Analytics Consulting Lab Syllabus Winter 2025
10-14-24 Update

Background on the Analytical Consulting Lab

The Analytics Consulting Lab (ACL) is part of the Foster experiential learning initiative. The specific interest in the Analytics Consulting Lab comes out of the deep demand for business leaders that can provide guidance in analysis and focus that analysis to specific business questions. Additionally, many recruiters and employers have commented that finding talent that bridges the business and analytical communities is difficult. The ACL strives to provide a real-world learning experience for students to work with sponsoring companies on business questions that revolve around analysis. Students work in teams using analysis (broadly defined) to answer current and important business questions.

Available Projects from the following Leading Firms:

Seattle Kraken – Analytics to Increase Interest in Hockey Locally
GM EV Adoption and Marketing Analysis
Microsoft CoPilot AI Opportunities
Whole Foods
Marshall Gerstein IP - Strategies for AI
Sea Wolf Bakery
Paylocity
AstraZeneca
Feral File
Archer
Carleton House
Search Fund
De Laurenti
David Stine Fine Furniture
The Lerner Group
PitchBob
Zerone Analytiqs of Africa
Sage AI
Amtrak
TMRW Sports

Changing Tastes – Diets from Gen Z developed by AI
Lawrence and Scott
UW Athletics
José Andrés Group Food Group
Sustainability and Economic Prosperity for Malawi
US Army Special Operations Command (SOCOM)
Naturacur
UW Climate Risk Lab
The Thomas Group – Build the Next Great Community in Seattle

Project descriptions follow herein.

READ THIS!!!!! Course Expectations

Analytics Consulting Lab is an experiential class, with a strong focus on the application of analytics and market measurement in a real-world, client-facing, consulting environment. It provides an excellent opportunity for Foster MBA students to get real-world experience in consulting and in applying analytics and market measurement techniques to actual business challenges and opportunities.

Therefore, it is important to set some very important expectations in regards to this class:

- **The class does NOT involve lectures to present new theory or analytical techniques. Students seeking new analytical techniques or lectures on analytics, primarily, should consider other courses for that goal. This is a class on the application of analytics in a real-world, team-based environment.**
- **You will work in a team. Team dynamics will be instrumental in your experience.** It is important that you are available, accountable, dedicated, and willing to contribute in a team. In most cases, you get to choose your teammates. Be extremely open and honest with your teammates in terms of their contribution and hold each other accountable in a supportive and respectful manner.
- **The Professor is your advisor, coach, aide, and sounding-board.** He is here to help you in your journey through the project. **The MBA team is in a leadership role to execute the project, communicate and present to the client, and formulate recommendations.**
- The Professor can help you with reviewing regression, analytical concepts, data visualization, consulting best practices, and most any topic that arises on the project. **Execution of the project is, however, the responsibility of the MBA team.**
- **Each project in ACL is unique, real, and driven by an actual client-facing challenge or opportunity.** Your project will vary from others. Projects have different goals, different analytical opportunities, and clearly different clients. You can apply for the project(s) that most interests you.

- **ACL is a lot of work, a lot of learning, and a lot of fun**. Many students consider it a top Foster experience. Be sure that your schedule, life, and other commitments permit you to get the most from the class.

Course Details

The ACL is offered as MKTG 535.

Most projects in the ACL are sponsored by Seattle-based firms, professional contacts of Dr. Walker, and alumni of the school, at very senior levels in their organizations. Students taking the ACL are assured a strong learning experience and a commitment from the firm to provide access to decision maker and information that will make the experience meaningful.

Application Process

Students interested in the ACL must select MKTG 535 during elective bidding. Once in the class, email Dr. Walker of your:

- Project Choice #1
- Project Choice #2
- Project Choice #3
- Any fellow desired student for a team (limit of one student to specify). Team member preference is only considered if both people select each other.
- Other information that you may wish to share in your application, personal goals, career aspirations, etc.

Student information in the application process is used in formulating teams and assigning projects so that goals, backgrounds, skills, and expectations are all best aligned.

