We are so excited that you’ve registered for the Master Modeler Competition 2016!

I’m providing a bit more information as we are getting closer to the day of the event – below you’ll see 1) problem statement, 2) date of data review by 360i associate (date may change and we’re planning to record), 3) information about our Ask the Expert panel, 4) judging rubric, and 5) next steps / upcoming dates.

1)      Summary of Problem Statement / Business Objective:

“Social Media Influencers on Twitter, YouTube, and other platforms can command more than a million dollars to promote a product to their followers.  Currently, the analytics measuring an Influencer’s value (i.e., ability to influence their followers) is too limited.  Today, an Influencer’s value is measured almost exclusively by the total number of his/her followers; the extent to which those followers engage with an Influencer’s content is not given much, if any, weight in the valuation formula.

When a company pays an Influencer to promote a product, the goal is to positively affect the behavior of as many consumers as possible.  So, all other things being equal, an Influence with more engaged followers (e.g., Twitter followers who comment or retweet) has a greater value than an Influencer whose audience takes no action.

The purpose of this project is to improve the method for valuing a Social Media Influencer on Twitter.  Rather than simply and Influencer’s count followers, we want you to dig deeper into the Twitter data to develop an algorithm that accurately measures an Influencer’s ability to propagate a positive message throughout the Twittersphere.”

2)      Date of data review:

Larry O’Donnell from 360i plans to review the data tables with us on February 1 at 4:30 PM.  We are planning to record the session in case groups are unable to attend, and location is TBD in Scheller College of Business.

3)      Ask the Expert Panel:

We have assembled a panel of analytics experts to help you along your journey! Panel members include:

a.       Kris Hammond PhD, Narrative Science

b.      Kevin Baker, North Highland

c.       Alex Yurchenko, Blackbook

d.      Tuhin Chattopadhyay PhD, ValueLabs

e.      Ram Krishnamurthy, Coca-Cola

f.        Raj Bondugula, Equifax

g.       Trevis Litherland, Equifax

Each panel member has offered forward a 30-minute discussion to provide their perspective on ways to approach the business problem. You may choose to dial in during their scheduled time and interact with them.  There is a static set of questions that they may answer, and you can ask for clarification or elaboration from them, but we’re not allowed to ask new questions.  The questions are as follows:

**Questions for Ask the Expert Panel, Master Modeler Competition:**

h.      Please describe your background and current role

i.         Given the business objective and data available, what is one possible method you might suggest for analyzing this data?

j.        Please describe your reasoning for this potential approach.

k.       What are some benefits and limitations for this approach?

l.         Please tell us about any specific concerns regarding the data set. What about the business objective - are there any specific concerns there?

m.    Suggestions for process, next steps to get going please.

4)      We’ve also assembled a great panel of judges to assess final presentations on March 4.  The rubric / judging criteria includes the following measures:

a.       Justification for chosen approach

b.      Creativity of solution / innovativeness of approach

c.       Ability to answer the business questions

d.      Action orientation of results

e.      Delivery of findings / presentation of slides

5)      Next steps / upcoming dates:

a.       January 29 (oh wow it’s a Leap Year!) – last day to register (Please encourage your colleagues – there’s still time!)

b.      February 1 – presentation of dataset by 360i

c.       February 1 – thank you for designating your group preferences; we will try to accommodate as well as possible

d.      February 5 – groups, documentation, and dataset is established in T Square; teams are sent notification email message to login

e.      Throughout February – several Ask the Expert sessions take place

f.        March 4, 9 AM until 2 PM – final judging event in 201 Scheller COB; must have poster printed, as well as presentation slides and final model uploaded in T Square

Thanks so much to Yooniko and ProRelevant for financial support / sponsorship!