Structured Data Meets News

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Abstract

The news ecosystem is going through profound changes that will have long-lasting impact on our civic society. One of the key challenges in the news ecosystem is how to encourage content consumption that will bring informational values to the users instead of purely consuming users' attention via any (i.e., unhealthy) means necessary. As part of the talk, I will describe how structured data can play an important role in helping users consume content in a more healthy way and present my long term vision on how our research community can contribute to this important cause. In the rest of the talk, I will describe various technical efforts, within the Structured Data Research Group at Google AI and in partnership with many product teams, on improving news consumption at Google. One specific example is the question and answering summarization of news articles, where we combine structured data, machine learning, and natural language processing techniques to help users understand news articles quickly.

Short Bio:
Cong Yu is a research scientist and manager at Google Research in New York City and leads the Structured Data Research Group. The group's mission is to understand and leverage structured data on the Web to enhance user experience for Google products and has been responsible for several impactful products such as Web Tables, Structured Snippets, and Fact Checking at Google. Currently, his group focuses on technical research for news and has been partnering with journalists and policy advisors to combat online misinformation and polarization and to improve news consumption. His research interests are structured data exploration and mining, computational journalism, machine learning, natural language processing, and scalable data analysis. He was a keynote speaker for VLDB 2019 and twice served as an industrial program co-chair for VLDB (2014 and 2018). Outside of Google, he periodically teaches at NYU Courant's Department of Computer Science. Before Google, Cong was a Research Scientist at Yahoo! Research, also in NYC. He has a PhD from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, advised by Prof. H.V. Jagadish.