



Published on *Informatiebeheer* (<https://www.labyrinth.rienkjonker.nl>)

[Home](#) > On the value of data

On the value of data

Titel	On the value of data
Publicatietype	Divers
Publicatiejaar	1990
Auteurs	Hopper, G. ^[1]
Uitgave	Byte 15th Anniversary Summit
Publicatiedatum	09/1990
Uitgever	McGraw Hill
Taal	EN
RefMan	9880
Samenvatting	Een treffende korte analyse van Grace Hopper ^[2] over het achterblijven van de juiste inschatting van de waarde van informatie. A remarkable observation made by Grace Hopper in 1990 about the distracting focus on hardware and software instead of a necessary focus on the value of data.
Aantekeningen	Over Grace Hopper • Wikipedia (EN) ^[3] • Zoeken via Google ^[4]
Citation Key	ref_9880

Information is a [conceptual labyrinth](#) and at the same time a [hyperobject](#)

[\[Home\]](#) [\[Nieuws via RSS\]](#) [\[Colofon\]](#) [\[Zoeken\]](#)

Grace Hopper:

On the Value of Data

Since 1943, when the first computers appeared, we've gone after hardware. We've gone after faster hardware. Everyone is worried about hardware. Along about '51, '52, John Mauchley came out with that first short code, and then came FORTRAN, then came COBOL, and we started the software world, and we developed the languages, and the user-friendly stuff, and everything. Nobody has yet looked at the data.

There are clearly two kinds of applications—two major classes of applications. The big scientific/engineering research, which is largely mathematical in nature, [and] then there is the large data-processing world, which is largely arithmetic in nature. So, we never really designed computers for either world, because we wound up building von Neumann computers. And until we look at the data, we will not come up with a new articulation.

I've been thinking about data flow and the different kinds of data flow. Now, sometimes data flows like rivers, sometimes it flows like that lava out in

Hawaii, sometimes it's like a marching company of marines: organized, disciplined. [And] sometimes it's more like the flow over the wing of an airplane, which gives the lift and has the turbulence to fly, too. We've never looked at the data, how it arises and how it flows.

I think as we build these systems to compute, we'll become more aware of the data flow and more aware of types of data. For instance, the scientific/engineering field doesn't give a hoot about an alphabetic character. It is largely binary and floating. In data processing, it's integers and add, subtract, multiply, and divide: only arithmetic and comparisons of those alpha-decimal characters.

We haven't looked at the amount of work being done on data. Long ago, in the earliest computers, we discovered that you could always go faster if you had more space, more storage. We've never looked at the value of the data, the value of an education.

Well, some of the stuff going through the computer is a heck of a lot more valuable to us than the other stuff is.

Nobody has even gotten a little bit philosophical about the value of information: All information is good; put it in the computer and run it over the lines.

We need to look at the stuff and what can we afford to lose, what can't we afford to lose. Part of it is leading us toward the future. Part of it's just a relic of the past, and so on. With just a narrow look, we've taken these lovely computers, faster transistors, everything under the sun, better language, more software—pile it in. We never think of what we're doing it on.

I think until organizations begin to look at the information, as long as they look only at the computers and telephone lines that they control, they're not doing their job. They're not looking at the information itself. They're not looking at the value of the information. They're not looking at who uses it and why, the kind of information, what it does, where it comes from. The value is a big thing we've never looked at.

Editor's note:

See biography, page 257.

[5]

Share / Save

[6]



Bron-URL: <https://www.labyrinth.rienkjonker.nl/content/value-data>

Links

[1] <https://www.labyrinth.rienkjonker.nl/biblio?f%5Bauthor%5D=429> [2] http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grace_Hopper [3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_is_a_conceptual_labyrinth_and_at_the_same_time_a_hyperobject

[Home] [Nieuws via RSS] [Colofon] [Zoeken]

<https://www.labyrinth.rienkjonker.nl/content/value-information> [6]

<https://www.addtoany.com/share#url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.labyrinth.rienkjonker.nl%2Fcontent%2Fvalue-data&title=On%20the%20value%20of%20data>

Information is a [conceptual labyrinth](#) and at the same time a [hyperobject](#)

[\[Home\]](#) [\[Nieuws via RSS\]](#) [\[Colofon\]](#) [\[Zoeken\]](#)