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Not all authors are affiliated with TPI. We do not necessarily agree with everything, or even anything, in these papers, but find them interesting.

TPI's Research Roundup is our semi-regular compilation of recent outside research of interest to tech policy nerds. If you've read a paper you think might be interesting to include in the next Roundup, feel free to send it to nlovin@techpolicyinstitute.org.

The Diffusion of Disruptive Technologies

Nicholas Bloom,
Tarek Alexander Hassan,
Aakash Kalyani,
Josh Lerner
and Ahmed Tahoun

Their question: How do new technologies spread across space and between companies?

Their answer: Low-skill jobs using specific technologies disperse geographically more rapidly than high-skill jobs. As a result, the original location of high-skilled jobs using new technologies are likely to remain longer in a few specific, concentrated areas. The authors track the spread of 29 technologies using patent data, job postings, and earning calls.

Why does it matter? Understanding the dynamics of technologies and job growth can help policymakers think about future regional implications of economic growth.

Attention Economics of Instagram Stars

Sohpia Gaenssle

Their question: How does body exposure affect attention and revenue for social media "influencers?"

Their answer: Having more sexualized and exposed photos is associated with a large and significant positive impact on an influencer's estimated weekly revenue. Posting one additional photo out of 12 classified as having "body exposure" as defined by the author is associated with \$997 in additional income. The effect does not appear to differ based on the gender of the poster.

Why does it matter? Instagram is a major social network, and the dynamics of creators revenue are worth understanding. Sex still sells, apparently.

The Role of "Live" in Livestreaming Markets:

Evidence Using Orthogonal Random Forest

Ziewei Cong, Jai Liu, Puneet Manchada

Their question: What is the value of the "live" part of live streaming?

Their answer: The "live" part is valuable, but content retains residual value once it is no longer live. Specifically, tickets to view a live stream is more price-sensitive prior to the event than after (-0.5 14 days prior to the event and -0.1 after the event) and is price-insensitive during the event. The study is based on data from a Chinese livestreaming platform and comparing people's willingness to pay for live content vs recorded versions of live content.

Why does it matter? Very little data prior to this study helps content creators and distributors determine the most profitable ways to release content.

Digital Addiction

Hunt Allcott,
Matthew Gentzkow,
and Lena Song

Their question: Are smartphones and social media addictive?

Their answer: For many people, yes. A key part of the problem seems to be that people do not notice habit formation and overestimate their self control. Their answer derives from a randomized experiment they conducted.

Why does it matter? This research confirms what many suspect about online addiction and digs deeper into what explains the phenomenon. Understanding these underlying causes can help determine treatments.