Project Assignment

Student assignments to client projects will be based on individual preferences, requested skill sets and industry experience, and team member diversity. Every attempt will be made to grant students their first or second choice of projects, and only third if necessary. Student information is collected via the application. Students may select one fellow student for a project. This fellow student selection is honored as possible, if the both students select each other.

Students will be notified about their project assignments during the term before the class. All efforts are taken to accommodate first choices, while forming teams with an appropriate set of skills and interests.

Case Packet and Readings

As this course is an experiential one, there are no specific cases to prepare. However, many students have looked for examples of companies that have excelled at Analytics. Also, as the course emphasizes consulting and best practices in a professional client engagement, there is a need to consider some of these best practices. Given this, the following text is recommended and optional:

1) The McKinsey Way, Ethan M. Rasiel, McGraw-Hill

These texts are easily purchased on-line, so these are not requested in the bookstore.

Course Meetings

As with other experiential courses, the focus is on the team project and its delivery to the sponsoring company.

Teams will meet with the Professor on a regularly and frequent basis in order to discuss the analysis, flow of work, final presentation and delivery to the sponsoring team. The class will also meet with the prescribed schedule to review concepts and themes important in being successful with the analytical consulting function and in order to provide presentations for the purpose of group learning.

All Group Meetings are to be held with the team and the Professor at a pre-defined time that works mutually. Meetings with the Professor and Client must conclude before 4:30PM on weekdays. Students who cannot make meetings in person are encouraged and welcome to join via telephone.

Pre-term activities
        Project identification
        Team formation
        Identification of Team Liaison to Client
        Identification of Team Liaison to Professor
        Client Introduction
        Project description
        Schedule first group meeting with Professor
        Schedule first client meeting with Client

Week I:
        Class Session I
                Getting Started with ACL
                Managing Project Ambiguity
                Managing Teams
                Overview of the Consulting Approach
                Dealing with Data, Descriptive Statistics
                Using Tools: JMP, Excel, Tableau
Week II:

        Group Meeting I:
                Developing a Work Plan, Project Analysis
                Examples of Past Analysis
                Use of Graphics, Best Practices in Presentation of Data
                Building Points Through Analysis

Week III:

Group Meeting II:
     Preliminary Analysis of Data
     Teams to bring descriptive statistics to meeting with Professor
     Work Plans due to Professor

Week IV
     Group Meeting III: Focus on Data and Analysis
          Address questions and issues in analysis

Week V
     Group Meeting IV: Prep for Midpoint Check-in

     Class Session II
          Mid-term progress review and **team mini-presentations**
          Mid-point document due at beginning of class
          Mid-point team and mid-point peer feedback due to professor

Week VI :
     Group Meeting V:
          Mid-point feedback, planning for next phase

Week VII
     Group Meeting VI:
     As per team needs

Week VIII
     Group Meeting VII:
     As per team needs

Week IX
     Group Meeting IX:
          Dry-run of presentation with Professor

Week X
     Class Session III
          Project Findings
          Final project deliverable due to Professor and Client on last Wednesday.
          Meetings with Clients to be held and presentations made to client in person during or before final week of classes.

As in any professional consulting engagement, the students are requested to regularly meet with the client to receive input, data, direction of project goals, and feedback on the progress as needed. All clients are committed and dedicated to fulfilling the learning and business aspect of the project.

Teams may schedule additional time with the Professor as needed and as available.

Grading

Grading of the project is driven largely by the quality of the team project. The Professor will evaluate the project, its analysis, presentation, and delivery on the following major points:

- Analysis:
  - Quality of analysis (thoroughness, appropriateness)
  - Clarity and quality of model summary and description
  - Intellectual impact (was the analysis creative, novel, clever, or otherwise compelling?)
- Project Document
  - Quality of project description
  - Quality of analysis summary
  - Quality of recommendations and conclusions
  - Use of meaningful graphs, graphs, and presentation of data
- Presentation Documents
  - Quality of presentation
  - Professional impact of the presentation
  - Ability to communicate main points of the analysis and recommendations
- Team Meetings
  - Preparation
  - Organization
  - Progress

The Professor will ask the client company to provide feedback on the same above points.

