Still another tells how a Mexican company in the behind-the-times construction industry shames high-tech companies with its real-time communications sharing and decision making. Martin Luther unleashed the printed word by translating the Bible into German so priests were no longer needed as intermediaries, and allowed wide public access by printing it instead of having it copied by monks. *Data Dynamite* will do the same for data, unleashing its power by giving everyone access using the Internet. *Data Dynamite* delivers on its promise, showing how free, real-time data really is "dynamite," just waiting for us to show the vision and determination to make it available. When we do share it, it will blow away our old sense of limits and create a new reality of unprecedented opportunity.

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