

Department of Marketing
 Eller College of Management
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Education	<p>Ph.D., Quantitative Marketing, University of Arizona (expected) 2026 Dissertation: <i>How Platform Brands Affect Consumers, Sellers and Marketplace</i> Committee: Yong Liu (Co-chair), Xinying Hao (Co-chair, University of Maryland) Zach Nolan (University of Arizona), Bo “Bobby” Zhou (University of Maryland) Minor: Management Information System (Advisor: Seokjun Youn) M.Sc., Marketing Analytics, University of Maryland 2020 B.A., Economics, University of International Business and Economics (Beijing, China) 2018</p>														
Research Fields	<p>Substantive: Digital Platforms, Platform Brands, Influencer Marketing, Online Retailing Methodology: Machine Learning and AI, Causal Inference, Applied Econometrics, Computer Vision, Natural Language Processing (NLP)</p>														
Teaching Interest	Digital Marketing, Marketing Analytics, GenAI in Business, Marketing Research, Marketing Strategy, Retailing														
Job Market Paper	<p>“Platform Brands Rising: The Competitive and Perceptual Consequences of Amazon Brands Entry” <i>Under review at Marketing Science</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 ISMS Doctoral Early-Stage Research Grants • 2023 Eller College of Management Small Research Grant 														
Work in Progress	<p>“From Person to Brand: Tailoring Content Strategy to Influencer Audience Size” with Mengchen Zheng (Boston University) and Shuba Srinivasan (Boston University) <i>working paper available: paper</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Paper Award(Marketing), 2024 Singapore Rising Scholars Conference <p>“How Platform Brands Entry Affect Cross-Platform Keyword Market” <i>Data analysis in progress</i></p> <p>“Strategic Differentiation and Optimal Product Design Under Algorithmic Muting” <i>Data analysis in progress</i></p>														
Awards & Fellowship	<table> <tr> <td>Informs ISMS Doctoral Early-Stage Research Grants</td> <td>2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Best Paper Award, Singapore Rising Scholar Conference</td> <td>2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Platform Strategy Symposium Doctoral Fellow</td> <td>2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>INFORMS Society for Marketing Science Doctoral Fellow</td> <td>2023, 2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eller College Small Research Grant</td> <td>2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>University of Houston 40th Annual Symposium Doctoral Fellow</td> <td>2023</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mittelstaedt & Gentry Symposium(University of Nebraska) Doctoral Fellow</td> <td>2022</td> </tr> </table>	Informs ISMS Doctoral Early-Stage Research Grants	2024	Best Paper Award, Singapore Rising Scholar Conference	2024	Platform Strategy Symposium Doctoral Fellow	2024	INFORMS Society for Marketing Science Doctoral Fellow	2023, 2024	Eller College Small Research Grant	2024	University of Houston 40th Annual Symposium Doctoral Fellow	2023	Mittelstaedt & Gentry Symposium(University of Nebraska) Doctoral Fellow	2022
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Mittelstaedt & Gentry Symposium(University of Nebraska) Doctoral Fellow	2022														

