Kellogg School of Management

J.L. Kellogg School of Management
Marketing
Kellogg Global Hub
2211 Campus Dr.
Evanston, Illinois 60208-2001

www.kellogg.northwestern.edu

Samuel Goldberg
PhD Candidate

Samuel.Goldberg@Kellogg.Northwestern.edu
Phone: 610-291-8450

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to hear that the NBER Digitization Tutorial is being held this year and am excited to submit my application. As a second year graduate student, I am eager to introduce myself to and learn from the accomplished researchers belonging to the NBER digitization group. Below I outline my course of study and research interests.

Course of Study

As a graduate student I have pursued a rigorous study of both empirical and theoretical industrial organization, microeconomic theory, and econometrics. My coursework has included the 1st year PhD sequence in microeconomics and econometrics within the Northwestern economics department as well as a detailed marketing sequence. In particular, both economic sequences focused on a careful study of the standard topics in 1st year economics. These include: choice, general equilibrium, production, markets, game theory and mechanism design, asymptotic theory, identification, and experimental design. This coursework was complemented by a detailed discussion in my marketing sequence of large scale field experiments, discrete choice, and Bayesian statistics.

In my second year I have continued to focus on developing my econometric tools, while broadening my understanding of the research frontier. I am currently attending courses in industrial organization, non-parametric econometrics, microeconomic theory, and organizational economics. In tandem with this coursework, I am an active participant in weekly industrial organization, strategy, and marketing seminars.

Research Interests

My research interest span both empirical and theoretical applications in industrial organization and microeconomic theory. In particular, I am interested how digital markets and resources have changed how consumers acquire information, make decisions, and participate in social interaction. Consumption and communication have been fundamentally changed by digitization and the internet. While much work has already begun to address how these changes effect behavior in both a partial and general equilibrium sense, the continuing proliferation of data and the sheer scope of these changes present an enormous opportunity for research.

There are also a number of interesting topics on the firm side. The nature of competition has been shifted substantially, often in unintuitive ways, with the growth of digital markets. Again, the proliferation of information plays a key role in how firms make strategic decisions. One particularly important question becomes, how has collusive behavior been facilitated by this information? Similarly, firms are presented with more complex and subtle strategic decisions. Examples include the potential for more explicit price discrimination and obfuscation tactics. These are topics in which I am very interested in exploring.

Finally, I will mention some previous and ongoing work related to digital markets. Previously I worked with NBER Digitization members Benjamin Shiller and Phil Leslie on a dynamic ticket pricing model. In particular, this work introduced a multi-stage model of ticket resale markets. The intention is to examine how gradual information revelation and bundling impact consumer and firm strategies. Another ongoing project focuses on how platforms should choose their market strategies. It seems intuitive that characteristics of the platforms markets should impact the optimal choice of strategy. In this research, I construct a theoretical model that characterizes the optimal firm strategy as a function of consumer characteristics.

Summary

The economics of digitization pose a rich set of questions with complicated and unique answers. I hope to learn more about the current work being pursued and the methods being implemented; the NBER digitization conference provides an excellent opportunity to do so.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply.

Best,

Samuel Goldberg
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