IMSM
Institute for Interactive Marketing & Social Media

ANNOUNCEMENT

Bachelor Thesis

KEYWORDS

- Digital Distribution
- Music Industry
- Streaming
- Playlists
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TOPIC: COMING IN FROM THE COLD. DETERMINANTS OF PLAYLIST INCLUSION.

The music industry is rapidly moving from physical to digital channels and from ownership-based business models (e.g., iTunes) to access-based business models (e.g., Spotify). Streaming services try to enhance the product discovery process by using recommendation systems and algorithmically-generated as well as user-curated playlists. Playlists bear potential for vast changes in media consumption. Playlist curators select songs for playlists following certain criteria that may be related to the content (e.g., a specific genre) or the context (e.g., moods or activities). The users' listening behaviors are in turn increasingly dependent on these curation decisions, rather than on the preference for a particular song or artist. Therefore, understanding what determines the inclusion of a song on playlists is essential. Why do songs get picked for playlists? Are there differences between context- vs. content-based playlists?

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the determinants for a song's inclusion on a playlist and estimate the size of their relative impacts. Potential drivers may be song characteristics, such as genre, the "starpower" of the artist, or audio features (e.g., the positivity of a song). In addition, effects may vary by the playlist type (e.g. curated by individual user vs. a company, content vs. context-based) or follower-base of a playlist.

In a first step, the student will have to screen the data and select appropriate variables for the analysis. This requires the development of a research framework that shows the potential determinants of playlist inclusion. The second step will be the econometric analysis. A number of dependent variables could be of interest. The probability of being included in any playlist, a set of playlists (e.g., with a logit model) as well as determinants of the number of playlist inclusions (e.g., with a Poisson model) could be analyzed.

Solid math and data analysis skills are required to write this thesis.

LITERATURE:

- **Aguiar, Luis, and Joel Waldfogel. 2018a.** "Platforms, Promotion, and Product Discovery: Evidence from Spotify Playlists", EUR - Scientific and Technical Research Reports. https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/platforms-promotion-and-product-discovery-evidence-spotify-playlists
- **Aguiar, Luis, and Joel Waldfogel. 2018b.** "As Streaming Reaches Flood Stage, Does It Stimulate or Depress Music Sales?" *International Journal of Industrial Organization* 57 (March): 278–307. doi:10.1016/j.ijindorg.2017.06.004.
- **Datta, Hannes, George Knox, and Bart J. Bronnenberg. 2018.** "Changing Their Tune: How Consumers' Adoption of Online Streaming Affects Music Consumption and Discovery." *Marketing Science* 37 (1): 5–21. https://doi.org/10.1287/mksc.2017.1051.
- **Winkelmann, Rainer, ed. 2008.** "Poisson Regression." In *Econometric Analysis of Count Data*, 63–126. Berlin, Heidelberg: Springer Berlin Heidelberg. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-78389-3_3.
- **Joven, J. 2018**. Spotify: The Rise of the Contextual Playlist. https://blog.chartmetric.io/spotify-the-rise-of-the-contextual-playlist-c6f2c26900f4

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APPLICATION

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