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Destination

University of New South Wales (UNSW) Business School
School of Marketing
Postdoctoral Fellow Position

Dear UNSW Business School, School of Marketing representative,

I write this letter to apply for the Postdoctoral Fellow opportunity within the School of Marketing at the UNSW Business School, posted on 4th June 2019 on the Seek.com.au web-page.

My name is Sergey Alexeev and I am a PhD in Economics candidate (specialising in econometrics) at the University of Technology Sydney. I have recently submitted my thesis on 30th June 2019 and expect to receive my doctorate by October 2019. In what follows, I hope to demonstrate that my research skills and interests, teaching abilities, and general life experience have shaped me as an ideal candidate for the opening at UNSW. For convenience, this cover letter has been structured in accordance with the specified selection criteria of the Position Description.

1. PhD in Marketing, Business, Econometrics, Computer Science or similar with strong background in empirical econometric models

I am an econometrician with a PhD in Economics (completed and awaiting conferral) and three research papers submitted into peer-reviewed journals. I have also tutored time series econometrics, predictive analytics and data mining methods, as well as micro- and macroeconomics, and have been systematically using econometrics methods since 2007.

Through my Bachelor's (Honours) and Master's in Finance, and Master's and PhD in Economics, as well as through industry and public sector experience, I have used empirical econometric models to predict asset prices, explain economic growth, build an asset portfolio, calculate college wage premiums, measure intergenerational mobility, estimate inequality and polarisation, and analyse policy interventions.

2. Strong interest in real-world marketing issues

Although my recent background is in economics, my first tertiary degree was from a business school, where I received excellent training in various branches of marketing, management and finance. My understanding of business science was also later sharpened by my industry experience. I made the decision in 2014, however, to focus on

economics as I felt that it provides more rigour in both theory and empirical exploration, which suits my tastes better than qualitative methodology. Nonetheless, I still have a passion for doing research in business, especially marketing, as I believe that it has a wide potential to influence the real world.

There are a number of marketing research questions that I believe are important and under-explored. One example is discovering an optimal strategy for organisations to respond to data breaches. The growing number of internal information leakages due to mismanagement or hacking suggests that there is an unexplored downside to the collection of large datasets (often containing sensitive information) for machine learning purposes. Not every company will find benefits from machine learning as it requires expertise and tight integration with existing business processes, but every company is a candidate for a breach. While some aspects of the costs, risks and management of data breaches are explored (Janakiraman et al. 2018; Martin et al. 2017; Martin et al. 2016), the area still appears to be underappreciated and I am excited by the potential opportunity to contribute to it for the duration of the fellowship.

As a junior researcher, I would, however, clearly be heavily influenced by the expertise and experience of S.H.A.R.P. Research Professor of Marketing Dr. Harald J. van Heerde, and I wholeheartedly welcome this influence. I am especially fond of his work on the sales effects of the marketing mix and new media (e.g. Dinner et al. 2014).

3. Strong quantitative background and training

I have a strong quantitative background, having started my career with both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Finance and working as a mergers and acquisitions industry Data Analyst, and then in management consulting. My quantitative skill-set has been further developed through completion of Master's and PhD degrees in Economics, which led to roles in teaching and research in this field.

4. Strong programming and data handling skills, for example in R, Python, Matlab or Gauss

During my studies at York University, I used Gauss for two graduate level research projects; during coursework at the University of Technology Sydney, I have been using both R and Matlab. I am also proficient in Stata, and am currently learning Python.

Other programming skills include LaTeX, Unix and Mathematica.

5. Excellent oral and written communication skills

Throughout my industry experience and academic coursework, I have been regularly making presentations, and since 2013, I have been regularly teaching. My current teaching evaluation at the University of Technology Sydney is 4.55 out of 5.0.¹ Since 2011, I have also been regularly participating in academic conferences and created a custom Beamer template for a more efficient presentation of my research papers.²

6. Proven, or demonstrated excellent potential for, an outstanding publication record

I have three working papers currently under review:

1. *The Structure of Wages in Russia: 1985–2015* (Alexeev 2019c) under review in *The European Economic Review* (A* level general-interest economics journal);
2. *The Effect of the Test-Preparation Industry on Centralized College Admission* (Alexeev 2019b) under review in *A Quarterly Journal of Operations Research* (B level economics theory journal); and
3. *On Australian Exceptionalism: The Role of Home Ownership in Income Mobility, Inequality and Polarization* (Alexeev 2019a) under review in *The Journal of Housing Economics* (A level housing economics journal).

