

Macon Raine, Inc.

Meditations on Intent Data

Marc Aurelius, 2026

maconRAINE

Marc Aurelius writes on the *decrapification of complex systems*.

This is his second meditation.

Meditations on Intent Data

Too long have we chased the phantom of perfect knowledge, the lie that we can predict the moment a buyer will move.

Intent data, in the hands of the undisciplined, is noise.

In the right hands, it is a signal.

Meditations on Intent Data offers ideas for acting smarter. *Intentionally.*

These are your meditations.

They offer focus.

Read one, then act.

Verify. Identify the noise.

Read another. Ignore the noise.

You are not here to chase squirrels.

On the Promise of Intent

You were told the signal would arrive before the buyer raised their hand.

That you would know who was ready before they knew themselves.

A lie.

Intent data does not predict. It observes.

The difference matters.



On Signal and Noise

A prospect visited your competitor's pricing page.

They also visited fifty other sites.

You received an alert.

They called it a signal.

It wasn't.



On Timing

The signal arrived. The sales team celebrated.

Three months later, nothing.

This is the nature of things.

Intent is not readiness.

Attention is not interest.

A click is not a decision.



On Vendor Promises

"We track 10,000 topics across 4 million domains."

You nodded.

You signed the contract.

You received 847 alerts in the first week.

What is real? What is an illusion?



On Acting Too Soon

You reached out because the data told you to.

Who are you?

Why are you calling me?

Intent without context is intrusion.



On Acting Too Late

The signal fired two weeks ago.

You added them to a nurture sequence.

They signed with your competitor yesterday.

Speed matters.



On Account-Level vs. Contact-Level

The account is "in-market."

Seventeen people touched seventeen pages.

You do not know which one holds the budget.

You do not know which one hates your brand.

You emailed all of them.

Why are you calling me?



On Correlation

They visited your site five times this month.

They also visited your competitor's site nine times.

The data provider did not mention this.

You called them a hot lead.

They were comparison shopping.

Are you winning yet?



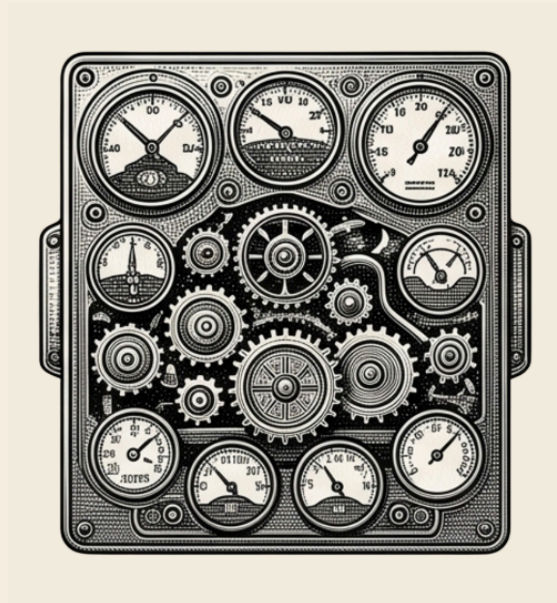
On the Illusion of Control

You built a workflow:

- If intent score > 70, assign to SDR.
- If intent score > 85, send to AE directly.
- If intent score > 95, executive outreach.

The score was an average of averages, weighted by a vendor's secret formula, based on activity you cannot verify.

Congratulations, you automated a guess.



On False Negatives

Your best deal this quarter came from an account with zero intent signals.

They called you directly.

They had a problem.

You had a solution.

The data missed it entirely.

This is also the nature of things.



On Combining Sources

You layered three intent providers.

You believed more data would create clarity.

Provider A said they were researching.

Provider B said they were evaluating.

Provider C said nothing.

You still do not know what they are doing.

LOL.



On Treating Signals as Certainty

Intent data is a rumor.

Treat it as such.

Investigate. Do not assume.

The signal tells you where to look.

Not what you will find.



