

Jason Zhao

Contact Information	Purdue Univ. Daniels School of Business 403 Mitch Daniels Blvd West Lafayette, IN 47907	Email: jyzhao@purdue.edu
Academic Employment	Assistant Professor of Management (Marketing), Purdue University	2025 - Present
Education	Ph.D., Marketing, Northwestern University	2025
	M.S., Marketing, Northwestern University	2021
	B.A., Economics (minor Computer Science), University of Chicago	2018
Research Interests	Quantitative Marketing, Industrial Organization, Advertising, Media Economics, Health Economics	
Working Papers	<p>“Product Positioning and Polarization in the Demand for Local News”</p> <p>“Limited Consideration and Physician Gifts: Evidence from Atypical Antipsychotics”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Presented at the Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Consortium (LBS), 2022 	
Work in Progress	“Technology Adoption and Experimentation: Evidence from Generative AI”, with Samuel Goldberg and H. Tai Lam	
Fellowships & Awards	ISMS Early Career Camp Fellow	2025
	AMA Sheth Doctoral Fellow	2024
	KGSM Fellowship, Northwestern University	2019
Professional Service	Ad Hoc Reviewer, Journal of Marketing Research	
Teaching Experience	Purdue University Marketing Management (Undergraduate)	2026
	<i>Teaching Assistant</i> , Northwestern University Quantitative Marketing: Structural Modeling (PhD) Professors Brett Gordon and Caio Waisman	2022 - 2024
	Marketing Strategy (MBA) Professors Tim Calkins and Jim Lecinski	2020 - 2023
	Strategic Marketing Decisions (EMBA) Professor Tim Calkins	2020 - 2023
	Driving Growth Through Innovation (Executive Education) Professors Tim Calkins and Julie Hennessy	2020 - 2023
	Retail Analytics (MBA) Professors Brett Gordon and Anna Tuchman	2020 - 2022
Professional Experience	<i>Research Analyst</i> , Dimensional Fund Advisors Austin, TX	2018 - 2019

Selected Abstracts

Working papers

“Product Positioning and Polarization in the Demand for Local News”

Abstract: I study how consumer preferences over slanted language and issue coverage impact firms’ product positioning as well as ideological segregation in news consumption. In particular, I examine how Democrats and Republicans vary in these preferences, and how this affects the reporting strategies of local newspapers whose markets vary in their compositions of Republicans or Democrats. I create a novel measure of partisan slant that disentangles politicized language from differential prioritization of issues among Democratic and Republican politicians. I then estimate a demand model in which Republican and Democratic consumers have separate tastes for partisan slanted language as well as for differences in the selection of issues. I find that both consumer segments prefer partisan slant that favors their respective parties, with Democrats displaying both a greater mean preference for congenial slant as well as more heterogeneity in tastes. However, while Democrats prefer issue selection more similar to those of major national papers, Republicans prefer more specialized reporting. I model firms’ profit-maximizing product positioning and find that readership can be politically polarized even in the absence of partisan slant, since firms’ issue selection may be more favorable to one consumer segment than the other. Moreover, in counterfactual simulations, I find that government subsidies promoting increased entry in local news may lead to both more extreme slant and increased ideological segregation in consumption.

“Limited Consideration and Physician Gifts: Evidence from Atypical Antipsychotics”

Abstract: Pharmaceutical firms frequently provide physicians with gifts as a routine promotional practice, raising concerns from regulators that gifts could sway physicians towards inappropriate treatment options. I find that gifts are both prevalent and effective in increasing prescriptions, but their impact on patient well-being depends on the mechanisms through which gifts affect prescription behavior. Gifts could potentially distort choice by directly impacting physicians’ preferences for drugs, but they could also improve limited consideration, leading to better patient outcomes. To disentangle these effects, I estimate a structural model of discrete choice under limited consideration in the market for atypical antipsychotics. The model estimates imply that on average physicians consider only 2.4 of the 8 most popular branded drugs, and that gifts primarily impact consideration with a near-zero impact on utility. I find that, across drugs, an additional gift of average value (\$24) increases consideration probability by 14.5% on average, leading to a 0.22 standard deviation increase in prescribing. Higher rates of consideration are likely to benefit patients, but firms disproportionately target physicians that are already likely to consider the promoted drug. Counterfactual simulations show that either changes to firms’ targeting policies or regulation placing annual dollar limits on gifting could lead to more gifts allocated to physicians with low ex-ante rates of consideration. Such changes lead physicians to consider 22-26% more drugs on average, increasing the market shares of most branded drugs. On the other hand, banning gifts leads to only small aggregate changes in market shares due to the ineffectiveness of firms’ gift targeting under the status quo.

Languages

English (native), Mandarin Chinese (intermediate), French (intermediate)

References

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