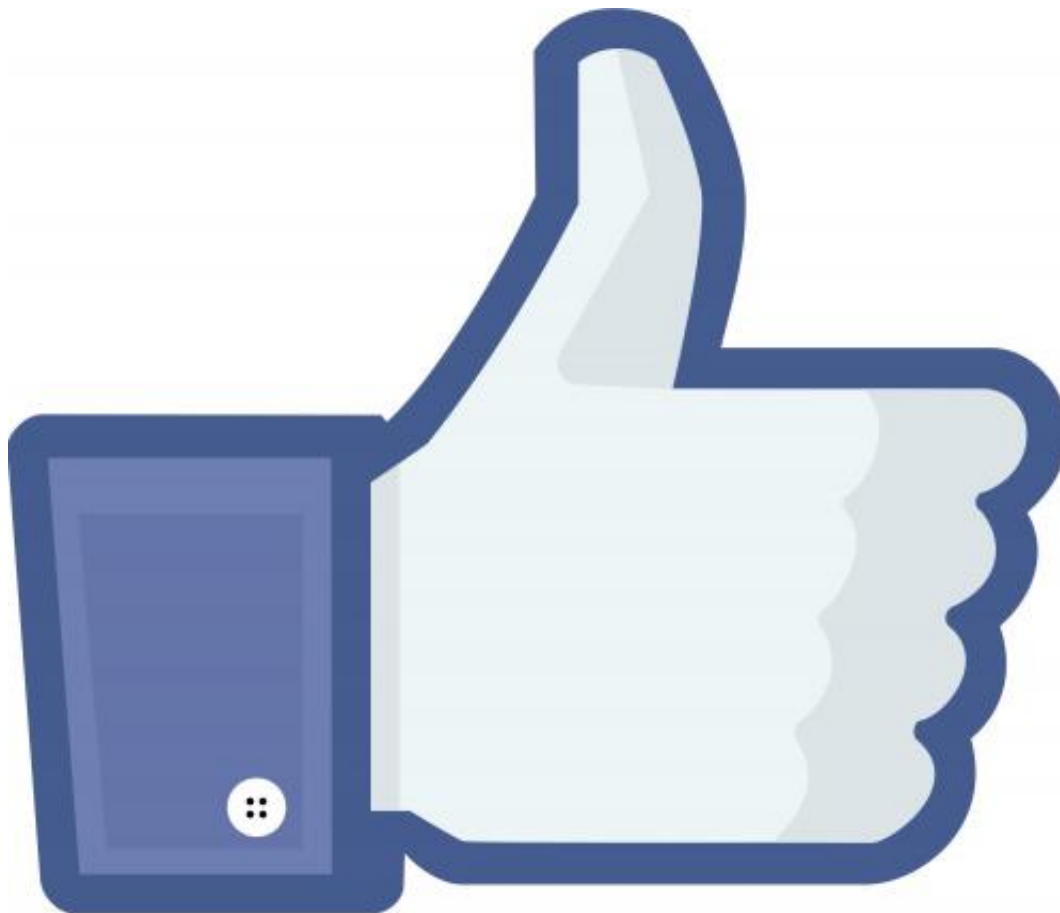# Apply Magic Sauce: What you like is fleshed out

September 7 2015, by Nancy Owano

The Psychometrics Center of the University of Cambridge has a message: A Prediction API by Apply Magic Sauce. It can translate a

digital footprint into a detailed psychological profile. The AMS could be used to predict psycho-demographic traits of a user based on digital footprints. Translation: You can be explained based on what you like on Facebook. "It's not magic, and it's not psychic," said *The Washington Post*. It's a tool that researchers can use and it is built from personality tests and social media profiles.

Psychological research was performed to produce the Apply Magic Sauce, a prediction engine assembled by researchers at the University of Cambridge Psychometrics Center. Their models are based on over 6 million social media profiles and scores on psychometric assessments. They said this is "by far the largest database of its kind in history."

The dataset merits added details: The model is based on the myPersonality dataset of over 6 million users published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (Kosinski, Stillwell & Graepel, 2013). They said they are continually updating it, and "our model's accuracy is even higher than previously reported."

API currently accepts Facebook LikeIDs, "but we are developing predictive models using other input signals too. LikeIDs are a convenient language to use in the digital world."

Predictive models? How would these be used in the real world? The site reveals likely applications:

"We help you rapidly assess and give feedback to job applicants," said the site.

(Interestingly, intheblack.com, a site for information on accounting, business and finance, reported earlier this year that according to the Hiring Report: The State of Hiring in Australia 2015, 54 percent of senior executives valued psychometric testing as part of the recruitment

process and 40 per cent said they saw more psychometric testing being used compared with two years ago. The site said this may be due to Big Data "taking aptitude and behavioral assessment to a whole new level." Businesses are starting to use a battery of "sophisticated talent analytics," said the site, tailored to their needs by assessment companies.)

For general business efforts to gain customers, said the Apply Magic Sauce team, "we enable instant psychological assessment of your users based on their online behavior."

Their APIs can "tailor your messaging to the individuals and psycho-demographic groups with whom you communicate." and helping "mould your product and business around the distinguishing attributes of your user community." Another plus, they said, is the ability to use the API and test delivery platform "to collect the insights you need without invading users' privacy and without having to handle sensitive personal data."

For research, "Avoid asking unnecessary questions. Personality questionnaires take time for participants to complete. Using our API allows you to collect information on psychological characteristics without inconveniencing your participants. This is especially important for large online studies."

The Apply Magic Sauce invites visitors to login with Facebook to submit Facebook Likes to its prediction engine and view output of the API.

The Psychometrics Center focuses on psychological, occupational, clinical and educational assessment.

  More information: applymagicsauce.com/you.html

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