



Abstract

The field of direct marketing is constantly searching for new data mining techniques in order to analyze the increasing available amount of data. Self-organizing maps (SOM) have been widely applied and discussed in the literature, since they give the possibility to reduce the complexity of a high dimensional attribute space while providing a powerful visual exploration facility. Combined with clustering techniques and the extraction of the so-called salient dimensions, it is possible for a direct marketer to gain a high level insight about a dataset of prospects. In this presentation, a SOM-based profile generator is proposed, consisting of a generic method leading to value-adding and business-oriented profiles for targeting individuals with predefined characteristics.

Moreover, the proposed method is applied in detail to a concrete case study from the concert industry. The performance of the method is then illustrated and discussed. In addition, an approach giving the possibility to incorporate business knowledge in order to guide the clustering algorithm is presented and illustrated with two cases: one from the ticketing sector and one from the banking sector.