

By Paul Belleflamme, 31 May 2016

"Big Data in the Platform Economy" - A Digest of the Conference



On May 13, 2016, the editors of IPdigIT organized a one-day conference to study the growing importance of '**Big data in the platform economy**'. To this end, they assembled a panel of experts from several disciplines: applied mathematics, engineering, economics, management, policy-making, and law. (You can find the general description of the conference [here](#)). The conference, held in the premises of the [Microsoft Innovation Center in Brussels](#) (whose efficient and kind support is gratefully acknowledged) was a real success, according to the feedback we received from numerous participants.

In this post, we give you a short summary of the various presentations made during the day; we also give you access to the speakers' slides.

Session 1. Big data, engineers, and analysts

The aim of the first session was to address the following questions: *What is Big Data? What are the data analytics tools? What are the risks?*

1. [Gautier Krings](#) (Chief Scientist at [Real Impact Analytics](#) and invited lecturer at UCLouvain) described the multiple facets of big data, from the technical challenges to the practical

applications ([Slides](#)).

2. [Rudy Van Hoe](#) (Solution Sales Manager at Microsoft) presented Microsoft's advanced analytics solutions, and told us that even cows can generate useful big data once they are properly connected! ([Slides](#))

3. [Julien Hendrickx](#) (Assistant Professor and chair of the [Department of Mathematical Engineering](#) at UCLouvain) explained that even 'safe-looking' datasets may lead to privacy risks when they are combined. ([Slides](#))



Gautier KRINGS

Rudy VAN HOE

Julien HENDRICKX

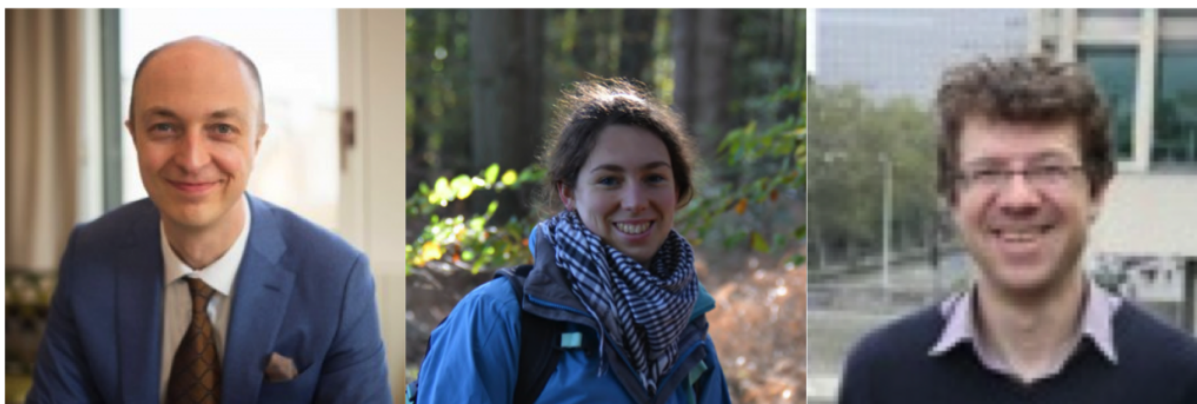
Session 2. Big data, economists, and managers

In this second session, the speakers addressed the following questions: *How, and to what purpose, do organizations exploit big data?*

4. [Pierre-Nicolas Schwab](#) (Big Data / CRM manager at [RTBF](#), researcher at [Solvay Business School](#), and the founder of [IntoTheMinds](#)) described the trends and challenges of the big data business, with a focus on marketing applications. You can view his Prezi presentation [here](#).

5. [Wouter Vergote](#) (Associate Professor in Economics at [University Saint-Louis, Brussels](#)) explained how big data can facilitate differential pricing and examined the pros and cons for consumers. ([Slides](#))

6. [Adeline Decuyper](#) (Post-doctoral fellow in Geography at [CORE](#), UCLouvain) showed how mobile phone data can support development programs; for instance, mobile phone data can help improve food security in Africa. ([Slides](#))



Pierre-Nicolas SCHWAB

Adeline DECUYPER

Wouter VERGOTE

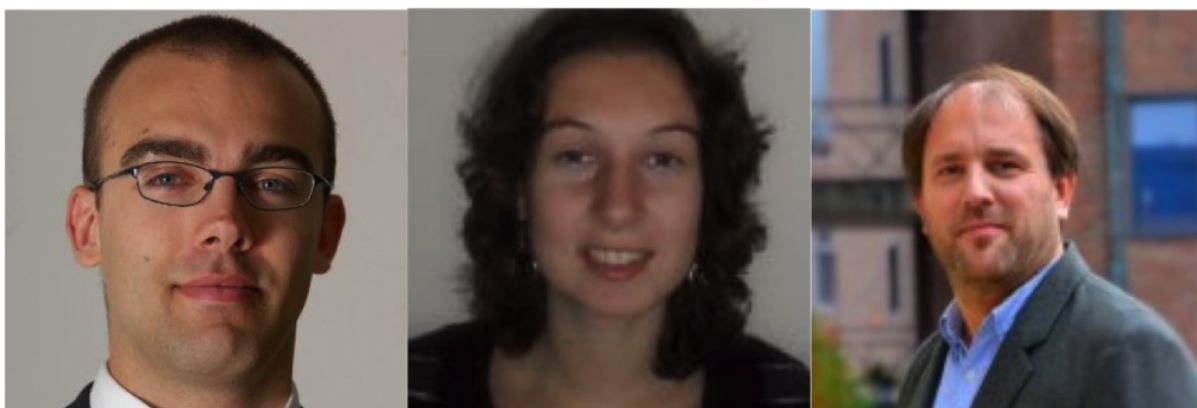
Session 3. Big data and competition lawyers

We started the afternoon with a session examining the *role for personal data and big data in the regulation by competition law*.

7. [Cyril Ritter](#) (Lawyer for the European Commission’s [DG Competition](#)) discussed the implications of big data for competition policy. He argued that the issue is not so much about data per se but about how data is used.

8. [Inge Graef](#) (PhD fellow at [CITIP](#), KULeuven) pursued on the topic of data and competition law. She examined whether a ‘market for data’ should be defined and, if yes, how. ([Slides](#))

9. [Alexandre de Stree](#) (Professor of European law at the [University of Namur](#), and director of [CRIDS](#) and [CERRE](#)) argued that competition policy must be a complement, not a substitute, for consumer and privacy protection. ([Slides](#))



Cyril RITTER

Inge GRAEF

Alexandre DE STEEL

Session 4 - Big data and regulators

The final session aimed to address the following question: *Is there a need to adjust intellectual property and data protection rules in the era of big Data?*

10. [Benoît Michaux](#) (Partner with [Hoyng Rokh Monegier](#), associate professor of IP law at the [University of Namur](#) and a [Cepani](#) arbitrator for domain-name disputes) made the connection between big data and copyright and database protection, talking about the scope of and the exceptions to these rights.

11. [Christian D’Cunha](#) (Assistant to the [EDPS](#), European Data Protection Supervisor) presented and discussed the EU General Data Protection Regulation. ([Slides](#))



Benoît MICHAUX



Christian D’CUNHA