Deutsche Bank Markets Research

Global



Date 15 May 2017



STAR Ratings

Search Tools for Academic Research (STARs) – Our STAR rating system retrieves academic papers for a broad range of topics and assesses their relevance for investment processes (spreadsheet available upon request). Our approach:

- Reclassifies abstracts into a standardized set of quant-related topics enabling a researcher to quickly search for papers including asset allocation, factor investing, machine learning and sustainability.
- Weights papers based on their perceived relevance for traditional quant investment processes, whilst taking into account the author's influence and credibility within the academic and/or practitioner community.

Our latest recommendations include:

- Earnings Quality
 - The Magic Formula: Value, Profitability, and the Cross Section of Global Stock Returns.
 - Customer-Supplier Relationships and Abnormal Accruals.
- Factor investing Dissecting Characteristics Nonparametrically.
- Unstructured data Improving Experienced Auditors' Detection of Deception in CEO Narratives.

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A letter to our readers

In today's information age, the amount of data available to researchers can quickly become overwhelming. Our 'recommendation system' can help researchers find academic papers across a range of quant-related topics. Our approach:

- Reclassifies abstracts into a standardized set of topics enabling a researcher to search for papers using a consistent set of keywords.
- Weights quant-related topics more heavily by considering their relevance for a traditional quant investment process (e.g. alpha and portfolio construction research receive higher weights than high frequency trading research or derivatives research).
- Considers the potential influence and credibility of an author (i.e. the author's history of publishing in top ranking academic/practitioner journals and the number of abstract views).
- Provides an Excel-based filtering tool— by date, author, topic and investment relevance.

Figure 1: Illustration of our abstract filtering tool



	opic	Title	Abstract	Keywords	Authors		Number of	Number of		Macro		Commodities	Derivatives		DB STAR Rating
						impact author?	pages	abstract views		research?	asset classes?	research?	research?	research?	(1=Low, 5=High)
	_	_			_	_	_			_		_	_		_
					_	<u> </u>									2
20170126 Co			This paper is the third chapter of the third edition	Shareholder-	John Armour;Luca	N	40	12	N	N	N	N	N	N	3
		The Interests of Shareholders as	of The Anatomy of Corporate Law: A	Management Conflict;	Enriques;Henry										
		a Class	Comparative and Functional Approach, by Reinier	One-Tier and Two-Tier	Hansmann;Reinier										
20170126 Ri	lisk	Credit Expansion and Neglected	By analyzing 20 developed countries over	Credit Expansion,	Matthew D.	N	91	12	N	N	N	N	N	N	3
		Crash Risk	1920-2012, we find the following evidence of	Financial Crises	Baron; Wei Xiong										
			overoptimism and neglect of crash risk by bank												
20170125 Al-	Iternatives	Super Hedge Fund	Activist hedge funds revolutionized corporate	Hedge Fund Activism,	Sharon Hannes	N	44	393	N	N	Y	N	N	N	3
			America, generating both excitement and	Corporate Governance,											
			criticism alike. This article suggests that a novel	Long-Term Firm Value											
20170123 M	Machine learning	An Axiomatization of the	The most important rule to determine payments	financial networks,	Péter Csóka;P.	N	40	3	N	Y	N	N	N	N	4
		Proportional Rule in Financial	in real-life bankruptcy problems is the	systemic risk, bankruptcy	Jean-Jacques										
		Networks	proportional rule. Many bankruptcy problems are	rules, proportional rule	Herings										
20170123 Su	ustainability	Philanthropic Giving, Market-	This paper investigates the association of	Philanthropic Giving;	Sudipta	N	43	5	Y	N	N	N	N	N	3
	·	Based Performance and	philanthropic giving with market-based	Corporate Social	Bose;Jyotirmoy										
		Institutional Ownership: Evidence	performance and institutional ownership using	Responsibility; Firm	Podder;Kumar										