Peer evaluations will also be collected from each member. Each student must rate their teammates on the following dimensions:

- Intellectual and creative contribution
- Workload and willingness to take initiative
- Organization, preparation, and availability
- Collaboration and respect for peers

Peer evaluations will be on a 1-10 scale with 10 being excellent and 1 being poor. All peer evaluations will be treated confidentially.

All ACL students must participate, as participation is also important to make this a meaningful learning experience for all involved.

Grade Breakdown

Professor Evaluation of Final project materials and presentation: 40%
Professor Evaluation of Work plan and Mid-point review: 20%
Client Evaluation of Final project materials and presentation: 15%
Peer Evaluations and Participation: 10%

Professor Evaluation of Preparation during meetings: 15%

Role of the Professor

The Professor serves as an aide, counselor, and advisor for the team. The Professor does not conduct the analysis, but will provide detailed direction on analytical approaches. The Professor does not serve as the team liaison or representative to the client. The team must organize itself and identify such a liaison. The Professor may accompany the team to select team meetings and or participate in calls, but the Professor cannot in practically, attend all such meetings.

In the event that the client or the ACL student team encounter an incompatibility or encounter an issue, the Professor will intervene to remedy the situation.

The Professor may also resolve project assignments, as needed.

Role of the Team

The team will consist of 3 to 7 Foster MBA students working as a team to complete analysis, as defined by the client as agreed to before the start of the academic term.

The team should be mindful to control the amount of time that is required of the client. This means being prepared for meetings, having a designated liaison to schedule meetings, request information, and follow-through with next steps. This level of preparation and understanding is needed as most clients sponsor this project but do not allocate a full-time associate to work with the ACL team.

The team should expect to contribute about 400-600 hours (depending on team size) over the 10-week period to this ACL project. This is a reasonable expectation for a team working on a project and is consistent with other experiential and lab courses in other MBA programs. This translates to 8-10 hours per person per week.

The team will produce a white paper that documents the study, results, and recommendations. The team will also prepare a presentation and deliver it in person to the client and its team. A reduced version with emphasis on key findings is also to be presented at the last class.

Role of the Client

The client provides the real-world learning opportunity, data needed to complete the appropriate analysis, and feedback on the quality of the project and its analysis. The Client is not expected to solve the problem, but should provide ample expertise, data, and contextual information to the ACL team.

Prerequisites

All students in the ACL must have completed a statistics class. There are no other requirements.

Some FAQs:

What is the Analytical Consulting Lab?
It is a course available to Foster MBA students that are interested in the use of analytics in business. Students must take specific prerequisites and have strong academic performance in such classes to take the Analytics Consulting Lab. Students work in teams to resolve a real-work business problem using analytics.

What do you mean by Analytics?
It is meant to be broad but includes the use of specific quantitative approaches, such as regression analysis, time series analysis, forecasting, market segmentation, data mining, optimization, logistical analysis, scenario simulation, and risk analysis, as examples. In particular, we mean solving a business problem using data and applying one of these quantitative approaches.

How does this experience benefit the students?
Foster MBA students taking the ACL will work on a real-world problem under the direction of Dr. Walker. The opportunity to apply analytical theory and learn about a business, make recommendations, and bring together many aspects of their business education is unparalleled. We also ask that the students focus on how to communicate the results of analysis in the context of business decision-making. For students interested in moving to an industry to deep in analytics after graduation or developing new business skills in analytics, this course will be very attractive.

The Analytics field is one of the most demanded in the workforce and students have expressed deep interest in developing strong skills in analytics. This course meets an interest in our students and provides them an exceptional experiential learning opportunity.

