



IMPROVING UPTAKE OF TEXT AND DATA MINING IN THE EU

Facts

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TDM Spotlight **The Start-Up Perspective**



Who?

Mediately – a Slovenian start-up since 2011. Its websites and apps are used by over 35,000 doctors, nurses and other medical professionals in Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Serbia and Croatia. Over half of Slovenia's doctors use it daily.

What's got these doctors so excited?

Mediately tells them everything they need to know about a prescription medicine: what it's for, the appropriate dose, how to take it, side effects and if it's covered by health insurance.

Where do Mediately find all of this information?

Mostly from the public websites of medical authorities, such as the European Medical Agency.

So doctors could just Google and get the same results?

Not so fast, Sparky! The information is publicly available but doctors searching for an answer would have to trawl through endless PDFs. Mediately makes it far easier by using their own software to

automatically extract the most important facts from the PDFs. Mediately also occasionally ask pharmaceutical companies and researchers for information.

Is that all they do?

Far from it. Once Mediately have retrieved the most critical information from a PDF, they reformat it into a machine-readable format, check it for accuracy, and translate it before finally presenting it on their websites and apps. If an organisation which provides information to Mediately changes their website or documentation, Mediately's engineers rework their own algorithms and software to keep the whole system working.

Sounds pretty useful. So what's the problem?

Copyright, copyright, copyright. Mediately's competitors in the United States can use information from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). It's released freely under a CCo license. But Mediately are in Europe, and not all countries give this information away for free. Those that do, often attach all kinds of terms and conditions. This means more



 mediately A complete database of medicines	 9 mediately employees	 35.000 users of Mediately Services	 5 EU Countries geographical cover	 10 years estimated head start that its US competitors have had
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work for Mediately, who need to verify the status of information before they use it. Questions about the legality of its work are off-putting for potential investors, and Mediately may soon have to employ a full-time lawyer – a big financial burden for a start-up.

What would make life easier for Mediately?

If European laws permitted the mining and reuse of accessible data – as American laws already do – Mediately could spend less time worrying about legal issues and more time collating the information which doctors care about.

“There is an enormous amount of quality medical information produced by public institutions in the EU. Enabling access to that data, by publishing it in open formats, without copyright restrictions, can be a huge driver of innovation for healthcare companies all over the EU. Open access to publicly funded information should be a fact, not a question.”

Blaž Triglav
CEO, Mediately

Anything else?

Yes. Swap the PDFs for data feeds. In America, the FDA has been releasing data via an open API since 2014. This lets developers freely search, mine and analyse over 3 million reports. Nothing comparable exists in Europe.

TDM BARRIERS

- ▲ Technical access to data
- ▲ Licensing and copyright
- ▲ Legal uncertainty impacts investment prospects



Mediately Team

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