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THE TWO-SECOND ADVANTAGE

How We Succeed by Anticipating the Future – Just Enough

VIVEK RANADIVE and KEVIN MANEY

VIVEK RANADIVE is founder and CEO of TIBCO Software Inc., a company developing software which enables organizations to become event-driven. He is also the co-owner and vice chairman of the Golden State Warriors NBA franchise. Mr. Ranadive is the author of *The Power of Now* and *The Power to Predict*. He is a graduate of MIT and Harvard Business School.

KEVIN MANEY is editorial director at VSA Partners, a branding company. He has been a contributor to *Fortune*, *Fast Company* and *The Atlantic* and was a technology writer at *USA Today* for more than twenty years. He is the author of *Trade-Off* and *The Maverick and His Machine* and co-author of *Making the World Work Better*. Mr. Maney is a graduate of Rutgers University.

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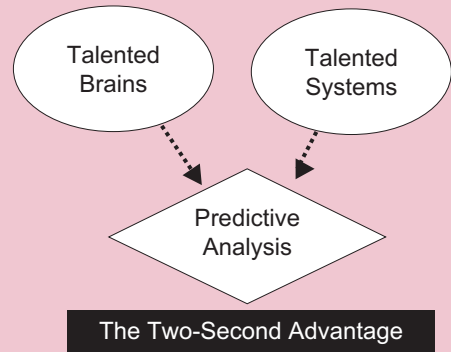
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MAIN IDEA

Hockey legend Wayne Gretzky famously said he doesn't skate to where the puck is now – he skates to where it's going to be in the future and waits for it there. Commentators noted it was as if Wayne Gretzky was two seconds ahead of everyone else and that was enough of an advantage for Gretzky to become an ice hockey superstar and for him to lead the Edmonton Oilers to four Stanley Cup Championships. Like Gretzky, the most successful people in every field make high quality and accurate predictions just a little bit faster than everyone else. They anticipate what's going to happen and act accordingly.

As it turns out, neuroscience and technology are today combining to make it possible for more accurate predictions to be made in many fields. The science of predictive analysis is becoming better established and applied. When these enhanced capabilities are combined with RFID sensors and reams of data which get generated by information technology, businesses are starting to have access to two-second-advantage technology.

Forget about trying to build a computer that thinks like the human brain. That's yesterday's news. Instead, the challenge of the future is to become better at predictive analysis through a blend of talented brains and talented systems. If you can combine the right information at the right time and in the right context just far enough ahead, you have all the ingredients for success.



“Two-second-advantage technology is arriving. These event-driven systems can form models by analyzing massive amounts of data, but they don't rely on accessing all that data all the time. Borrowing from the way the human brain works, these systems are predictive – they take in real-time events, predict what's about to happen, and take action or send a notification without human interaction. They operate on the idea that a little bit of the right information ahead of time is more valuable than piles of information too late. The trend toward talented systems will continue and gain strength – because it has to.”

– Vivek Ranadive and Kevin Maney

Talented Brains Pages 2 - 3

The human brain is a predictive machine par excellence. Most highly successful people are really good at making extremely accurate predictions about what will happen next and use this to their advantage. Enterprises need to do something similar – develop real-time systems which can spot a series of unfolding events, anticipate what's about to happen next and then initiate action on that basis. It's time to build Gretzky's brain into technology.

Talented Systems Pages 4 - 6

The challenge of the immediate future is to build software systems which function like a highly talented human brain. The next frontier in artificial intelligence is to develop a talented and predictive machine which mirrors the development path superstar performers follow. The prescription on how to achieve this is known: Give the software the equivalent of ten thousand hours of deliberate practice, then allow the software to use that massive store of information to build an efficient model which can then be used to make short-term predictions about the world it will encounter in the immediate future. The hard part is how to make this happen in a way which moves systems toward Enterprise 3.0.

Predictive Analysis Pages 7 - 8

Technology which can deliver a two-second advantage to enterprises and organizations is already starting to arrive. Event-driven systems are becoming more sophisticated and more predictive. They don't exactly operate the way the human brain does but they are getting progressively better at making predictions. Smart leaders are planning ways to apply these capabilities in clever ways. Over the next decade, almost all organizations will move to take advantage of predictive analysis to derive a two-second advantage. To not do so would be the equivalent of handing a competitor a strong and vibrant competitive advantage.

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