COMM 620 — Business Models of Communication

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Class meets: 12:30-3:20pm Wed @ ASC 328
Office hours: by appointment

Introduction

The advancement in IT technology has enabled businesses and other organizations to leverage the talent and financial resources of the crowd on the Internet for their benefits. This seminar surveys cutting-edge research examining factors influencing such activities, with a specific focus on how communication researchers can contribute to this body of research.

There is no economics prerequisite for this course.

Requirements and Evaluation

Everyone is expected to be prepared for each class. Each of you will pick three articles from the readings (marked with a star), and lead a discussion based on that paper. Evaluation will be on the following basis:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<td>Discussion leadership</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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Your research paper is to be 25 pages max (double-space). It is due by 11am PST on May 8. When leading a discussion on a paper, please read the paper carefully and address the following questions during the discussion:

- What are the central research questions and main findings?
- What unique advantages do the authors have to attack their research questions (e.g., access to good data or methodological cleverness)?
• What’s the unit of observation in their dataset? Why is it appropriate (or inappropriate)?
• Where do their hypotheses come from? Are they appropriate or a stretch?
• What can be improved in their study?
• If you were to do the same study on your own, what specific tasks would be involved in completing the study?
• What research skills are essential for completing the study?

Schedule

[Week 1, Jan 14]  Introduction

[Week 2, Jan 21]  Crowdfunding (1)


• Ethan R Mollick. The Dynamics of Crowdfunding: Determinants of Success and Failure. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 2012

[Week 3, Jan 28]  Crowdfunding (2)


• Elizabeth M Gerber, Julie S Hui, and Pei-Yi Kuo. Crowdfunding: Why People Are Motivated to Post and Fund Projects on Crowdfunding Platforms. pages 1–10, December 2011


[Week 4, Feb 4]  Crowdsourcing (1)


[Week 5, Feb 11]  Participation in Crowdsourcing (2)


[Week 6, Feb 18]  Open Innovation


[Week 7, Feb 25]  Online word-of-mouth


[Week 8, Mar 4]  Herding and cascades

[Week 9, Mar 11] Peer-to-Peer Lending


[Week 10, Mar 18] Spring break

[Week 11, Mar 25] Social ties in user generated content


[Week 12, Apr 1] Social influence in collective intelligence


[Week 13, Apr 8] Participation in online innovation community


[Week 14, Apr 15] TBD

4
Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism—presenting someone else's ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words—is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standards https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misc.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/or to the Department of Public Safety http://capsnet.usc.edu/department. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC's schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.