

**D**ata is the building block of all knowledge. Yet while the modern world is awash with data, true insight remains elusive. In the end, data isn't valuable without experience and intuition to interpret it and act on it. Harnessing the abundance of data and turning it into insight and knowledge is a core challenge in the 21st century.

The potential rewards are significant. Businesses gain efficiency, expand customer relationships, identify new markets and boost value for investors. Customers benefit from tailored products and better services. Society will benefit as innovations revolutionize healthcare, transportation, manufacturing, media and a host of other businesses.

Optimizing data comes with challenges. The privacy debate colors every aspect of the data conversation. Regulatory tensions between government and business are growing. Threats to cybersecurity increase. With data both ubiquitous and permanent, unprecedented transparency is virtually guaranteed. Businesses need strategies, not only to seize the opportunities data presents but to prepare for any crises that may emerge. Leaders need to be data savvy to operate in this new world.

Behind many of these concerns is an apparent contradiction: data is both valuable and cheap. The right data at the right time has incalculable worth. And yet, bits and bytes can be stored, copied and transmitted for almost nothing.

This issue of the *Brunswick Review* looks at the impact of data, and communications in a complex, data-filled world.

**SUSAN GILCHRIST** – CEO, *Brunswick Group*



# The **DATA ISSUE**

**The data explosion  
has powerful implications  
for all aspects  
of business and society**





**Detailed segments (above) from the data portrait for [www.brunswickgroup.com](http://www.brunswickgroup.com) reveal the data and connections that comprise the website; the complete portrait is seen on the cover. The portrait shape (left) for [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) reflects its place at the heart of the World Wide Web**

## BRUNSWICK DATA PORTRAIT

The cover of this issue of the Brunswick Review features a “data portrait” of the website URL, [www.brunswickgroup.com](http://www.brunswickgroup.com).

The image represents the site’s core links and was created with a program that retrieves the elements that constitute the site. The data is mapped using a graph that shows each piece of information or “asset” as a node, and the links between them as lines. Like many other such portraits, the resulting shape for Brunswick’s site is a central diamond with radiating branches. The diamond indicates the very highly connected web assets – scripts that are shared across every page of content on the site – while the radials include other hyperlinks and images. More detailed segments of the portrait are pictured above.

The image was created by **MARTYN DADE-ROBERTSON**, Senior Lecturer in Architecture at Newcastle University in the northeast of England. He has a PhD in Information Architecture from Cambridge University and has published widely, including the book *The Architecture of Information*. [martyn.dade-robertson@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:martyn.dade-robertson@newcastle.ac.uk)