In the field of empirical labour economics, I also have a number of research projects in progress.³

In the field of business science, in 2007, during the beginning of my Bachelor's in Finance (Honours), I published an article titled *Modern Brands Based on Soviet Trademarks* in *Proceedings of VII Graduate School of Management International Student Conference*. In 2006, I also received a distinction for my second year research paper titled *SWOT Analysis of Otis Elevator Company in Russia*.

7. Demonstrated ability to work as part of a team and work with minimal supervision

As evidence of my capacity to work independently and with minimal supervision, I have written all of my working papers without co-authors (as it sends a better signal to future potential academic employers in the field of economics). Additionally, throughout my career, I have demonstrated the ability to work effectively as part of a team. I am currently contracted by the New South Wales Department of Education where I work in a team of four people led by Principal Evaluator, Sarah Rahman, to evaluate the influence of the “Bump It Up” program on New South Wales public school students. I also tutor for Intermediate Microeconomics at the University of Technology Sydney, where I am part of a three-person team led by Lecturer, Dr. Massimo Scotti.

8. Demonstrated high level analytical and problem-solving skills

Throughout my academic training from European, North American and Australian universities, I successfully completed many research projects that were of noticeable interest to faculty members and required high level analytical and problem-solving skills. For example, my Honours thesis on the costs of raising capital through initial public offerings that I completed in 2009 was noticed by my Lecturer, Yuri Ignatishin, who later offered me the position of Data Analyst in his mergers and acquisitions data vending company. More recently, during my PhD in Economics, my supervisor and Associate Professor, Dr. Peter Siminski, and I discussed the possibility of us co-authoring an empirical labour research paper, however, we later decided that individually conducted research would be a better signal to future potential academic

employers.

The projects that I was involved with during my industry and public sector employment were often similar to academic research projects and also required the use of these analytical and problem-solving skills. For example, in 2010, while being employed as a mergers and acquisitions Data Analyst, I partook in modelling the consequences of a hypothetical merger of key Russian IT companies. Currently, I am involved in developing econometrics models to evaluate the influence of the “Bump It Up” program on New South Wales public school students.

9. Demonstrated capacity to deliver high quality project outcomes in a timely manner

The projects that I have been trusted to work on throughout my industry and academic experiences, including those mentioned above, have always been delivered in a timely manner. I believe that it is important to produce deliverables and outcomes well before their deadline, and then use the remaining time for revision, editing and external evaluation.

Although I started the PhD program in 2015, my work on the actual research papers started in 2017, as economists at the University of Technology Sydney are required to successfully finish coursework during the first two years of their degree. From 2017 to 2019, I managed to produce three research papers, and I hope to produce many more.

10. Knowledge of equal opportunity principles

Having teaching experience from Europe, North America and Australia, and with students of diverse backgrounds, I am a strong believer in meritocracy. All people should be treated equally or similarly and not be disadvantaged by prejudice or bias. The best person for a job or a promotion must always be the person who earns that position based on their qualifications, experience and knowledge.

11. Knowledge of health and safety responsibilities and commitment to attending relevant health and safety training.

I believe that each employee must be responsible for the safety and well-being of themselves and others, and adhere to the aim that all work must be performed in accordance with the requirements of the health and safety policy and procedures of the organisation for which they work. I also believe that it is important for employees to undertake, and encourage others to participate in, regular training on all facets of safe work practices.

I hope I have addressed the selection criteria adequately, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries or require further information.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.

Yours sincerely,

Sergey Alexeev

Enclosure:
Curriculum vitae

Notes

1. The materials and students' feedbacks for the course Intermediate Microeconomics recently taught by me at the University of Technology Sydney can be accessed on my private web-page <http://www.backwardinduction.blog/2017-2018-intermediate-microeconomics-business-course-at-uts/>.
2. An example of the template can be accessed on my private web-page <http://www.backwardinduction.blog/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Alexeev.-14.08.2019-Mobility.pdf>.
3. The current research projects in progress from the area of applied labour economics can be accessed on my private web-page <http://www.backwardinduction.blog/his-research/>.

References

- Alexeev, S. (2019a). *On Australian Exceptionalism: The Role of Home Ownership in Income Mobility, Inequality and Polarization*. Working Paper. URL: [↗](#).
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- Dinner, I. M., H. J. H. Van, and S. A. Neslin (2014). “Driving Online and Offline Sales: The Cross-Channel Effects of Traditional, Online Display, and Paid Search Advertising”. In: *Journal of Marketing Research* 51.5, pp. 527–545. URL: [↗](#).
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- Martin, K. D., A. Borah, and R. W. Palmatier (2016). “The Dark Side of Big Data’s Effect on Firm Performance”. In: *Marketing Science Institute Working Paper Series*, pp. 16–104. URL: [↗](#).