

# Call for Papers

Statistical Challenges in eCommerce Research (SCECR 09)

We invite submissions to the Fifth Symposium on Statistical Challenges in eCommerce Research (SCECR 09) to be hosted in Pittsburgh by the Heinz College's iLab (<http://www.heinz.cmu.edu/i-lab/>) Center for Digital Media Research on May 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009.

## Symposium Theme: Digital Media Research

Our focus this year is on the statistical challenges and opportunities involving digital media and associated data analysis. Various media industries, including the film, television, music, software, publishing and electronic gaming industries are rapidly moving from traditional distribution channels toward digital distribution and broadcast channels for their products and services. Growth in high speed and ubiquitous Internet connectivity, the widespread penetration of Internet-connected smart phones, and increasing processing powers of mobile electronic devices has accelerated the growth of digital distribution. These technology platforms provide users with a ready opportunity to consume content online using computers, cellphones or other mobile devices.

Growth in online distribution of television, movies, eBooks is also generating large amount of data for producers. Large amounts of real time data on who watched what television shows, who downloaded which iPhone application, or how many people are consuming pirated content is now readily available to the firms and in some cases to academic researchers.

These new data sources provide a unique opportunity to ecommerce researchers to examine the impact of new digital media products and channels on firms, industries, and markets. In particular, on one hand introducing television shows, movies and DVDs, music and ebooks online has a potential to cannibalize existing channels, while on the other hand digital distribution channels can convert some pirates into legitimate consumption or spur demand among non-users. How to differentiate online offerings from traditional offerings is also a strategic and managerial challenge for firms, where differentiation can be temporal, price, vertical, horizontal or a combination of all of these. Likewise, digitization of media can alter the dynamics of network effects in markets, the importance of media protection strategies, and the balance between promotion and distribution strategies. Optimal managerial decisions associated with these and related questions require careful and rigorous empirical analysis.

One advantage of the online distribution and promotion of digital media is the availability of rich datasets pertaining to the management, consumption, and propagation of these media products. Converting these dynamic, rich and real time and large data sets into useful, actionable strategy requires applying latest statistical techniques and algorithms. We expect that this symposium will draw research that uses these datasets as the basis for empirical research and applies the statistical tools to provide unique insights into this new emerging ecommerce. We also envision that the symposium will also discuss both the opportunities and challenges relating to the statistical analysis of these new forms of data.

Beyond the symposium's theme of digital media research, we also welcome and encourage submissions that highlight statistical challenges in other domains of ecommerce research. Past workshops have drawn studies on following frequent topics: online auctions; consumer profiling using web click-streams; search engine advertising; methods and models for large dynamic ecommerce data sets; sampling and selection issues on the Internet, modeling/ mining spatial ecommerce data, running experiments on the Internet.

More generally, the focus of SCECR is to identify problems and research questions that highlight empirical

research in electronic commerce using large datasets. The workshop brings together researchers from computer science, economics, information systems, marketing, statistics, and other related fields. As in the past, we believe that this multi-disciplinary approach is paramount in understanding the diverse empirical techniques needed to examine these issues.

### **Submission Guidelines**

Authors should submit abstracts (maximum 2 pages all inclusive) of their work for consideration for the workshop. These abstracts should clearly highlight the **statistical challenges** that the research and subsequent presentations will address. These abstracts should be e-mailed to [scecr-workshop@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:scecr-workshop@andrew.cmu.edu) by **March 1 2009**. PDF is the preferred format. This is a work-in-progress symposium, so abstracts will be evaluated based on their fit with the symposium's objective of enhancing our understanding of statistical issues and potential solution with large scale ecommerce datasets, their research contribution, and their potential for stimulating discussion at the symposium. Decisions on acceptance will be made by **March 15, 2009**. Addition details on the workshop can be found online at: <http://www.heinz.cmu.edu/scecr09>

### **About SCECR**

The Statistical Challenges in eCommerce Research Symposium was founded in 2005 by Galit Shmueli, Wolfgang Jank and Ravi Bapna, and first held at the University of Maryland's Smith School of Business with the purpose of bringing together researchers across disciplines to address the statistical challenges and issues unique to research that used Web-based data. Since then the workshop has been held every year including last year at The New York University.

### **General Chair**

Ramayya Krishnan, [rk2x@cmu.edu](mailto:rk2x@cmu.edu)  
The Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University

### **Co-chairs**

Michael D Smith ([mds@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:mds@andrew.cmu.edu)), Rahul Telang ([rtelang@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:rtelang@andrew.cmu.edu))  
The Heinz College, Carnegie Mellon University