

RYAN C. McDEVITT

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RESEARCH AND TEACHING FIELDS

Research: Industrial Organization, Applied Microeconomics, Strategy

Teaching: Business Strategy, Industrial Organization, Microeconomics

DOCTORAL STUDIES

Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

Dissertation: An Empirical Analysis of Firm Strategy: Three Essays

Committee Co-Chairperson: Professor Aviv Nevo

Committee Co-Chairperson: Professor Michael Mazzeo

Date of Completion: July 2010 (expected)

PREDOCTORAL STUDIES

M.A.: Economics, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, 2006

B.A.: Economics, Williams College, Williamstown, MA, 2002

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Center for the Study of Industrial Organization Research Fellowship, 2009

Center for the Study of Industrial Organization Research Grant, 2009

Northwestern University Graduate Research Grant, 2008

Jack Larned Class of 1942 International Management Prize, 2002

Class of 1960s Scholar in Economics, 2000 and 2001

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer, Kellogg School of Management, 2009

Business Strategy (M.B.A. core course)

Instructor Rating: 9.4/10.0

Head Teaching Assistant, Kellogg School of Management, 2008

Business Strategy with Professors Meghan Busse, Tom Hubbard, and Michael Mazzeo

Teaching Assistant, Kellogg School of Management, 2006 – 2008

Business Strategy with Professors Michael Mazzeo and Jeroen Swinkels

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant to Professor Michael Mazzeo, 2007 – 2008

Research Assistant to Professor Robert Blattberg, 2006 – 2008

Research Assistant to Professor David Matsa, 2007

COURSE DEVELOPMENT

“Competitive Strategy in Financial Services,” with Professor Tom Hubbard

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

Morgan Stanley, Investment Banking Analyst, 2002 – 2003

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Gender Disparity in Urology: Preferences, Competition, & Quality of Care,” with James Roberts.

Abstract: In the United States, fewer than 6% of urologists are women. When women do not have access to a female urologist, they have higher death rates from urological cancers, all else equal. This paper analyzes the impact patients’ heterogeneous preferences and competition between urology groups have on the gender disparity in urology, and examines the consequences for the quality of care received by women. In particular, we model urology groups’ decisions to employ male and female urologists and find that groups are more likely to employ a female urologist as competition intensifies. Groups’ anticipations of business-stealing by competitors, however, forestalls the entry of subsequent female urologists in a market. With this as motivation, we present a counterfactual policy simulation that estimates the effect subsidizing urology groups to employ female urologists would have on women’s health outcomes.

ADDITIONAL WORKING PAPERS

“Names and Reputations: An Empirical Analysis.” *Submitted.*

Abstract: This paper empirically tests a number of the predictions that follow from theoretical models of firm reputation. Using the market for local plumbing services in Illinois, I find that the main theoretical result of the reputation literature holds: poor past performance by a firm is correlated with its decision to conceal its reputation. A firm that had a record of complaints one-standard-deviation above the mean was 133.2% more likely to change its name than the average firm. In addition, firms with longer tenures in the market were less likely to change their names or exit, while firms that had incurred substantial firm-specific sunk costs such as advertising were more likely to change their names than exit. Finally, I find that reputation matters comparatively more in smaller markets.

“A Business by Any Other Name: Firm Name Choice as a Signal of Firm Quality.”

Abstract: This paper presents a simple economic model of a firm’s name choice. The model predicts that the content of a firm’s name will be correlated with its *ex post* performance under certain conditions, which belies the conventional economic intuition that a firm’s name should represent little more than “cheap talk” about itself. Using unique data from markets for local plumbing services, the model’s main result is confirmed empirically: plumbing firms with names that begin with “A” receive six-times as many complaints regarding poor service, on average. Moreover, firms that attempt to conceal their reputations by operating with multiple trade names are also found to provide lower-quality service. These qualitative results extend to paid listings on Internet search engines. Firms that advertise on Google receive more complaints, all else equal, which casts doubt on the validity of sorting equilibria commonly used in the theoretical literature on position auctions.

ADDITIONAL WORKING PAPERS (CONT.)

“The Broadband Bonus: Accounting for Broadband Internet’s Impact on U.S. GDP,”
with Shane Greenstein, NBER WP 14758.

Invited to present at the Federal Communications Commission, August 2009.

Abstract: How much economic value did the diffusion of broadband create? We provide benchmark estimates for 1999 to 2006. We observe \$39 billion of total revenue in Internet access in 2006, with broadband accounting for \$28 billion of this total. Depending on the estimate, households generated \$20 to \$22 billion of the broadband revenue. Approximately \$8.3 to \$10.6 billion was additional revenue created between 1999 and 2006. That replacement is associated with \$4.8 to \$6.7 billion in consumer surplus, which is not measured via Gross Domestic Product (GDP). An Internet-access Consumer Price Index (CPI) would have to decline by 1.6% to 2.2% per year for it to reflect the creation of value. These estimates both differ substantially from those typically quoted in Washington policy discussions, and they shed light on several broadband policy issues, such as why relying on private investment worked to diffuse broadband in many US urban locations at the start of the millennium.

REFERENCES

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