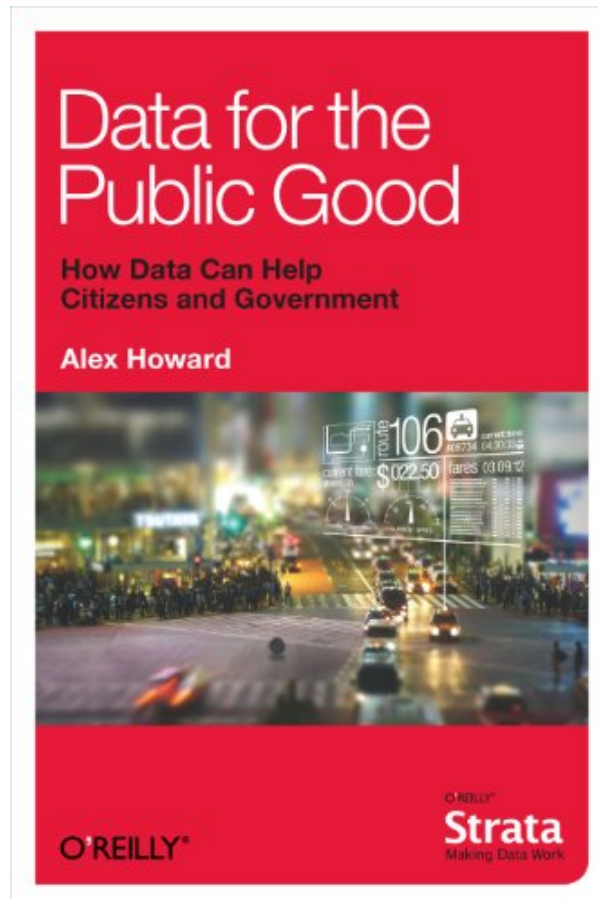


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As we move into an era of unprecedented volumes of data and computing power, the benefits aren't for business alone. Data can help citizens access government, hold it accountable and build new services to help themselves.

Simply making data available is not sufficient. The use of data for the public good is being driven by a distributed community of media, nonprofits, academics and civic advocates.

This report from O'Reilly Radar highlights the principles of data in the public good, and surveys areas where data is already being used to great effect, covering:

- Consumer finance
  - Transit data
  - Government transparency
  - Data journalism
  - Aid and development
  - Crisis and emergency response
  - Healthcare
- 
- Published on: 2012-02-21
  - Released on: 2012-02-21
  - Format: Kindle eBook

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Breathless prose, but for something meaty, look elsewhere

By K. Luangkesorn

The author is effusive in his praise for recent initiatives in the U.S. to make data accessible in usable form, and the entrepreneurs that take advantage of it. But the form of the review is lots of breadth, but little depth. In a web page form, the fact that most of this book was references to experiences of others is fine, because there are inline links to allow for readers to dive in. However, in book form, I think this would have benefited greatly by the author expanding on the points he wants to make and recognize that someone who is reading is probably not interested in following up on the links, but wants the author's insight and contribution to the material.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Good introduction to the challenges and potential of open data

By Erik Gfesser

Similar to another recently published O'Reilly Strata series text on Big Data, "Designing Great Data Products: Inside the Drivetrain Approach, a Four-step Process for Building Data Products", in the sense that

it is very succinct, in this case providing focus on data for a specific purpose, rather than solely focusing on Big Data like the other series entries I have read recently, "Big Data Now: Current Perspectives from O'Reilly Radar" and "Planning for Big Data: A CIO's Handbook to the Changing Data Landscape", this quick read is expected to be a welcome addition to the reading list of anyone beginning their investigation of government data being made available to the public (otherwise known as "open data").

After discussing the case for open data and the potential that it has for public good, Howard walks the reader through several examples of how open data is currently being used, and then addresses trends demanding special attention in this space. As a consultant who has worked for both public and private sector clients, including pro bono work for another consulting firm which provides services around open data, I especially appreciate the outline of four areas that support the investment in this space that the author shares from John Tolva, the chief technology officer for Chicago, which includes trust, accountability of the work force, business building, and urban analytics, as well as the sharing of four trends that include civic network effects, hybridized data models, personal data ownership, and smart disclosure.

And the closing thought of the author speaks volumes: "The exabyte age will bring with it the twin challenges of information overload and overconsumption, both of which will require organizations of all sizes to use the emerging toolboxes for filtering, analysis and action. To create public good from public goods - the public sector data that governments collect, the private sector data that is being collected and the social data that we generate ourselves - we will need to collectively forge new compacts that honor existing laws and visionary agreements that enable the new data science to put the data to work."

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

A useful resource

By Michael

Data is good. More data is better?

This slim (39 pages) booklet is a great little resource if, for nothing else, it is a mine of just about everything you could want about using data to improve public administration.

If you have half an interest in making the world a better place then grab this booklet and follow the leads it provides that interest you.

At 39 pages you can't expect an in depth analysis of pro's and con's of information as the panacea for the woes of 21st century government. Personally I think that the authors are a little too optimistic about the redeeming powers of open information, but given it is 39 pages and free (on Kindle) there isn't too much to complain about this handy resource.

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