

SCMS Seminar



MACHINE LEARNING AND REAL TIME DEVELOPMENT IN R

Mr. Tong Lu (陆彤)
Lead Data Scientist, AvantCredit

Time: 9:00-10:00 a.m., Friday, December 5, 2014

Venue: Room 502, Starr Building, Fudan University (管理学院史代楼 502 室)

Abstract: The gap between development of advanced machine learning algorithms by statisticians and industry use of production models has been one of the most challenging questions in the technology industry. Companies like Netflix paid millions of dollars to develop complicated and accurate predictive models known as the Netflix Prize, but never implement the solution itself because “The additional accuracy gains did not seem to justify the engineering effort needed to bring it into a production environment.” Given that there are a massive set of packages for machine learning already in R and almost all cutting edge tools are first implemented in R by researchers in statistics and machine learning to accompany their articles, it makes one wonder why not to implement both of model development (known as “training” or “learning” to most machine learning experts) and production (known as “predict”) in the same language like R. This talk intends to provide a high level overview of such an effort in a technology startup setting.

Speaker's Bio: Tong Lu, Lead Data Scientist at AvantCredit, graduated from University of Chicago with a Master degree in Statistics. Tong is excited about exploring advanced machine learning algorithms to predict consumer behaviors and challenge the standards in the predictive analytics industry. His experience in graduate-level statistics and writing production code allows him to lay the bridge between machine learning algorithms and their implementation in large-scale real-time infrastructures.

AvantCredit is changing the way near-prime consumers borrow money. Utilizing advanced algorithms and machine-learning capabilities, the company offers a unique and highly customized approach to the personal loan process. The combination of technology, analytics and customer service capabilities allows the company to provide a simple process for personal loans and line of credit products to borrowers, all entirely online. AvantCredit operates in 46 U.S. states and in the United Kingdom under the brand SpringCoin.com. The company has experience some tremendous growth of over the past 2 years and constantly need more talent to continue their growth and success.