



The Billion Dollar Paperclip: Think Smarter about Your Data

Gregory Short

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Gregory Short, who founded two revolutionary market research companies, offers readers a “behind the curtain” look at the importance of data in a company. The book’s unusual title is derived from the notion that even a simple paperclip depends on multiple complex processes, products, and services for it to be manufactured and sold. Thus, “a simple paperclip represents a billion-dollar ecosystem,” writes the author. And behind all of that is data.

The real challenge, according to Short, is the fact that most company managers view data in isolation rather than in context. In fact, Short believes the typical research conducted by firms on behalf of companies—mainly qualitative research, quantitative research, and predictive analysis—falls short. Instead, contextual analytics, which Short calls “the largest opportunity in decades to expand the total market research industry,” would provide much needed insightful and actionable intelligence.

The Billion Dollar Paperclip is more a position statement on the contemporary issue of contextual analytics than a how-to guide for implementation. Short writes with authority and passion, citing examples of companies whose access to “big data” alone was not a solution; rather, it was each company’s ability to learn lessons and gain insight from the context of that data.

Short’s book is likely to turn the generally accepted principles of market research upside down while opening managers’ eyes to the reality of the new and powerful world of contextual data. Wise and informative, *The Billion Dollar Paperclip* is a smartly insightful book.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (Summer 2014)

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