

Mining value in the digital data dump (BeebCamp)

 blogs.lse.ac.uk/polis/2009/11/27/mining-value-in-the-digital-data-dump/

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The Internet is full of rubbish, but could it be a goldmine? At [BeebCamp](#) Chris Thorpe from The Guardian is asking whether we can make the vast amounts of data that we generate and that goes into the digital equivalent of the cutting room floor.

beebcamp

And Chris even creates his own rubbish. So when he did a sponsored walk he hooked himself up to a webpage so people could follow his progress. When someone responded online it made the whole enterprise even more worthwhile.

What other ways are there that we can use data or create data flows that appear initially to be relatively worthless?

What about the stream of traffic data that most websites generate? why not make them visible so that people can track attention trends? software could put that traffic into word clouds, for example, to show what people are thinking.

[Information Is Beautiful – Dave McCandless](#) is one example of this idea.

Here's another possible source of interesting data that currently disappears: What happens to old Tweets?

You only have to think about the amount of data that any newsroom generates that goes unused to see where this could go in terms of finding new ways to tell stories and fresh formats to cover issues or events.

But of course to get data you often need the sources to be more open. Over to you government. Can you make all the facts and figures available in a way that people can take it and use it?

The long term aim at The Guardian, says Chris, is to lower the barrier between journalists and readers. Can you leverage the expertise in the audience to exploit this material? Can you make sure that the stuff that your newsroom produces is made available for extended story-telling with the reader?

And how do you make money out of it? Chris gives the example of a car loans company that will pay for car reviews from a newspaper and will also be interested in how readers respond online.

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