
**PhD opportunities at Nottingham University Business School China (NUBS China)
Full/ Half Scholarship available**

I and my colleague (Dr. Alain Chong) in NUBS China is planning to recruit PhD students in the following Finance/ Information System research area , more details follows:

For the following three potential research topics, we will offer Full-Scholarship to students:

Topic 1:

Using user-generated contents to predict business performances

Abstract:

The main interest of this research is to understand how user-generated contents in social media affect business performance, and in this example we will use stock performance as an example of business performance. Previous studies by Bollen et al. (2011) and Tirunillai and Tellis (2012) have built their studies on Efficient Market Hypothesis, and examined whether user-generated contents in social media sites such as Twitter and Youtu be can influence the price of stock markets. Some measurements used include the emotions of the contents (e.g. via text analysis), and the reviews and ratings of products in these sites. Despite these studies, there remain gaps in these relatively new and under study topic. One interesting area to explore is the relationships between network characteristics in these sites and the performance of businesses (stock performance). The main interest is therefore to build on previous studies (e.g. valence, volume of user-generated contents), and extend it to investigate whether network characteristics (e.g. creators of content and their interactions) derived for large scale data from social network sites (e.g. Weibo/Twitter/WeChat) are correlated to the stock performances of companies over time. A predictive model will be developed using appropriate artificial intelligence technique such as neural network.

Topic 2:

Modelling and predicting consumer behaviour within social network

Abstract

One of the most interesting research questions that have driven social science researches is to determine if individual behaviours can be predicted. Researches ranging from marketing, information systems, and economics have aimed to predict users' decisions in negotiations, adoption of new technology, election decisions etc. Marketing researchers have historically tried to predict behaviours of consumers via market segmentations and developing target based marketing strategies. With the Internet, marketers are able to offer personalization and customization of advertisements to users based on their demographic profiles, geographical locations, and web usage patterns. Companies such as Amazon and Netflix employ predictive and artificial intelligence techniques such as neural network to recommend relevant products to their customers based on the demographics and use patterns of previous customers. Although there are studies on predicting consumer behaviour with data related to demographics, use patterns and locations, little research have focused on the role



of social network of individuals in predicting their re-actions to marketing/advertisements such as purchasing, forwarding a viral marketing video, or clicking on an online advertisement. As such, the key question is should companies target on social network data in their marketing strategies, or can data from social network be used to improve targeting and prediction in marketing activities. If yes, could a unified predictive model which be applied across all marketing activities be developed, or should companies target specific social network (e.g. homophily group) in specific marketing activities? A particular interest would be to conduct this study on Chinese social network. Social media in China has enormous potential and the number of users on Tencent (QQ + WeChat) are about to overtake Facebook. Although there has been study on consumer behaviour in applications such as Twitter (which are banned in China), little study has focus on Chinese social media applications. An interesting question will be to investigate if culture plays a role in how users make use of their social network, and whether we can use social network to predict their actions given that Chinese are known have to high level of collectivism culture. Thus the key aims of this research to examine the value of social network, and if they can be used to identify and predict group of users (Chinese users) who are likely to take specific actions based on various marketing strategies. Simulations and modelling could also be developed to observe how different social group can react to different marketing strategies developed by companies.

Topic 3:

Development of a Unified Open E-Logistics Standards Diffusion Model for Manufacturing Supply Chain Integrations

Abstract

The most admired manufacturing firms are those that have a tightly integrated, collaborative supply network. An important web technology which facilitates the integration of the supply chain is Open E-Logistics Standards (OELS). In OELS, the transmission and the manipulation of data are governed by open data and process standards that define their format, structure, and semantics of data flow between trading partners. OELS implementation facilitates electronic integration and information sharing in the supply chain. OELS's importance was recognized by both the manufacturing industries and the government. The governments in China and Taiwan have even included OELS implementation roadmaps as part of their long term economic plans. Despite OELS' importance, there remain concerns about OELS' slow development progress and low adoption rates. This is despite the significant investments made by governments and leading firms such as Intel and Nokia. The potential failure of OELS represents a significant stumbling block for government and supply chain practitioners who have envisioned a globalized supply chain network electronically enabled by OELS. Researchers are also concerned with the inadequate models that are used to explain and understand the adoption of OELS. OELS's developments and implementations are complex due to the various social constructions and the tightly coupled network effects in play. OELS's adoption is also influenced by the "hub and spoke" setup, whereby a powerful customer will align its vision with its suppliers, thus influencing the structure and functionality of OELS. Recent OELS research has stated that the presence of the alignment needs to be examined in applied research models and methodologies. Furthermore, the nature of organized clusters of OELS adopters, known as adopter configurations, needs to be further probed by researchers in terms of their structures and behaviours which have an influence on OELS diffusion. Adopter configurations divert researchers' focus from a



single adopting firm to the interdependent firms which have different technological capabilities, and overall strategic and structural arrangements as a whole. Although analyzing adopter configurations in what is known as configuration analysis has been examined in disciplines related to science and economics, its application in the study of OELS remains sparse. This research aims to integrate multiple theoretical views, and apply configuration analysis with an improved methodological approach to examine OELS diffusion decisions and processes. This research will redirect future OELS research at both the theoretical and methodological levels, and will provide a new research paradigm for the future study of OELS adoptions.

In addition to the above 3 Finance/ Information System topics, we will also offer Half-Scholarship to potential good students on the following Corporate Finance research area:

Topic 4:

Empirical Corporate Finance Research in China

1. Mergers & Acquisition
2. Institutional Investors

Requirements

- Students for all the above projects are expected to have a good honours degree (min. 2:1) and a good masters qualification.
- Students should be passionate and interested in research related to Finance, information systems and e-commerce, with degrees in either business/engineering/computing/information systems.
- Good English writing and speaking skills.
- Either good programming skills (javascript, PHP, data mining, visualization, C, VB) **OR** good statistical skills (data mining, regression, MPLUS, PLS)

About University and Business School

About University of Nottingham Ningbo China:

<http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/index.aspx>

About Nottingham University Business School China:

<http://www.nottingham.edu.cn/en/business/index.aspx>

Contact:

Interested Candidates, please send your CV and University Transcripts to the following email address:

Dr. BI, XiaoGang, Nottingham University Business School (China)

393506598@QQ.COM

Please state “PhD Application” in email title, and clearly states which topic you are interested in.