Teaching	University of Arizona	
	Instructor:	
	Digital Marketing, Teacher Evaluation: 4.6/5.0	Fall 2023
	Teaching Assistant:	
	Marketing of Innovation (Executive MBA), Yong Liu	Spring 2025
	Use-centered Design (Professional MBA), Yong Liu	Spring 2022,2024,2025
	Marketing Research for Managers (MBA, MSMA), Martin Reimann	Spring 2025
	Marketing Analytics (Undergraduate), Xinying Hao	Spring 2021-2024
	University of Maryland	
	Teaching Assistant:	
	Advanced Marketing Analytics (MSMA), Michel Wedel	Fall 2019
	Data Analysis (MBA), P.K. Kannan	Spring 2019
Industry	Deloitte Consulting Intern, Dept. of Advanced Quantitative Analysis	2018
Experience	Nielsen Intern, Telecom & Technology Group	2017
	GE Healthcare Intern, Marketing Department	2017
Conference	2025 INFORMS Marketing Science Conference, Washington D.C	2025
Presentations	2025 AMA Winter Academic Conference, Phoenix, AZ	2025
	2024 Platform Strategy Symposium, Boston, MA	2024
	2024 INFORMS Marketing Science Conference, Sydney, Australia	2024
	University of Houston 40th Annual Doctoral Symposium, Houston, TX	2023
	2023 INFORMS Marketing Science Conference, Miami, FL	2023
	Mittelstaedt & Gentry Doctoral Symposium, Lincoln, NE	2022
Service	Reviewer for Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems 2023, APACR 2024	
Programing	Python, R, Stata, Matlab, SQL, Tensorflow, Hadoop, AWS	
Reference	Yong Liu	Xinying Hao
	Professor of Marketing & HSLopez Family Endowed Chair	Assistant Professor of Marketing
	Vice Dean, Eller College of Management	Robert H. Smith School of Business
	University of Arizona	University of Maryland
	yoliu@arizona.edu	xhao@umd.edu
	Zachary Nolan	Bo “Bobby” Zhou
	Assistant Professor of Marketing	Associate Professor of Marketing
	Eller College of Management	Robert H. Smith School of Business
	University of Arizona	University of Maryland
	znolan@arizona.edu	bozhou@umd.edu

Job Market Paper

“Platform Brands Rising: The Competitive and Perceptual Consequences of Amazon Brand Entry”

Abstract: This study examines the impact of platform brand entry on competing products sold on the platform. In the context of Amazon.com, we identify 66 markets where Amazon introduced its Amazon brands and use a staggered Synthetic Difference-in-Differences (SynthDID) model to estimate the effects on market price, engagement, and consumer perception. We find that the entry of Amazon brands significantly reduces market price and price dispersion. For the competing products, the Amazon brand entry increases consumer engagement, measured by the number of product reviews, and improves product ratings. Yet, these competitive gains come at a perception cost: both perceived value and quality decline after the entry of Amazon brands. This suggests that while platform brands stimulate efficiency, they may simultaneously raise consumer expectations and undermine perceived product differentiation. To understand which products are most exposed to this shifting pressure, we implement a panel-adapted Double Machine Learning (DML) framework with multi-modal product embedding. We find that the third-party sellers, who offer moderately similar products to the Amazon brand, face the most pronounced negative effects. Our findings generate valuable managerial and policy insights regarding digital platforms and third-party sellers on these platforms.

Work in Progress

“From Person to Brand: Tailoring Content Strategy to Influencer Audience Size” *working paper available: paper*

Abstract: The rise of influencers underscores the growing importance of personal branding in the digital landscape. This study explores how influencers with different follower size can strategically select posting topics and craft messages to enhance their audience engagement. Using BERTopic modeling to analyze topic selection, generative AI for feature annotation to assess message appeal across 16,600 YouTube posts from 63 influencers, and two controlled experiments, we suggest that influencers face the challenge of balancing human-like relatability with brand-like credibility to maximize their appeal. Small influencers, often perceived as more human than brand-like, can boost perceived credibility by consistently aligning content with their domain expertise and employing cognitive appeals. Conversely, large influencers, typically seen as brand-like entities, benefit from humanizing their image by sharing relatable personal stories and adopting affective language. These findings provide actionable insights for influencers, agencies, and brands to optimize content strategies across the influencer growth stage.

“How Platform Brands Entry Affect Cross-Platform Keyword Market”

Abstract: As platform brands expand their presence within digital marketplaces, their influence may extend beyond the host platform to shape consumer search behavior and competitive dynamics across the broader e-commerce ecosystem. This study investigates how platform brands entry alters the dynamic and composition keyword markets across major online retail platforms. Leveraging a novel dataset of keyword-level search volume, click and transaction data collected from SEMrush.com, we track shifts in keyword traffic, demand and conversion after leading platform introduces its platform brands. Preliminary patterns suggest that Amazon brands intensify price competition in search keyword market, redirect traffic and demand to long-tail keyword, with implications for both incumbent sellers and external traffic acquisition strategies. This research highlights how platform brands can reshape consumer attention and competition beyond the platform’s boundaries.