Source: SSRN, Deutsche Bank

The Global Quant Research team



Paper 1: Earning Quality

Title: The Magic Formula: Value, Profitability, and the Cross

Section of Global Stock Returns

Authors: Blackburn, D; Cakici, N

Abstract views: 765

Reviewer: Ronnie Shah

Overview:

- The authors examine Greenblatt (2006, 2010) investment strategy called the "Magic Formula" which involves buying profitable, undervalued stocks and shorting un-profitable, over-valued stocks.
- The authors fail to find that such a strategy generates abnormal return premia in major developed equity markets.
- When the authors modify their measure using gross profits they are able to construct long-only region portfolios that have twice the Sharpe ratio when compared to the relevant market portfolio.

Related literature:

- Fama and French (1992, 1993, 2012).
- Novy-Marx (2013).
- There are several papers that talk about the value anomaly including Fama and French (1993) and more recent research that talk about profitability such as Novy-Marx (2013). Value strategies are price-scaled variables which are formed as ratios of fundamental scaled by price, while profitability captures a measure of economic profits scaled by a firm fundamental such as assets, book value or sales.

Dataset:

 Stock return and fundamental data for 23 developed market countries are taken from Datastream.

Methodology:

- The MF model requires two measures: (i) Profitability which is measured as EBIT divided by the sum of net working capital and net property, plant and equipment and (ii) earnings yield defined as EBIT divided by enterprise value. The 2- version of the MF model involves replacing EBIT in (i) and (ii) with Gross profits which are defined as revenues less cost of goods sold. This paper also uses standard Fama-French global factors (MKT, SMB, HML).
- Using a reporting lag of 7 months (minimum time difference between accounting data period end and portfolio formation) stocks are ranked based on MF. The magic formula is calculated by averaging the ranks



of the two measures defined above: profitability and earnings yield. The authors then sort stocks into quintiles and report results.

Results:

Portfolios formed on the Magic Formula fail to create reliable differences in average returns (except in Europe). When the authors replace EBIT with Gross Profits they find their modified MF portfolios explains cross-sectional return dispersion in North America, Europe, Japan and Asia with long/short T-statistics that exceed 2 in each region.

DB insights:

- This paper largely builds on Novy-Marx (2013) which identifies that profitability (gross profits/assets) explains returns and has low correlations to value strategies.
- Their main result involves extending the profitability research to other developed markets such as Japan and Europe.
- There are a couple of small items of interest in the paper Value-oriented (growth-oriented), highly profitable (un-profitable) firms have very low (high) betas suggesting that their results may be driven by the low beta anomaly.

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Paper 2: Earning Quality

Title: Customer-Supplier Relationships and Abnormal Accruals

Authors: Bao, M. X., Billett, M. T., Liu, Y.

Abstract views: 311

Reviewer: Andy Moniz

Overview:

- The authors investigate whether abnormal accruals of a supplier firm are affected by the abnormal accruals of its major customers?
- Consider a retailer that manufactures smartphones that experiences increased retail demand. They will need to produce more smartphones and will increase the orders for parts from suppliers. These suppliers will also need to order more input materials from their suppliers. Thus the increased demand for smartphones will reverberate down the supply chain. This magnification can occur if there is order batching (where orders are made in batches and only crudely communicate fluid demand changes), accumulation of safety stock, and price variation
- The paper finds that abnormal accruals of a supplier positively relate to abnormal accruals of its major customer.

Related Literature:

- Customers-supplier relationships have been shown to create contagion effects along the supply chain including financial distress, financing decisions and stock return predictability.
- Kale and Shahrur (2007) find that firms' capital structure is related to R&D intensities of the suppliers and customers, showing that leverage of a supplier is lower when the supplier invests more in customersupplier relationship, and vice versa.
- Campello and Gao (2016) find that borrowers with higher customer concentration experience higher loan spreads and tighter loan covenants. Itzkowitz (2013) argues that firms, relying on major customers, increase cash holdings to dampen potential shocks caused by the loss of major customers.

