



Tushar Shanker
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RE: NBER Digitization Tutorial Application

Dear Mr. Healy:

I write to apply to participate in the NBER Digitization Tutorial. I am currently a third year doctoral student in the Information Systems Department at Boston University's School of Management, working most closely with Prof. Marshall Van Alstyne.

To date, my doctoral coursework has focused on Economics of Digitization. I have, thus far, taken courses in Digitization, Information Systems and Information Technology at Boston University, Harvard, and MIT. My minor area of study has been Econometrics.

As I transition from coursework towards formulating a dissertation, I feel that participation in this Tutorial will be helpful by exposing me to an even broader array of ideas in digitization and by enabling me to participate more fully in the community of scholars for whom this is a core research interest. I am at the phase of the doctoral program in which I am formulating ideas for a dissertation. By participating in the tutorial and the Spring Economics of Digitization meeting, I hope that exposure to research at the frontier of this area and the opportunity for informal interactions with leading scholars and doctoral students might help me sharpen some of my own dissertation ideas.

I am most interested in questions relating to economics of technology platforms, two-sided markets and knowledge markets. I am currently working on the following projects, along with my advisor, Marshall Van Alstyne:

- *Platform Strategies for Innovation*: This is an empirical study of a large enterprise platform's App store. We are trying to take advantage of a natural experiment to study the impact of platform governance strategies on innovation incentives for developers. Currently, we are in the process of working with the company to gain access to data.
- *Market Expansion*: We are also working on an analytical modeling paper that explores developers' and sellers' incentives for participating in platforms as opposed to remaining independent. This paper has already benefitted from conference feedback and we are currently working to incorporate suggestions from scholars.
- *Digital Information Market for USPS*: This is a practitioner-facing paper that was written to help the US Postal Service explore strategies for creating a two-sided digital platform. If implemented, this strategy might allow the USPS to compete effectively in the digital age. This paper was completed in summer of 2013.
- *Interaction Economy*: This is another practitioner-oriented paper on which I am currently working with Prof. Erik Brynjolfsson. In it, we explore pricing strategies for digital products in relation to the kind of network or interaction effects involved.

In the remainder of this application, I identify relevant academic courses I have taken, my program, and my contact information.

The courses relevant to digitization that I have taken include:

- *Economics of Information & Technology* (Erik Brynjolfsson, MIT; Fall 2013)
- *Empirical Studies of Digitization and Innovation* (Shane Greenstein & Karim Lakhani, Harvard; Spring 2014)
- *Economics of Ideas, Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (Scott Stern & Pierre Azoula, MIT; Spring 2014)
- *Industrial Organization* (Glenn Ellison, MIT; Fall 2013)
- *Information Economics* (Marshall Van Alstyne, Boston University; Spring 2013)

My coursework in econometrics and data analysis include:

- *Applied Econometrics* (Stefan Hoderlein, Harvard; Spring 2013)
- *Advanced Quantitative Research Methodology* (Gary King, Harvard; Spring 2013)
- *Causal Inference in Social Science* (Tim Simcoe, Boston University; Spring 2014)

My official details, including program information and contact information appear below:

- Course of studies
 - Advisor: Prof. Marshall Van Alstyne (mva@bu.edu)
 - School: Boston University School of Management
 - Degree Sought: PhD in Management (expected graduation: 2017)
 - Year of Advance: Third Year
 - Department: Information Systems
- Contact information
 - Address: 126 Jersey St, Apt 502, Boston, MA 02215
 - Email: tshanker@bu.edu
 - Phone: 508-523-6067
 - Website: <http://people.bu.edu/tshanker/>

I am grateful for your considering my application and would be happy to supply any additional information that might help my candidacy.

Sincerely yours,

Tushar Shanker
27th October, 2014