How does the Client benefit from this opportunity?
The ACL is an intensive analytics elective that attracts some of our most analytically talented MBA students. It is expected that the student group of 5 will commit about 500 working hours to the project. Additionally, the student project will be overseen by Dr. Walker, who has 20 years plus experience and deep expertise in analytics and its application in business.

We expect that the project deliverables, recommendations, and report will provide direct value to your organization. However, we also believe that the project provides your organization and opportunity to determine how and where to invest in more analytics. If this includes the acquisition of more analytical talent, the project provides an excellent conduit to members of our student body that are talented and interested in this space.

How does the team work with the Client?
For the student team, the partnering company is a client. They will conduct their analysis and provide recommendations through a report and presentation in the same format and in the same manner as a consulting service. The faculty member also serves as an important liaison between the partner and the student, serving to manage time commitments and negotiate deliverables. It is expected that the student team can meet with and speak with key members of your team that can help them answer questions relevant to the analysis.

Which software will we use?
It really depends on the project and your familiarity with software packages. This course is software agnostic, meaning most software packages are acceptable. The course does not have as a goal to teach a particular package, but rather to enable analytics in a business project. You are welcome to use software of your choice. Most projects can well be completed with a combination of Excel and one statistical package. If you are unsure or unfamiliar with statistical software, we will discuss that during our first meeting. Some packages may have a minimal cost.

What about the data?
To make this experience valuable to the students and the to solve the business problem at hand, we do need access to data. It is important that the data be available before the project begins. Additionally, the project should make use of "scrubbed" data, that is data that is free of specific information that would be sensitive or otherwise governed by a law, such as social security numbers of customers or names of customers.

What types of business problems can be considered?
As analytics is helpful in many business functions, we are open to many applications of analytics. Specific business problems in marketing, forecasting, customer segmentation, pricing, commodity analysis, logistics, risk management, operations, inventory leveling, supply chain improvement, and scenario planning are sure to provide great analytical opportunities.

Will the analysis become public?
The work between the students and your organization is considered confidential. If necessary, the students may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement. If this is necessary, we ask that the non-disclosure agreement be such that it does not prevent the students from seeking employment or from building on their experience gained on the project.

From time to time, such company-student projects lead to very interesting business lessons. As a leading business school, we are interested in sharing such lessons with our next generation students and business leaders. We do this through business cases. If such an opportunity exists with your project, we will seek your permission to relate the business lesson through a case study.

How to I join the Class?

First, you must meet the prerequisites. Then submit your project selections to Dr. Russell Walker upon entering the course.

Contact Information
Please contact Russell Walker, Ph.D.
Via e-mail: rwalker1@uw.edu

Winter 2025 PROJECTS

ACL for MBA

Seattle Kraken

Growing Hockey

Interest In the Puget Sound Region

As we enter the fourth season in Seattle Kraken history, we are increasingly focused on growing the game of hockey in Seattle and the Puget Sound region. In 2021, the Kraken became the NHL's 32nd team via expansion, but the Kraken were certainly not the first expansion team to start playing in a non-traditional hockey market. From the 1990s to the 2000s, the NHL has expanded into markets including the Bay Area (San Jose Sharks), South Florida (Florida Panthers), Dallas-Fort Worth (Dallas Stars), Tampa Bay (Lightning), Orange County (Anaheim Ducks), Nashville (Predators), Phoenix (Arizona Coyotes), Atlanta (Thrashers), and finally, Vegas (Golden Knights). In each of these markets, the game of hockey has grown at varying levels due in part to the local NHL team's involvement in building community ice rinks across the region.

*As we embark on our journey to grow hockey through the existing Kraken Community Iceplex and a potential two-sheet ice rink project in Kirkland, **we'd like you to design a long-term plan to increase hockey and ice sport participation in the Puget Sound Region.** This includes, but is not limited to, the following:*

- *Performing historical analyses of trends and timelines of ice sport growth in other non-traditional hockey markets*

- *A market analysis of the Puget Sound to identify the ideal locations / communities for future ice rink projects*

- *A development timeline of new ice rinks to reach stable ice sport participation levels*

The Seattle Kraken are an alumni firm of the ACL!!!