Dataset:

The paper relies upon Compustat Business Segment Files to identify firms connected by supply chains. The files report the names of a firm's customers when those customers account for at least 10% of the firm's sales (i.e. "major customers").



- The paper follows Ellis, Fee and Thomas (2012) to match a customer's name to the Compustat database in order to obtain financial information of the customer.
- The sample dataset consists of 16,901 firm-year observations on 3,758 unique nonfinancial firms (i.e., excluding firms with SIC codes 6000-6999) from 1987 to 2015.

Methodology:

- The paper identifies trios of firms linked via the supply chain using business segment data. These trios include an ultimate customer (C), the supplier to the ultimate customer (S1), and the supplier to the supplier of the ultimate customer (S2): C → S1 → S2.
- To identify causality from C to S2, the paper conducts two-stage least squares.

Results:

- Using the abnormal accruals of C as an instrument for S1's abnormal accruals, the authors find the predicted value of S1's abnormal accruals is significantly related to the abnormal accruals of S2.
- The magnitude of the coefficients in these regressions increase along the supply chain (from C to S1 and then to S2).

DB insights:

- This paper provides an interesting take on economic inter-linkage effects by considering the impact on firms' accounting variables.
- The approach suggests the potential to design a lower portfolio turnover strategy using accounting data compared to prior studies which rely upon Granger causality tests of monthly stock returns.

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Paper 3: Factor investing

Title: Dissecting Characteristics Nonparametrically

Authors: Freyberger, J; Neuhierl, A; Weber, M

Abstract views: 319

Reviewer: Aris Tentes

Overview:

- The authors suggest a non-linear methodology for calculating expected stock returns given a set of factors. The methodology is suitable when starting from a large set of factors.
- The authors suggest running a regression of returns on factor scores, however, to allow finer granularity, they suggest that for each factor there should be one quadratic term for each decile.
- For factor selection, the authors propose running regressions in a group Lasso framework, which enables predefined groups of independent variables to be either included or excluded from the model (as opposed to simple Lasso regression which selects single variables in or out of the model).
- The authors also compare the non-linear methodology to simple linear regressions and show that they can increase Sharpe ratios up to 50%.

Related literature:

- Harvey et al. (2016) mention that over 300 had appeared in the literature and proposed that a higher t-statistic should be used to assess factors' predictability strength.
- Lewellen (2015) and Green et al. (2016) show that only a small number of characteristics are significant predictors of the cross-section of returns.
- DeMiguel et al. (2016) investigate which characteristics provide incremental information for returns and increase investors' utility.
- Connor et al. (2012) use a non-parametric regression methodology to estimate factor returns, while Bryzgalova (2016) proposes a shrinkage method to tackle the problem of weak factors that can make risk premia estimates unreliable.

Dataset:

- Stock returns are taken from CRSP, for stocks that appear on NYSE, Amex of Nasdaq and have market prices above 5. Fundamental data are taken from Compustat. In total 36 factors are used.
- Factor selection is based upon data from 1963-1990, with backtesting from 1991 to 2014.



Methodology:

- The methodology consists of 3 steps:
 - In the first step, a group Lasso regression of returns fits a quadratic function for each factor decile. For each factor there is one linear and 10 quadratic terms, where the i'th quadratic term is non-zero only if the corresponding factor score is in the i'th decile. The group Lasso regression ensures that for each factor, either all above 11 terms are selected or none.
 - Another group Lasso regression is run, using weights in the group Lasso penalization term of the objective function. These weights are along the lines of Huang et al. (2010).
 - In the third step, an OLS regression is run, using the same terms as above, but only for the factors that are selected by the previous step.
- In order to run a strategy, the above trained model is used every month to go long/short the 10% of stocks with the highest/lowest calculated expected returns.

