

FALL
2025

DATA SCIENCES + OPERATIONS

DSO 456

Frontiers of Digital Business Platforms

Section: 16208R

MW 10:00–11:50am

Units: 4 Units

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WHY TAKE THIS COURSE?



Many of the world's largest public corporations are platform companies: Apple, Amazon, Meta, Alibaba, Tencent, Alphabet, Microsoft... These digital platforms are revolutionizing ALL industries: IT, finance, healthcare, entertainment, consumer retail, real estate automotive, or smart energy, you name it. Interested in a career in technology or management for digital platform companies? Do you want to have an advantage in case study interviews for jobs or summer internship opportunities for big tech platform companies in banking/media/consulting/gaming/entertainment/ e-commerce/ retail industries? Or do you want to launch your own product on digital platforms? This course will use case study methods to analyze digital tech platforms and prepare you for these great opportunities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES



This course gives students a competitive advantage in career preparation for consulting and business model innovation in any industry that delivers services and value through digital platforms. Upon completing the course, you will be able to understand, analyze, and independently conduct case study towards digital platform business models and platform strategy decisions.

KEY CONCEPTS



- Identify the key components and foundations of digital business platforms
- Assess business strategy decisions in managing digital business models
- Conduct in-depth case analysis on digital platforms
- Use digital business frameworks to theorize emerging digital platform phenomena
- Pitch to potential investors or business partners about the dynamics of disruptive digital platform business models

Course Description



The course contents are based on recent case studies, articles, industry reports, current happenings. We are aiming for a rich interactive and collaborative learning experience throughout this course. The class format will consist of lectures, case discussions, and student presentations. Concepts will be presented in the context of leading examples of internet and technology platforms such as the sharing economy platforms, online labor markets, computing technology platforms (e.g., mobile), social networks, cloud computing, videogames, and financial technology platforms. Examples of cases in this course include Amazon, Uber, TikTok, Intuit, Facebook (Meta), Nike, Pinduoduo, etc. The course is general management multi-disciplinary orientated. Enrollment open to all USC students from all schools and all majors.



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