

# The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Department of Information Systems, Business Statistics and Operations Management

## Zoom Webinar Announcement



### **The Secret to Finding Love: A Field Experiment of Choice Structure in Online Dating Platform**

by

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**Date** : 15 June 2020 (Monday)  
**Time** : 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm  
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**Zoom Link** : <https://hkust.zoom.us/j/94138862325>

#### **Abstract:**

Online matching platforms require new approaches to market design since firms can now control many aspects of search and interaction process through various IT-enabled features. While choice structure—the size of choice set and the number of choices a platform offers to its customers—is one of the key design features of online matching platforms, its impact on engagement and matching outcomes remains unclear. In this study, we examine the effect of different choice structures on the number of choices and matches on the platform by conducting a randomized field experiment in collaboration with an online dating platform. Specifically, we 1) select users who are in a similar age range and live in same geographical location, 2) design four treatment groups with different choice structures where users can only interact with other users in the same group, and 3) randomly assign them to each treatment group. We find that providing higher choice capacities to male and female users have different effect on choice behaviors and matching outcomes. While increasing the choice capacity of male users yields the highest number of choices, increasing the choice capacity of female users is the most effective way to increase matching outcomes. Structural analysis further reveals the underlying mechanisms of choice behavior and matching results, suggesting that users significantly decrease the number of choices after receiving a choice from other users and the effect of the choice capacity on matching outcomes differs by gender. We further provide counterfactual analysis that explores optimal choice structure design depending on the gender ratio of the online dating platform.

#### **Bio:**

Hyungsoo Lim received Ph.D. degree in Management Engineering from KAIST, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology. He was previously a Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Department of Information Systems, Business Statistics and Operations Management at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. His research interests include market design, multi-channel dynamics, and ICT (Information Communication Technology) innovation.