Results:

- The factor selection methodology selects 7-15 factors out of the 36, depending on whether they use quintiles, deciles etc. The deciles case selects 8 factors.
- The most common factors are Closeness to previous 52-week High Price, Short Term Momentum Reversal, Size and Standardized Unexplained Volatility.
- Using the same approach with simple linear regressions, leads to an increase in the number of selected factors to 21.
- The Sharpe ratio of the non-linear approach is 3.42, whereas for the linear regressions approach is 2.26. Even when the linear approach is used with the 8 factors selected by the non-linear one, the Sharpe ratio remains almost the same.
- The Sharpe ratio improves from 2.26 to 2.40 when using the non-linear approach for expected returns estimation with the 21 factors.

DB insights:

 The idea of using a (grouped) Lasso regression for factor selection sounds appealing, due to its simplicity and its ability to capture nonlinearities.

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Paper 4: Unstructured data

Title: Improving Experienced Auditors' Detection of Deception in

CEO Narratives

Authors: Hobson, J. L., Mayew, W.J., Peecher, M. E.,

Venkatachalam, M.

Abstract views: 162

Reviewer: Andy Moniz

Overview:

 The authors conduct an experimental study to investigate the accuracy of experienced auditors' abilities to detect fraudulent companies using CEO narratives from conference calls.

Related Literature:

- Q&A between analysts and management provide information about the company (Blau et al. 2015, Hollander et al. 2010, Mayew and Venkatachalam 2012, Price et al. 2012), including cues that can facilitate detection of financial statement fraud (Larcker and Zakolyukina 2012; Hobson et al. 2012).
- A vast literature in social psychology reveals that individuals generally fail to exceed chance levels when attempting to detect deception (Bond and DePaulo 2006, Bond and DePaulo 2008, Vrij 2008). Prior work examining experienced auditors' capability to detect deception is sparse.

Dataset:

- The authors gather 124 observations from thirty-one audit professionals at multiple large public accounting firms with an average of 24 years in the audit, assurance, and fraud/forensic services.
- Each auditor provides deception judgments on excerpts from the question and answer portion of quarterly earnings conference calls.

Methodology:

- Following Hobson et al. (2012), narratives are characterized as deceptive if the company's financial statements being discussed in the call were restated and any of the following "irregularity conditions" hold: the restatement was deemed fraudulent, a regulatory investigation followed the restatement, or a class action lawsuit followed it.
- The authors create a sample dataset of company narratives by first requiring that fraudulent companies do not systematically differ from non-fraud companies on known financial statement predictors of fraud. To do so, the authors calculate a financial statement fraud score or "F-Score" (Dechow et al. 2011). Observations are sorted by the F-Score and, for each fraud observation, the authors select the



- observation from the same two-digit industry with the closest F-Score, without replacement.
- When examining each transcript, auditors were asked to note in a text box the following for each red flag of fraud they identify: (1) the location of the red flag in the narrative via line number / timestamp, (2) the topical issue of the red flag, and (3) why it was a red flag.

Results:

- As a baseline, the authors test whether auditors' deception judgments are better than chance rates and find an accuracy rate of 63%.
- This finding, however, is driven by accuracy on non-fraud companies. Their accuracy rates on non-fraud companies (83%) are far better than chance while their accuracy rates on fraud companies (43%) does not statistically differ from chance.
- The authors then refine the test to assess whether auditors more accurately identify sentence-specific fraudulent statements by CEOs in the conference call narratives of fraud companies.

DB insights:

- Prior studies have investigated the potential of text mining to infer qualitative information from financial disclosures. These studies have predominately relied upon a 'bag-of-words' dictionary based approach.
- This paper provides an interesting alternative based upon using human experts to classify text. The approach may be extended more generally to create a supervised learning model to classify fraudulent disclosures based upon, for example, using fundamental analysts' insights.
- The findings of the paper suggest even experienced analysts struggle to detect fraud in corporate communications.



Appendix A: STAR rating overview

- In today's information age, the amount of data available to researchers can quickly become overwhelming. For instance, website search engines often fail to retrieve relevant results when a user does not know exactly what he/she is looking for, when content is not described accurately, or not popular enough to appear high on search results.
- To illustrate the challenge of searching for relevant papers, Figure 1 displays a network analysis of the co-occurrence of all the keywords used in financial asset pricing research related to Optimization techniques (JEL code: C61). As well as including traditional topics such as 'Black-Litterman', keywords include 'basket option pricing' and 'optimal consumption'.