General Motors EV

GM.com

EV Adoption

General Motors EV

EV Adoption

There's a prevailing narrative that EV adoption is slowing down - but the data can paint a different picture

How fast are EVs growing? What type of retention are we seeing, and what's the market opportunity realistically?

What are the long term headwinds and tailwinds?

How can we look at different populations and market segments and forecast GM's opportunity in the space?

What features or products are missing or what consumer needs remain unmet?

How are EVs most effectively marketed to drive adoption?

The GM EV is alumni of the ACL!!!

Whole Foods

Innovative Price Optimization

Price Optimization:

As part of this project, the team will evaluate the effectiveness of innovative price optimization models in driving business outcomes and propose a recommended framework for model-driven pricing.

The Whole Foods is alumni of the ACL!!!

Microsoft Copilot AI Opportunities

microsoft.com

Background

In this contemporary project, students will examine the value of Copilot AI from the lens of businesses. How will businesses us Copilot? What is the use case and value? Associated analysis in value creation and pricing are suggested.

- Create a Business Justification and ROI as a Microsoft Customer to purchase Microsoft Copilot for their business.
- Students must do this based as a small, medium, and enterprise level business. Three business cases.
- Students are expected to research MSFT Copilot and determine:
  The benefits of Copilot are for the business
  How and what type of copilot the business will be purchasing.
  An estimate of cost and time to the business to deploy Copilot.
  Cost Savings or Revenue Generation or Productivity Opportunities the business will receive.
  Students will research Microsoft and attempt to bucket what a small, medium, and enterprise business looks like from the Microsoft Perspective.
  Students may pick any business they like in each of the three customer segmentations.

Microsoft is an alumni firm of ACL!!!

Marshall Gerstein IP

www.marshallip.com

About:

Marshall, Gerstein & Borun LLP provides sophisticated intellectual property advice and legal services to many of the world's largest, most innovative businesses, research institutions, universities, and entrepreneurs. For more than six decades, we have been exclusively dedicated to excellence in the practice of IP law. Our size and singular focus enhance efficiency, foster responsive and creative decision-making, and help clients achieve mission-critical results. We cultivate trust, communicate clearly, and deliver effective solutions.

Thesis:

Smaller companies/startups (e.g., entitles with less than $X revenue/year) tend to file patents in emerging technical fields

(e.g., AI). In many cases, the patents of these smaller companies get asserted against larger companies (e.g., Fortune 500 companies) because the smaller companies assert the patents themselves, or the patents of the smaller companies are bought/sold by third parties (e.g., non-practicing entities a/k/a "patent trolls") who assert them.

Question(s):

How many AI-related patents, or patent applications, are currently filed by small companies?

What is the distribution of these patents based on industry.

Which large companies (based on industry) are likely to be targets in the future, and at what percentage based on at least patent count per industry?

This project is sponsored by a proud alumnus of Professor Walker's Class!

