The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Department of Information Systems,
Business Statistics and Operations Management

Seminar Announcement

Social Networks and the Diffusion of User-Generated Content: Evidence from YouTube

by

Ms **Jeong-ha Cath Oh**
Michael G. Foster School of Business
University of Washington

Date: 10 February 2009 (Tuesday)
Time: 11:00 am – 12:15 pm
Venue: Room 4379, ISOM Conference Room (L17/18)

ศิศิศิศิศิ All interested are welcome ศิศิศิศิศิ

Abstract

This paper is motivated by the success of You Tube, which is attractive to content creators and media companies for the potential to rapidly disseminate digital content. The tremendous variation in the success of videos posted online and the networked structure of interactions on You Tube lend itself to an inquiry about the role of social influence on content diffusion. Using a unique data set of video information and user information collected from You Tube, we find that evidence for a number of mechanisms by which social influence is transmitted, such as a preference for conformity, social learning and the role of innovators or opinion-makers. Such mechanisms of social interactions can play a huge role not only in the success of user-generated content, but also on the magnitude of that impact. Our results are in sharp contrast to earlier models of diffusion such as the Bass model that do not distinguish between different social processes that are responsible for the process of diffusion of content. Econometrically, the problem in identifying social influence is that individuals' choices depend in great part on the choices of other individuals, referred to as the 'reflection problem'. Another problem in identification is to distinguish between social contagion and user heterogeneity in the diffusion process. Our results are robust to potential self-selection according to user tastes, temporal heterogeneity and the reflection problem. Implications for researchers and managers are discussed.

Biography

Jeongha (Cath) Oh is a PhD Candidate in Information Systems and Operations Management at the University of Washington. Her research interests include diffusion of user generated contents, social network, user behavior in online communities, marketing channel selection, and organizational coordination of e-Business.

Before joining the University of Washington, Jeongha received her B.S. and M.S. in Mathematics from Seoul National University, Korea, and her M.S. in Financial Mathematics from the University of Chicago.