

Why, AI?



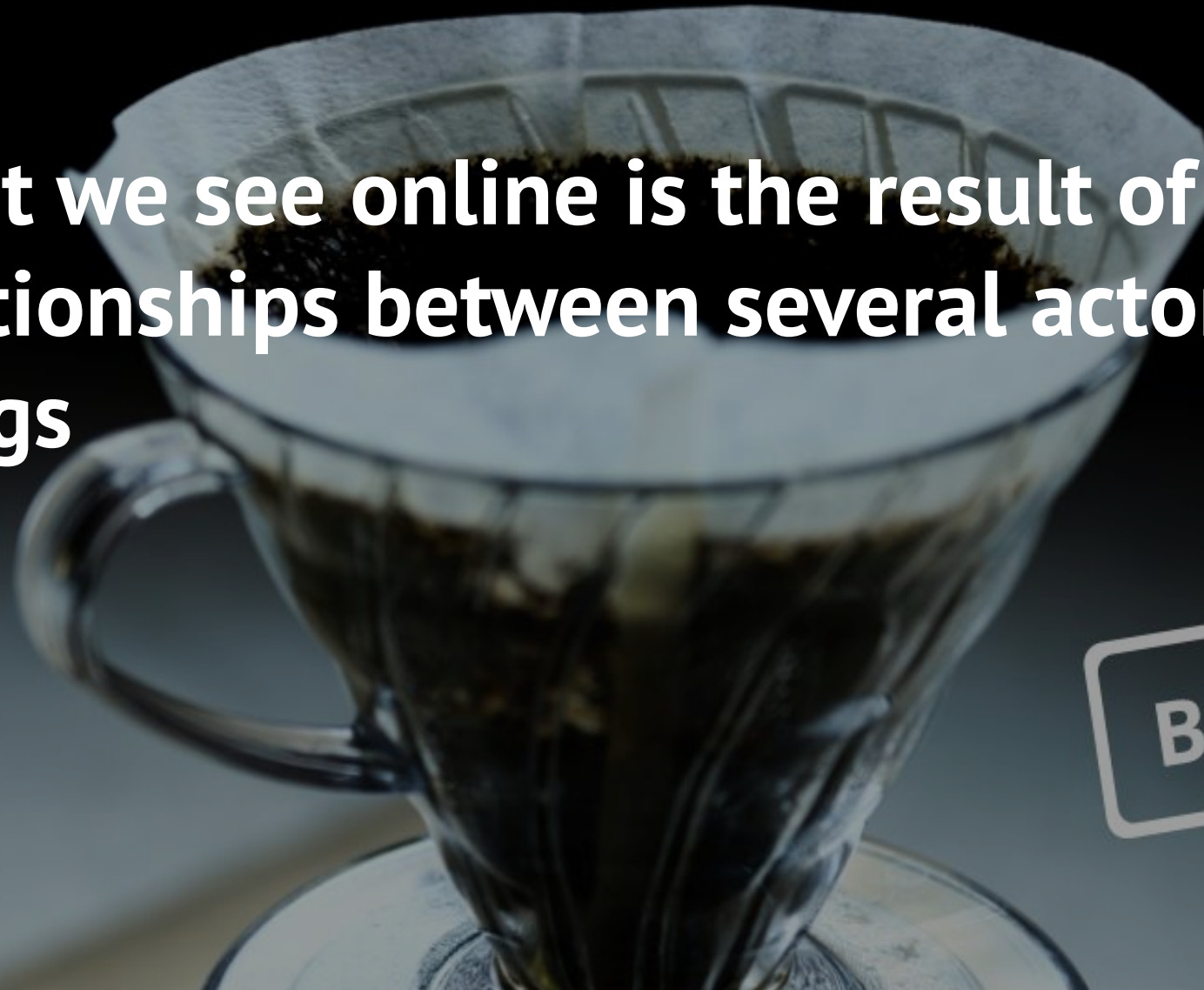
BUSTED

MYTH

A close-up photograph of a glass coffee filter filled with dark coffee grounds. The filter is placed over a glass cup, and coffee is seen dripping through the filter into the cup. The background is dark and out of focus.

AI decides what you see online.

MYTH



What we see online is the result of several relationships between several actors and things

BUSTED

MYTH

What is algorithmic visibility?

- Search engines
- Social media newsfeeds (and friends' suggestion)
- Online maps' route
- Online ads

What *isn't* algorithmic visibility?

What we know about the world *and* ourselves

Social

Identity

Individual

Myth 1: AI algorithms decide what you see online

The Unruly Algorithm

Algorithm = Tool



Myth 1: AI algorithms decide what you see online

How algorithms are controlling your life

And why you should probably pay closer attention.