Sea Wolf Bakery

SEAWOLFBAKERS.COM
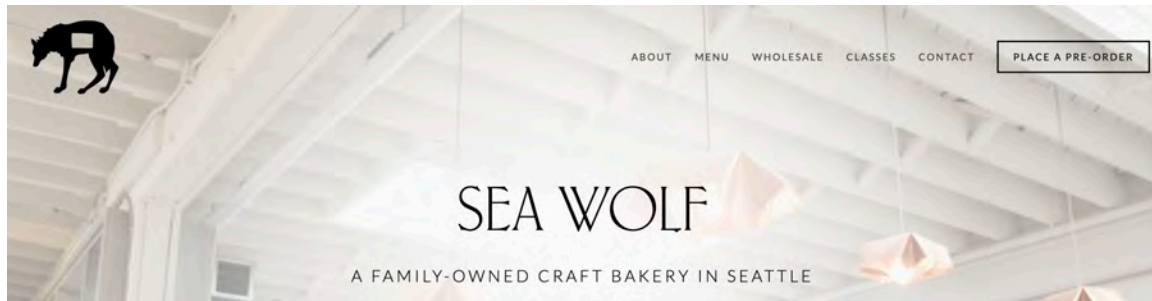
COMPANY BACKGROUND

Sea Wolf Bakers, established in 2014 by co-owners and brothers Kit and Jesse Schumann, began as a wholesale operation selling sourdough bread to local restaurants. In 2016, the bakery hired its first employees, launched a Kickstarter campaign, and opened its retail location on Stone Way N in the Fremont neighborhood. At its new retail counter, Sea Wolf Bakers expanded its offerings to serve several kinds of bread, pretzels, laminated pastries, tea, and drip coffee.

Since opening their retail location up until mid-2023, the bakery's annual revenue grew by 10% to 25%. This growth was driven mainly by increased retail demand, though wholesale sales also grew 5% to 15% each year. Sea Wolf Bakers also consistently expanded product offerings for retail customers from 2018 through 2022 including: espresso coffee, lunch offerings like pizza and salad, and additional pastry and bread items.

In 2022, in an effort to decrease transaction fees, the bakery switched from using Square Point of Sale systems (both hardware and software) to using Clover Point of Sale through Gravity Payment Processing. The bakery estimates that this reduced transaction costs by about 1% or $5000 annually. However, sales reporting within the native Clover platform is clunky. Data is difficult to extract with time stamps and analysis is very laborious because of the reporting user interface and formatting standards.

SALES PLATFORM ANALYSIS

As Sea Wolf Bakers builds out its business plan for the next 5 years, they want to consider what point of sale system will serve them best going forward. This system should have robust analytics and detailed, easy to access sales information that can be quickly understood by managers and reported on a day to day or week to week basis. Production Managers use this data to make decisions about how to adjust bakery production to meet changing demand and seasonal fluctuations.

The bakery could consider several options: (1) Keep Clover with Gravity Payment Processing and build in-house analytics workbooks that process the data (could be in SQL or Excel), (2) Keep Clover with Gravity Payment Processing and pay for an app that will parse Clover data and present statistics and analytics in easy-to-read formats for managers, (3) Go back to Square Payment Processing and use their native analytics dashboard, (4) Consider another payment processing platform that has robust analytics.

Consultant students looking into this question will need to develop a deep understanding of the sales data which leaders and managers at Sea Wolf Bakers are in need of on a daily, weekly, and monthly reporting basis. Their initial work will be to use currently available data to display helpful information about time-of-day product sales, daily total product sales based on day of the week, and week to week sales fluctuations. Consultants will have access to sales history of the bakery from 2016 through 2023.

After mining current data and interviewing company leaders, the consultant students will research analytics platforms or build their own in-house workbooks to amalgamate sales data and present easily-readable analysis. Based on their analysis, including cost comparisons of different platforms and processing fees, the student consultants will make a recommendation on the next sales platform for the bakery to use.

KEY QUESTIONS

1. Which data will best serve the bakery to optimize sales, increase overall profits, and minimize waste?

2. By mining data from all the previous sales reports, 2016 to 2023, what key insights can be presented to the leadership of the bakery about next steps for profit margin growth and reducing waste?

3. What is the most digestible, easily replicable, and quickest way to present these analytics and update managers on a week to week basis?

4. Should the bakery switch point of sale systems and payment processing providers? What are the key benefits, costs, and risks of making a switch or staying with the current one?

KEY DELIVERABLES

- An analytics workbook that presents Sea Wolf Bakers sales data and analytics and can be updated by stakeholders on a daily or weekly basis with reports from their point of sale system

- A cost-benefit analysis of each option for switching to a new sales system or staying with the current one

- A risk assessment for each option for switching to a new sales system or staying with the current one

STAKEHOLDERS

Jesse Schumann - Co-owner of Sea Wolf Bakers
Founder
Jesse manages accounting, finances, human resources, payroll, benefits, sales, and business strategy for Sea Wolf Bakers.