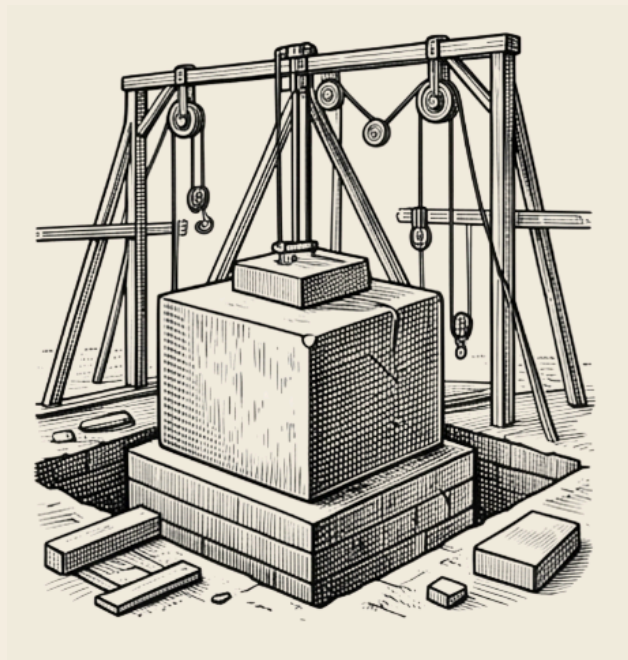
On Building a System

If your sales team ignores the alerts, the data is decorative.

If the signal does not change your approach, it is not a signal—it is expensive noise.

Intent data is only useful if the system around it works.

Fix the system first.



On the Trap of Over-Reliance

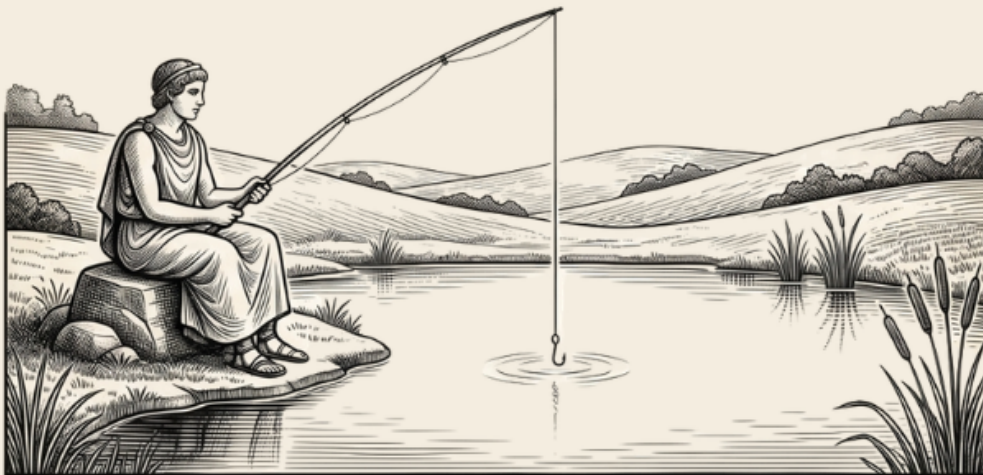
You waited for the signals to arrive.

They did not arrive fast enough.

You missed your number.

Intent data is a supplement, not a replacement.

Discipline does not come from a dashboard.



On What Intent Data Cannot Tell You

It cannot tell you why they are looking.

It cannot tell you if they have budget.

It cannot tell you if they like you.

It can only tell you that something happened.

The rest is your job.



On the Best Use

Use intent data to prioritize, not to predict.

Use it to focus your effort, not to replace your judgment.

Use it to start conversations, not to script them.

A signal is an invitation to pay attention.

Nothing more.



Silence

You do not need more intent data.

You need better follow-through.

The signal has always been there—in your CRM, in your conversations, in the deals you lost.

You ignored it because it required effort.

Intent data will not fix this.

Neither will the next vendor.

Build systems that act on signals.

Train teams to ask better questions.

Stop waiting for certainty.

Let the work speak.

Then walk away. Quietly.

The End

The Author

Marc Aurelius is the writer and philosopher in residence at Macon Raine, Inc., an account-based marketing agency.

He writes on decrapification of complex systems.

When the work is done, he walks away quietly from the office to his home in Athens, Georgia.

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