



Honors Research Assistant Program

Title: Identifying the determinants of Adoption and Use of Digital Goods in Social Networks

Description of the Research: This project is sponsored by a small Twin-Cities based technology startup – Yugma. Yugma has agreed to provide data on users and usage data for analysis and any other inputs needed. Yugma provides a range of digital teleconferencing products (Yugma Free, Yugma Skype, Yugma Premium) which users can download from the website for use. Their recent product Yugma Skype provides conferencing features to Skype users and has been extremely popular.

Yugma has a large user base and hosts thousands of teleconferences every day. The fascinating aspect of the project is the study of the adoption of a digital product to understand how adoption and use occurs within social networks using live data.

The study will

- * help Yugma understand users and provide recommendations for product positioning and enhance the transition from the Free to the Premium product.
- * contribute to knowledge on product adoption, use and customer switching behavior in social networks

The research is focused on answering questions like:

- * What are the characteristics of users of the Free product and of the Premium product and how are they different?
- * How does product adoption and use spread within users' social networks?
- * What are the factors that predict the switch from the Free to the Premium (paid) version?

Responsibilities of the Student: The project is in its early stages and the student will be involved in

- * formulating the research model and thinking through the conceptual model of product adoption, usage and switching behavior. This will involve literature survey and reading of prior research papers.
- * Carry out data analysis
- * Participate in interactions with Yugma senior executives in the course of the project
- * Create a survey questionnaire to collect data from users

Approximate Number of Hours/Schedule: 8 hr/week

Qualifications: Familiarity with Excel and any statistics package (e.g. Minitab)