

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

Seminar Announcement

Learning from Peers on Social Media Platform

by

Mr Yingda Lu
Tepper School of Business
Carnegie Mellon University

Date: Wednesday, 22 February 2012
Time: 2:30 – 4:00 pm
Venue: Room 4219, 4/F (Lift 19)

~~~~~ All interested are welcome ~~~~~

**Abstract:**

More and more companies have adopted social media platforms for supporting knowledge sharing among customers and employees, where individuals ask and answer questions among each other. Hence, it is important to understand the knowledge-sharing behavior of users on these systems. We propose a theoretically-grounded, dynamic structural model with endogenized knowledge-sharing behavior that takes into account “learning by sharing” and “knowledge spillover,” which are two salient features that are enabled by social platforms. Our model recognizes the dynamic and interdependent nature of knowledge-seeking and sharing decisions and allows them to be driven by knowledge increments and social-status building in anticipation of future reciprocal rewards.

Applying this model to a unique panel of data from an expertise-sharing forum used to shore up customer support at a Fortune 500 firm, we illustrate the dynamic interdependency between individual decisions. We show that an individual is more willing to contribute to the community when her peers are more knowledgeable. We further demonstrate how a “core/periphery” knowledge sharing structure emerges, discourage users with low social status from participating, and creates a barrier to knowledge sharing and integration for the company. An exploratory sensitivity analysis shows that hiding the identity of the knowledge seeker breaks the core/periphery structure and improves the knowledge sharing by 20.46%.

**Bio:**

Yingda Lu is a Ph.D. candidate at Tepper School of Business, Carnegie Mellon University. His research focuses on resolving urgent business problems that firms are facing when they implement social media platforms. His research topics include how individuals contribute and consume content on social media platforms, and what are the desirable design and incentive mechanism that could maximize the benefit of social media initiatives.