Abstract:

Obtaining a healthy and nutritious diet has proven to prevent various diseases, yet many populations suffer from high obesity rates that continue to increase. One potential cause is that people take their cooking inspiration from online recipes which are rather unhealthy. Authors have previously examined food-related interactions online, and how users can be nudged into the direction of healthier food consumption. Additional literature has made use of social networks, such as Facebook, to infer health statistics. This thesis takes the study of nutrition in the online domain further by exploring the factors that influence interactions with recipe advertisements on Facebook, in order to eventually encourage people to make better health-related choices. The results show that some factors, for instance images and state healthiness, show a difference in clicks or impressions on advertisements. Other factors, including recipe healthiness and user interests, do not show differences in interactions. Users responding to recipe promotions tend to be of older age, and predominantly female. Results also reveal that advertising budget is important when promoting recipes. These findings can be useful to governmental bodies and other actors, as they reveal which factors influence recipe interactions. That knowledge can then be exploited to promote a healthier diet.