By Sean Illing | @seanilling | Oct 1, 2018, 8:10am EDT

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VoxTechnology

How new technology is transforming cities and societies, from the latest apps to advances in renewable energy, computing, transportation, and more.

Algorithms are a black box.

We can see them at work in the world. We know they're shaping outcomes all around us. But most of us have no idea what they are — or how we're being influenced by them.

Algorithms are invisible pieces of code that tell a computer how to accomplish a specific task. Think of it as a recipe for a computer: An algorithm tells the computer what to do in order to produce a certain outcome. Every time you do a Google search or look at your Facebook feed or use GPS navigation in your car, you're interacting with an algorithm.

- Oppressive control
- Opacity
- 'Shaping' powers

Myth 2: AI algorithms *don't* decide what you see online

The Tame Algorithm
Algorithm = Mirror



Myth 2: AI algorithms *don't* decide what you see online

You and the Algorithm: It Takes Two to Tango

 Nick Clegg · Mar 31 · 21 min read



Imagine you're on your way home when you get a call from your partner. They tell you the fridge is empty and ask you to pick some things up on the way home. If you choose the ingredients, they'll cook dinner. So you swing by the supermarket and fill a basket with a dozen items. Of course, you only choose things you'd be happy to eat — maybe you choose pasta but not rice, tomatoes but not mushrooms. When you get home, you unpack the bag in the kitchen and your partner gets on with the cooking — deciding what meal to make, which of the ingredients to use, and in what amounts. When you sit down at the table, the dinner in front of you is the product of a joint effort, your decisions at the grocery store and your partner's in the kitchen.

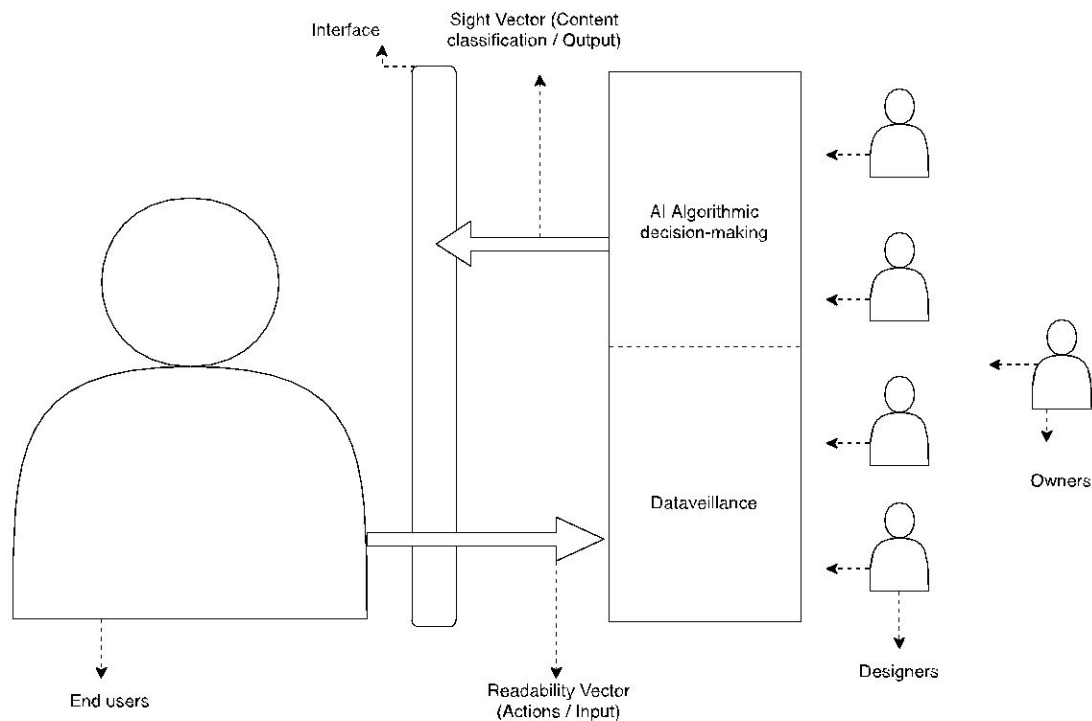
The relationship between internet users and the algorithms that present them with personalized content is surprisingly similar. Of course, no analogy is perfect and it shouldn't be taken literally. There are other people who produce the food to designing the packaging and arranging the shelves, all of whose actions impact the final meal.



Content ranking is a dynamic process between people and algorithms. On Facebook, it takes two to tango.

- Harmony
- Plays down opacity
- Empowering

Algorithmic visibility regimes as complex and multipolar emerging orders



- Complex
- Many actors, various techs
- Several points of uncertainty
- What does define what we see online?
Unequal relationships, not people nor things
- Always emerging – never fixed, much less unidirectional

Thanks!

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