

INTRODUCTION

Labor market platforms ranging industries and styles of work (e.g. Uber, TaskRabbit, UpWork, and Amazon Mechanical Turk) have struggled for years with persistent (generally growing) challenges relating to worker qualifications. These issues range a wide spectrum: in some cases, worker qualifications are non-transferable, leading requesters to “re-invent the wheel” as they attempt to determine in their own way whether a potential worker is qualified and reliable.

Problems determining a worker’s qualifications start on day 1; labor markets begin their relationships with new workers almost entirely uncertain about the worker’s competence in any type of task. Gathering this information through qualification exams is generally time-consuming and costly.

Challenges mount as workers’ skill sets develop; work requiring more training and skill (for example, translating or programming) are either verified by individual *requesters* (e.g. Amazon Mechanical Turk) or are verified by the *platform* itself (e.g. UpWork). While the *UpWork* model avoids needless repetitive work by generally consolidating qualifying exams at the platform level, these labor platforms nevertheless find themselves in the unenviable (and often unexpected) position of having to develop new qualifications exams to outpace would-be cheaters.