Tweet to the Top? Personal Branding and Executive Employment

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Abstract: We study the relationship between one’s Personal Branding (PB) and labor market performance by examining 822 S&P 500 executives’ PB on Twitter and also their career paths. To unravel the effects of sorting and compensation negotiations, we utilize a structural model based on the two-sided matching theory to estimate how PB relates to a candidate’s chance of accepting a specific offer and the compensation negotiation outcome. We find that the past performance significantly moderates the association between PB and job market performance. For example, for CEO and CMO candidates, more PB on social media is associated with better sorting score only for those with very good or poor past job performance. In terms of compensation negotiation, more PB is associated with higher compensation only for those with good past job performance. This paper contributes to the IS literature by being the first to study the emerging phenomenon of PB on social media and has important implications for job seekers, employers, and social media platforms.

Bio: Yanzhen Chen is an Information Systems Ph.D. candidate at The University of Texas at Austin. Her research focuses on topics such as FinTech innovation in financial services, social media and labor market and healthcare management. She particularly enjoys incorporating into her research the state of the art tools from Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing, and Bayesian Statistics, as a way to overcome challenges brought in by big data and structure models.

Before starting a Ph.D. in information systems, she received an M.A. degree in Finance from Peking University and worked in investment banking industry briefly.