Datasprints as a method for Controversy Mapping

Jensen, Torben Elgaard; Munk, Anders Kristian; Bach, Daniel; Israelsson, Pelle

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DATASPRINTS AS A METHOD FOR CONTROVERSY MAPPING

Torben Elgaard Jensen, Professor in Techno-Anthropology
Anders Kristian Munk, Associate Professor in Techno-Anthropology, Director of TANTab
Daniel Bach, Techno-Anthropology Master’s student
Pelle Annfeldt Islaalsson, Techno-Anthropology Master’s student

INTRODUCTION
A datasprint is an intensive 3-5 day workshop that brings together humanistic researchers, data experts, and stakeholders from a selected field. Together, the participants visualize and analyse a collection of data sets, which have been prepared before the datasprint.

In the beginning of a datasprint, stakeholders present their understandings and views of the field in question. Following this, the workshop participants explore how the prepared data may shed new light on the field.

The final products of a datasprint are prototypes of analyses or digital products that forms the basis for future collaboration between the partners.

Since 2015, DIGHUMLAB has sponsored a special interest group in controversy mapping. Datasprints have proved to be a very productive format for controversy mapping and for creating dialogue and joint projects between humanistic researchers and external collaborators.

METHOD
Datasprints are about doing things together. Fast.

STEP 0 - PREPARE THE SPRINT
Invite issue experts, data scientists, humanistic researchers to a joint workshop. Harvest and prepare a collection of data sets.

STEP 1 - GRASP THE ISSUES
Issue experts present their insights into the field and its current problems.

STEP 2 - EXPLORE THE DATA TOGETHER
Visualize, explore and discuss what questions can be asked of the data.

STEP 3 - FEEDBACK AND ITERATE
Present preliminary results and solicit feedback from selected issue experts.

STEP 4 - BUILD PROTOTYPES
Present prototypes of analyses or digital products to all participants.

STEP 5 - DEVELOP FUTURE COLLABORATIONS
Create contacts and plan joint development work.

Data sprints bring people with different resources together to create a data centered project prototype in a short amount of time. So called “issue experts” provide domain specific expertise and are assisted by digital methods researchers, who provide tool-specific knowledge in creating different visualisations of digital data.

Working together offers researchers a space where new questions can be asked and new understandings can arise.

REFERENCES
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