

the numerati are transforming...

medicine

The same algorithms originally used to combat e-mail spam by predicting its mutations are now being used to predict the mutations of the HIV virus.

safety

The Numerati are now using surveillance methods perfected in Las Vegas casinos—methods designed to pinpoint known cheaters, crooks, and card-counters—to spot potential terrorists.

shopping

By analyzing the data they gather about us, retailers are learning how to lavish big spenders with special attention and nudge cheapskates toward the door...

consumer power

... but vigilant Numerati are also working on behalf of the consumer, providing Web surfers with the tools to amass their own data—and to sell it to advertisers rather than blindly give it away.

health care

Intel is measuring the time it takes a person to recognize a familiar voice on the phone; if the lapse lengthens, it could point to the onset of Alzheimer's. And by studying old sitcoms, researchers can see that Michael J. Fox was shortening his stride a decade before his diagnosis of Parkinson's. Now they're hooking up monitors and even "magic carpets" to pick up the same telltale signs in thousands of homes.

politics

Political Numerati are placing us into new types of tribes according to our values, studying and targeting us with increasingly customized come-ons. And they're discovering all sorts of correlations—cat owners are more likely to be Democrats; Republicans trend towards dogs.

sex

By creating algorithmic profiles of us and lining up mathematical correlations with potential mates, dating sites like Chemistry.com are giving neighborhood matchmakers a run for their money. Their next step is to scrutinize our behavior, movements and social networks—mapping out the DNA of our mating rituals.

work

Researchers at Carnegie Mellon are studying the patterns of office e-mail to spot signs of subversive networks taking shape within a company, or to spot outliers—who might be ready to jump ship, or even spill trade secrets. A research team at IBM is digging through colleagues' e-mails, resumes, and IMs to build mathematical profiles of 50,000 workers. They'll be able to calculate not only how best to deploy the workers, but also how much each of them adds to the bottom line.

... everything.