

Lei Xu

Current Contact Information

Room 414, Leacock Building
855 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2T7

Mobile: 951-223-6987 (USA)
647-362-6621 (Canada)
Email: lei.xu2@mail.mcgill.ca
Website: <http://www.leixu.org>

Doctoral Studies	McGill University Ph.D. Candidate in Economics	2010 - Present
Prior Degrees	McGill University M.A. in Economics B.A. Joint Honors in Economics and Finance	2009 - 2010 2005 - 2009
Professional Experience	Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto Visiting Scholar, Business Economics Unit	2014 - 2015
	Stern School of Business, New York University Visiting Scholar, Business Economics Department	2012 - 2014
References	Professor Fabian Lange (McGill University) Professor Luís Cabral (NYU Stern School of Business) Professor Licun Xue (McGill University) Professor Mitchell Hoffman (Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto)	
Research Fields	Primary Fields: Economics of Digitization, Applied Microeconomics Secondary Fields: Labor Economics, Industrial Organization	
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 Chinese Airlines Industry” with Wenbo Wang (HKUST) and Lai Jiang (UBC) “Information Organization and Entry Deterrence”	
Conference Presentations	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	Digital Economy, Telecommunication, Airline Competition, Platform Competition, Online Labor Market, Information Technology	
Teaching Interests	Data Analytics, Economics of Digitization, Empirical Methods and Research Design, Microeconomics, Game Theory, Industrial Organization, Information/Digital Technologies, Entrepreneurship and Technology Strategy	
Programming Languages	Python, SQL, L ^A T _E X, Stata, Matlab, Fortran, R	
Scholarships and Awards	FQRSC Stipend	2015
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	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”, <i>American Economic Review</i> , 104(9), 2918-2939.	
Personal Information	Citizenship: China	
	Permanent Residence: Canada	

References

Professor Fabian Lange

Department of Economics
McGill University
855 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2T7
office: 514-653-0020
email: fabian.lange@mcgill.ca

Professor Luís Cabral

Stern School of Business
New York University
44 West Fourth Street
New York, NY 10012
office: 212-998-0858
email: luis.cabral@nyu.edu

Professor Licun Xue

Department of Economics
McGill University
855 Sherbrooke Street West
Montreal, Quebec H3A 2T7
office: 514-398-3701
email: licun.xue@mcgill.ca

Professor Mitchell Hoffman

Strategic Management Unit
Rotman School of Management
University of Toronto
105 St. George St.
Toronto, Ontario, M5S 3E6
office: 416-978-1529
email: mitchell.hoffman@rotman.utoronto.ca

Job Market Paper

“What Makes Geeks Tick? A Study of Stack Overflow Careers” with Tingting Nian (UC Irvine) and Luis Cabral (NYU Stern)

Many online platforms such as most famously Wikipedia rely on users to voluntarily provide content. What motivates users to contribute content for free is however 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 see this as a productive way to improve their probability of finding employment. We provide direct evidence against alternative explanations such as integer constraints, skills mismatch, and selection into treatment (Ashenfelter’s Dip). The results suggest that, beyond altruism, career concerns play an important role in explaining voluntary contributions to 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 dominates both *local* markets, as well as sufficient conditions that each firm only dominate *one local* market.