

Exercise Sheet 1: Linear Models

December 1, 2022

The overarching topic of our exercises will be Demand Forecasting, i.e., time series predictions for different products in different locations, for example of a grocery chain.

The data sets to be used for the exercises can be found here:

https://github.com/FelixWick/understanding_ml/tree/main/exercises

The description of the data sets and variables therein can be found in the file `datasets_description.txt` in the same directory.

- 1) Familiarize yourself with the data and conduct an Explanatory Data Analysis (EDA), using summary statistics, visualizations, etc.
- 2) Predict the demand (expressed by sales values) of all product-location-date combinations in `test.csv`, using a univariate time series model of your choice (without using the actual values in `test_results.csv`), e.g., Exponential Weighted Moving Averages (EWMA, included in python package *pandas*).
- 3) Evaluation of predictions
 - a) Compute the mean absolute deviation (MAD) and the mean squared error (MSE) of your predictions on `test.csv` compared to the respective actual values in `test_results.csv`. (For this, you need to merge the two data sets by means of the product-location-date keys.)
 - b) Compute MAD and MSE only for product-location-date combinations with promotions as well as time windows of one week before and one week after events.
 - c) Plot the time series of your predictions and actuals (each summed up over the different product-location combinations) for the time period of `test.csv`.
 - d) Repeat this for each location (sums only running over products) and product-group level 3 (sums running over locations and products in respective product group).
- 4) Linear regression
 - a) Repeat the predictions from exercise 2 with a linear ML model (i.e., training all product-location time series together in a multivariate way), e.g., linear regression from the python package *scikit-learn*. This requires an i.i.d. (identical and independent distributed random variables) assumption over the different time steps (and products and locations). You need a one-hot encoding for the categorical variables to include several products and locations in one model. Repeat the evaluations with this model.
 - b) Compare the importance of the different features by means of the learned model parameters.
- 5) Use the in-sample predictions (i.e., predictions on `train.csv`) of your univariate method from exercise 2 as additional features (or replacing one-hot encoded product and location features) for your linear regression model from exercise 4. Repeat the evaluations with this model.
- 6) Turn your linear regression into a multiplicative model by using an appropriate link function, like in Poisson regression from *scikit-learn*. Repeat the evaluations with this model.