



BIG DATA

One Step Towards Creating Value From Big Data

- A Case Study on E.ON Elnät

Big Data Analytics is the field used to make astonishing insights from otherwise complex and meaningless data. Companies like Google, Facebook and Amazon have created their whole business around it, but how can companies actually create value with it?

Business Intelligence (BI) is the collective term used to describe how companies collect, organize and convert raw data into information, which is used to improve decision-making. Since the mid 2010's, there has been a paradigm shift within the field of BI. Traditionally, the statistical models and storage solutions limited the amount and types of data that could be collected and analyzed. A new industry within BI, called Big Data, changed this. Within the field of Big Data, intelligent analysis models are used to understand and make sense of data that used to be too complex to handle. This improvement has made Big Data a powerful tool for businesses in any type of industry.

The revolution within BI has created a hype and a growing interest for Big Data. Huge software companies like Google, Facebook and Amazon are constantly pushing development of the field to reach new heights. This has left the academia behind.

There are few publications covering how Big Data is used by companies and discussing if it actually creates value.

Since the field of Big Data is relatively young, many organizations are struggling on how to begin their journey into the world of Big Data. The purpose of this study is to explore how companies make use of a Big Data solution and to see if and how it creates value. The collection of data was made with an inductive approach by interviewing nine Big Data-using companies and six Big Data experts (academic researchers and consultants). Further, secondary sources were used to compare the empirical findings with the theoretical research.

E.ON Elnät was used to exemplify the questions organizations are asking in the beginning of a Big Data implementation. The conclusion of the study is that a successful adoption of a Big Data solution will affect the whole company and bring notable organizational change. Top management support, cross-functional teams and the right competence are viewed as prerequisites in order to succeed with this change. The study also clarifies how a Big Data solution can be applied either to understand the internal business, through Process Analytics, or to gain external knowledge about customers and customer behaviors, through Customer Analytics. The empirical findings from the study shows that the ethical landscape within Big Data is blurred and difficult to navigate. Therefore the result also covers four basic aspects of an ethics strategy.

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