

Operators need to act smart to monetise data

As operators deploy end-to-end analytics to enable monetisation of their data the greatest challenge they face lies in the sheer volume of the data from which they need to gain actionable insights

As the datasets being analysed by operators widen, the volume of data is a crushing weight for operators' analytics capabilities. "People today typically refer to big data in a traditional transaction, session record-based perspective", says Per Kangru, technologist and innovator in the CTO office of Viavi Solutions. "However, if the operator wants insight into a customer's specific location and the service they used there, they can receive data that is one or two magnitudes greater."



Per Kangru, technologist and innovator, Viavi Solutions

That means operators' resources are increasingly taken up just processing the data rather than analysing it to achieve insights for monetisation use cases. "What's needed is to go from having this enormous volume of data, to a situation where only the relevant data is processed," he adds. "We call this smart data and the concept is to strip away irrelevant detail, extracting value, and then making that valuable piece of information available."

Kangru points out that by using a combination of measurements and data points, it is possible to gain insights without processing every bit of data. "Our expertise is that we can take the enormous flow of data and generate the right set of data so you can get the right things done in the right monetisation use cases," he explains. "For instance, if you want to determine when a customer would be most receptive to an offer, it's going to be after they've had a good experience. We can identify such a time."

Viavi's heritage is in extracting visibility out of all facets of networks. This experience has led the company to create solutions that are disruptors in the assurance and analytics marketplace, as Kangru explains: "We've always worked with the largest operators in the world so we understand the challenges of scale but we also work with leading edge, smaller operators which are more nimble than some of the largest Tier 1 operators," he says. "We've learned the necessity of being able to handle the scale while being flexible and adaptive in what we provide."

He adds that Viavi has assembled a range of products to enable it to provide such insights as location intelligence, with its ariesoGEO offering, along with its xSIGHT assurance and analytics solution. Looking ahead, Kangru sees growing interest in assuring video on 5G networks. "Video already represents an enormous volume of data and could grow from 10 to 100 fold in the 5G world depending on the market you're in," he says. "We have the understanding of the end-to-end chain with real solutions deployed which have taught us not only what's really important but also trained us to deal with changes in technology quickly."

In addition to there being a huge volume of data there is also a vast array of potential use cases for monetisation. "When you think about all the different use cases, it boils down to finding a way to approach the data that you have and identifying who the people are who would like to use that data," says Kangru. "A lot of players are developing both internal and external use cases for operator data so I see more use cases emerging incrementally from data sources in the next year."

He singles out the area location data as a maturing use case. "Where location data can be used today without privacy issues, one can look at aggregated statistics of user profiles, such as a retailer setting up a new location," he says.

"They can follow the location of subscribers based on the demographic that the shop owner is looking to attract and then work out which location is the most suitable for a store front from those insights. In addition, they can identify if a given store location is good by analysing how those users are moving through the area and assess such factors as whether a competitor's store is placed between the new site and a subway station, for example.

"The operator provides the information to their customer in this example but remains in control of their data, protecting privacy," Kangru emphasises.

"We provide the capabilities to extract such valuable insights and also have the know-how to account for privacy implications across multiple jurisdictions. There is so much commercial value in data to be extracted if use cases like this can be developed and brought to market. [•]"