Figure 2: Network analysis of research related to Accounting

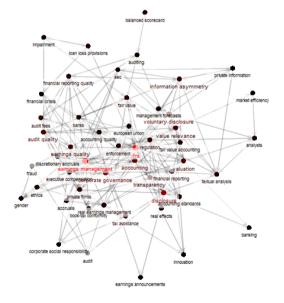
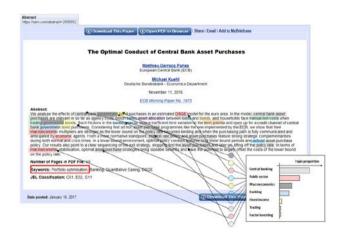


Figure 3: Illustration of our text analysis algorithm



Source: SSRN, Deutsche Bank

Source: SSRN, Deutsche Bank

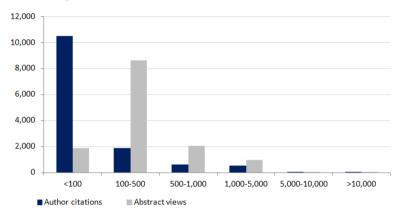
To address these limitations, we build a 'recommendation system' to help researchers quickly find papers across a range of topics. Our recommendation system first reclassifies papers into a standardized set of quant-related topics then assesses their potential relevance for a typical investment process.



Step 1: Reclassifying abstracts

- Our starting point consists of downloading academic abstracts from SSRN. We include asset allocation, asset pricing, and financial accounting literature, as well as more niche fields such as management studies, sustainability and machine learning.
- We employ a computational linguistics approach to reclassify abstracts into a standardised set of topics.
- Next, we search for whether a paper's authors have a history of publishing in top-rated academic journals (e.g. Journal of Finance, Journal of Accounting & Economics, Academy of Management) and/or practitioner journals (e.g. Financial Analyst Journal). We also make use of SSRN's metadata and retrieve data on the number of views an abstract has received and the number of paper downloads.

Figure 4: Histogram of author citations and SSRN abstract views



Source: SSRN, Deutsche Bank

To assess potential readership interest, our model includes an indicator variable equal to one if an abstract has received a very high number of views (in the top quintile), and zero otherwise.

Step 2: Building a recommendation system

- Next we estimated a logistic regression using text features (keywords) and metadata (paper views and authors' impact) from each abstract.
- The regression was trained using 750 abstracts, leaving 250 abstracts for out-of-sample evaluation.

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Appendix 1

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flows), increases in interest rates naturally lift the discount factors applied to the expected cash flows and thus cause a loss. The longer the maturity of a certain cash flow and the higher the move in the discount factor, the higher will be the loss. Upside surprises in inflation, fiscal funding needs, and FX depreciation rates are among the most common adverse macroeconomic shocks to receivers. But counterparty exposure, issuer creditworthiness, client segmentation, regulation (including changes in assets holding limits for different types of investors), changes in tax policies, currency convertibility (which may constrain currency conversion, repatriation of profits and/or the liquidation of positions), and settlement issues related to local clearing houses are also important risk factors to be considered. The sensitivity of fixed income instruments to macroeconomic shocks may be mitigated by indexing the contracted cash flows to inflation, to FX depreciation, or to specified interest rates - these are common in emerging markets. It is important to note that the index fixings may -- by construction -- lag or mis-measure the actual move in the underlying variables they are intended to track. The choice of the proper fixing (or metric) is particularly important in swaps markets, where floating coupon rates (i.e., coupons indexed to a typically short-dated interest rate reference index) are exchanged for fixed coupons. It is also important to acknowledge that funding in a currency that differs from the currency in which coupons are denominated carries FX risk. Naturally, options on swaps (swaptions) also bear the risks typical to options in addition to the risks related movements. to rates

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