Chapter 3
Crowd Shaping: A Morphological Innovation

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ABSTRACT

Welcome in today’s business where change is the only constant. The companies continue to invent new products and technologies. The innovative and improved technologies transform the industries and companies and change lives. But it involves so many challenges and difficulties. Still they are pursuing for better products to cater the future needs of customers. At IBM Smarter Cities Technology Center, a team of engineers was working on restructuring the city road system by using the mobile phone data. Almost 2.5 billion call records from five million mobile users in Ivory Coast were used to give a final touch to this operation. The data was used to improve the public transport service in the city. Once the suggestions are executed, the Ivory Coast would be only city to witness the world’s first ‘Crowd shaped’ road system. A road system wisely and beautifully re-engineered with the help of information collected through the data of its commuters. In the chapter we will try to know what is crowd shaping and how is it affecting the life of a retail shopper in this technical savvy world?

CROWD SHAPING: AN INTRODUCTION

At the IBM Smarter Cities Technology Centre in Dublin, a team of engineers were working on restructuring the city road system by using the mobile phone data. Almost 2.5 billion call records from five million mobile users in Ivory Coast were
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used to give a final touch to this operation. (The personal details of the data were not revealed but breaching of privacy issues was raised in later part of the operation). The data was used to improve the public transport services in the city.

“The data provide us some of the very useful information like the way people roam around the roads in city, about the various congestion points, the traffic peaks at the beginning and at the end of the working day, the total traffic on a particular destination at a given time”. They have developed an efficient and robust computer model which is able to study the billions of data details and recognized the points where some alterations are possible to modify the bus routes and their schedules to cut average travel time of commuters by almost ten percent.

Once the suggestions are executed, the Ivory Coast would be only city to witness the world’s first ‘Crowd shaped’ road system. A road system wisely and beautifully re-engineered with the help of information collected through the data of its commuters. Now the same team is working on parallel project for the city of Dublin, using GPS data of cell phone used by commuters.

Still the real potential of crowd shaping has not been retrieved, when the data can be used to reshape the services in real - time. So far past data has been accessed and researched to make some modification. But in 30 years of span we will have the system that will be able to process billions of GPS mobile data as received and amend the traffic routes and schedules on a minute - to minute basis. Also, the others services will be benefitted. Crowd shaped medical facilities, crowd shaped police patrolling, crowd shaped manufacturing products and crowd shaped retailing services. That stage of crowd shaping would bring the revolutionary benefits for the people in real.

The in-store technology enables the shoppers to notice crowd shaped advertising on digital screens where the shoppers will be able to find precisely his choice of t - shirt with just one thought and it will be clicked on screens showing the exact location and other details of the product. You can crowd shape the in - store music or music at a party aligned automatically with the playlist of your smart phone.

THE EVOLUTION OF CROWDSHAPING

The traditional marketing and product development strategies are based on the information extracted from a data retrieved from a crowd of people or customers since last so many years. The legacy is going on and it is still considered the best way to improve the products and services. But the methods of acquiring the data have been transformed. Big Data, Cloud Computing, The Internet of Things, Real Time Data, and the various disruptive technologies have enabled us for tailor made future where we would be able to mold the required technology and product as our
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