Microsoft Identifies Strategic Opportunities for Growth

Introduction

Microsoft’s Corporate Strategy Office wanted to evolve and expand upon their existing process for identifying the world’s most disruptive startup companies. In addition to its traditional research and relationship-based startup scouting, Microsoft sought a new approach for a truly data-driven and unbiased analysis of the competitive landscape to identify opportunities for investment and growth.

The tech giant leveraged NetBase Quid to analyze news and social media, consumer forums, company financial and investment data and patent filings to identify and target disruptive and high potential startups in key business segments to ensure the timeliest startup identification. The key objectives of the project were to:

- **Surface the most disruptive startups as early as possible**
- **Identify high-potential startups within priority business lines**
- **Initiate a relationship before the competition and or before a relationship becomes extremely costly/unaffordable**

**Identifying opportunities for growth was no small task**

Microsoft needed a methodology to evaluate emerging companies across several key segments.

To support this analysis, Microsoft leveraged the NetBase Quid consumer and market intelligence platform to identify and rank startups based on potential for ‘inflection’, a quantifiable criterion developed and refined through continuous intelligence.
To narrow down the list of potential opportunities, Microsoft evaluated each company against 5 key criteria across distinct data sources including:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>NetBase Quid Data Source</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Media coverage</td>
<td>Public presence across news and media</td>
<td>News</td>
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<td>Financial interest</td>
<td>Funding and investor interest</td>
<td>Companies</td>
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<td>Technical defensibility</td>
<td>Strength of companies’ IP assets</td>
<td>Patents</td>
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<td>Proliferation potential</td>
<td>Ability to gain consumers</td>
<td>Forums</td>
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<td>Proprietary metrics</td>
<td>Contextualize each company against the market landscape</td>
<td>Social media</td>
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**Zeroing in on strategic investments**

Using this process, the company developed an aerial view of the relevant startup landscape encompassing Microsoft’s priority business areas. Advanced Boolean queries and keyword amplification further refined their search, enabling the tech giant to identify relevant companies from NetBase Quid’s centrally indexed corpus of company data, which tracks over 3 million private and public companies, globally.

Using AI-enabled continuous intelligence, Microsoft was able to identify other relevant and adjacent companies based on commonalities in public facing descriptions/announcements, further filtering the list of potential investment, acquisition or partnership possibilities.

While the list of strategic investments, partnerships and acquisitions is confidential, the software giant has no doubt created a roadmap to identify innovative companies and exciting new technology to support its expansion in its traditional markets and open new markets for growth.
NetBase Quid is the next generation consumer and market intelligence platform, delivering contextual insights to reveal business trends, connect with consumers, and understand the story behind competitors and the market.

The platform uses advanced artificial intelligence to process billions of indexed resources across all forms of structured and unstructured data, empowering our brand, agency and consulting services customers to make smart, data driven decisions accurately, quickly and efficiently.


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