Lei Xu

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Doctoral Study

   McGill University
   Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, expected June 2016   2010 - Present

Prior Degrees

   McGill University
   M.A. in Economics   2009 - 2010
   B.A. Joint Honors in Economics and Finance   2005 - 2009

Professional Experience

   Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto   2014 - 2015
   Visiting Scholar, Business Economics Unit

   Stern School of Business, New York University   2012 - 2014
   Visiting Scholar, Business Economics Department

References

   Professor Fabian Lange (McGill University)
   Professor Luís Cabral (NYU Stern School of Business)
   Professor Mitchell Hoffman (Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto)

Research Fields

   Primary Fields: Economics of Digitization, Applied Microeconomics
   Secondary Fields: Industrial Organization, Labor Economics, Game Theory

Working Papers

   "What Makes Geeks Tick? A Study of Stack Overflow Careers" [Job Market Paper]
   Lead Author, with Tingting Nian (UC Irvine) and Luis Cabral (NYU Stern)

   "Platform Competition with Local Network Effects"

Works In Progress

   "Multi-Market Contact in the Chinese Airline Industry" with Wenbo Wang (HKUST) and
   Lai Jiang (UBC)

   "Market Dynamics and Value of Variety of Chinese Restaurants"

   "Information Organization and Entry Deterrence"

   "The Welfare Effects of China's Movie Import Quota"

   "Online Gender Discrimination: Evidence from Stack Overflow"

Conference Presentations

   Ninth Conference on the Economics of Intellectual Property, Software and the Internet
                          Toulouse School of Economics, France   January 7-8, 2016
   2015 INFORMS Annual Meeting Philadelphia, PA   November 2015
   NBER Summer 2015: Economics of IT and Digitization, Boston, MA   July 2015
                          Discussant: Chris Forman (Georgia Tech)
   Platform Strategy Research Symposium, Boston, MA   July 2015

Fourth Society of Labor Economists World Conference (SOLE), Montreal	June 2015
13th International Industrial Organization Conference (IIOC), Boston	April 2015
12th International Industrial Organization Conference (IIOC), Chicago	April 2014
European Asso. for Research in Industrial Economics (EARIE), Portugal	August 2013

Seminars

CIREQ Seminar, McGill University	2015
CEPA Seminar, University of Toronto	2015
CIREQ Seminar, McGill University	2014
NYU Stern IO Seminar, NYU Stern	2013
CIREQ Seminar, McGill University	2013

Research Interests

Online Labor Market, Open Source Software, Online Communities, Platform Competition, Digital Economy, Telecommunication, Airline Competition, Information Technology

Teaching Interests

Data/Business Analytics, Data Mining, Database Systems, Empirical Methods and Research Design, Quantitative Methods, Managerial Economics, Economics of Digitization, Internet Economics, Market Structure and Competition

Programming Languages

Python, SQL, LaTeX, Stata, Matlab, Fortran, R

Scholarships and Awards

FQRSC Stipend	2015
FQRSC Stipend	2014
William Dawson Scholarship	2013
Grad Excellence Award in Economics	2013
Internal SSHRC Grant	2012
FQRSC Stipend	2012
McCall MacBain Fellowship	2011
Principals Graduate Fellowship	2010
Provosts Graduate Fellowship	2009

Languages

English (fluent), Madarin Chinese (native), French (intermediate)

Teaching Assistantships

Macroeconomics and Applications (Prof. Mayssun El-Attar Vilalta, Eval: 4/4)	2012
Macroeconomics and Applications (Prof. Paul Dickinson, Eval: 3.9/4)	2011
The Chinese Economy (Prof. Christopher Green, Eval: 3.6/4)	2011
Labour Economics (Prof. Jennifer Hunt, Eval: N/A)	2010
Economic Statistics - Honors (Prof. Dhanoos Sutthiphisal, Eval: 3.6/4)	2010
Introduction to Economic Theory - Honors (Prof. Daniel Parent, Eval: 4/4)	2009

Research Assistantship

Zhou, Jidong. 2014 "Multiproduct Search and the Joint Search Effect", *American Economic Review*, 104(9), 2918-2939.

Personal Information

Citizenship: China
Permanent Residence: Canada

References

Professor Fabian Lange
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McGill University
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office: 514-653-0020
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Professor Luís Cabral
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Job Market Paper

"What Makes Geeks Tick? A Study of Stack Overflow Careers"
[Job Market Paper]
Lead Author, with Tingting Nian (UC Irvine) and Luis Cabral (NYU Stern)
Many online platforms such as Yahoo! Answers and GitHub rely on users to voluntarily provide content. What motivates users to contribute content for free however is not well understood. In this paper, we use a revealed preference approach to show that career concerns play an important role in user contributions on Stack Overflow, the largest online Q&A community. We investigate how activities that can enhance a user's reputation vary before and after the user finds a new job. We contrast this with activities that do not help in enhancing a user's reputation. After finding a new job, users contribute 25% less in reputation-generating activities on Stack Overflow. By contrast, they reduce their non-reputation-generating activity by only 8% after finding a new job. These findings suggest that users contribute to Stack Overflow in part because they perceive this as a way to improve future employment. We provide direct evidence against alternative explanations such as integer constraints, skills mismatch, and dynamic selection effects. The results suggest that, beyond altruism, career concerns play an important role in explaining voluntary contributions on Stack Overflow.

Working Paper

"Platform Competition with Local Network Effects"
This paper presents a dynamic model of price competition between two platforms on which consumers value *local* network effects. Specifically, each consumer's utility level depends on the number of her *neighbors* in the same platform. Consumers in different *neighborhoods* choose their networks, and each platform competes for new customers in different *neighborhoods* with a homogeneous entry price. I characterize equilibrium market structure with a combination of analytical and numerical solutions, and compare them to results from network effect models that are *global*, in which a consumer benefits from *all* other consumers on the same platform. I provide sufficient conditions such that one firm *dominants* both *local* markets, as well as sufficient conditions that each firm only dominate *one local* market.