

Why I see the ads? Data mining-AI bots to discover micro-targeted online video ads: A case study on political campaign ads**Adisak Sukul**

Iowa State University, USA

With growing number of users who watch videos online on YouTube, advertising on those videos has become a significant market. With the ability to specifically target users based on their preferences, it has become an even more essential medium of advertising for political campaigns. Analyzing the political ads that are viewed by different users could potentially help us understand the strategies that political campaigns use, to target users online. We developed new tools of data collection and coding to systematically test theories about how campaigns use online advertising to target voters. We aimed at developing a system of bots that have different online profiles. These bots will watch videos on YouTube, tracking and collecting the advertisements shown and to develop an automated coding scheme for these videos, allowing us to measure the content of the ads shown to the bots and test for how these messages vary as a result of the differences in the bots' profile. The creation of these data allows us to understand the strategies campaigns use to target voters online. The long-term goal of this project is to understand the abilities of campaigns to reach voters via online advertising. We developed and tested novel theories of campaign strategy. The aim was to create new measurement technologies that will make it possible to examine this growing and understudied aspect of political campaigns. This project will lead to understanding on other types of micro-targeted online ads in the future.

adisak@iastate.edu