Kit Schumann - Co-owner of Sea Wolf Bakers
Founder
Kit manages creative growth, marketing, brand identity, production, operations, staff training and professional development for Sea Wolf Bakers.

Haley Sive - Head of Sales
2017 to present
Haley manages sales operations for the bakery including in-person retail sales systems, wholesale, and online retail sales. She also leads marketing, customer relationships, and events.

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Paylocity

WWW.PAYLOCITY.COM
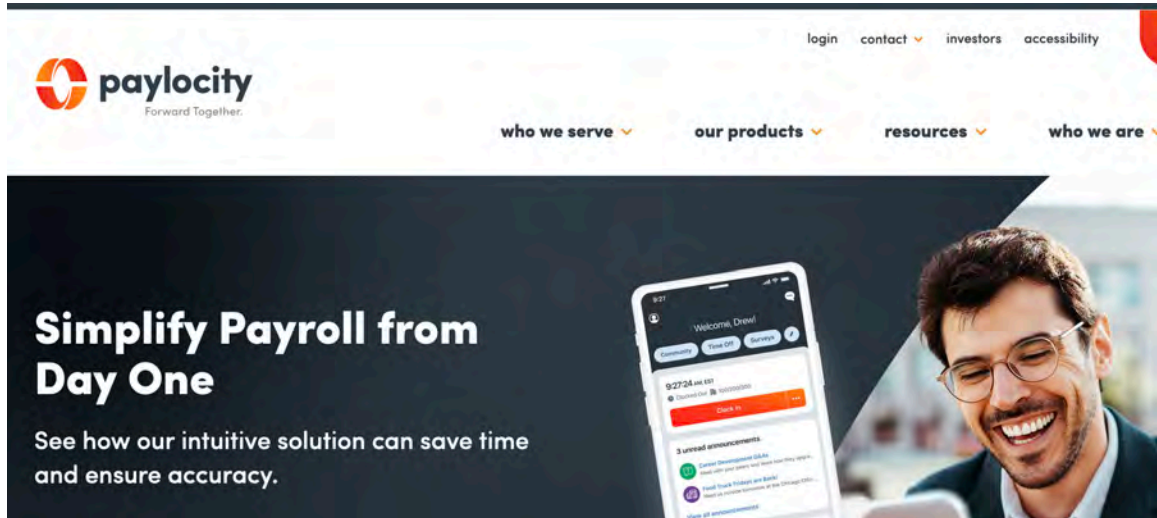
Paylocity provides cloud-based HR and payroll software solutions designed to streamline workforce management and enhance employee engagement. This includes products such as:

- Payroll Processing
- Human Capital Management (Recruiting, onboarding, performance management, etc.)
- Time and Attendance
- Benefits Administration
- Employee Self-Service (Access to pay stubs, tax forms, reimbursements, etc.)
- Community
- LMS (Learning Management System)

Currently, account managers (AM) at Paylocity ask clients what products they would like to buy next or have personal systems to come up with product recommendations. We'd like to develop a centralized system that recommends the Next Best Product (NBP) an AM should pitch to a client. The HCM space is extremely competitive with companies such as ADP, Workday, Paycor, Paycom, Rippling, etc. all providing software services.

Inputs:

- Account and Sales data from 2023-2024.
- Access to Sales and Marketing employees.

Business Questions:

- What account details should be considered when recommending products? How important are they relative to each other? Some to consider:
    - Industry
    - Company Size (Number of Employees, Revenue, etc.)
    - Location
    - Tenure with Paylocity
    - Current usage of Paylocity products.
    - Usage of other HCM (Human Capital Management) or HR software.
- What factors should be used to determine the "best" product? Some to consider:
    - Highest revenue products?
    - Most liked products?
    - Stickiest products (least likely to churn)? Products that block competitors from selling into the account?
    - Most competitively priced products relative to competition?
    - Most likely to sell products?
    - Easiest to sell products?
    - Products that bundle well together?
    - How do the answers to the above differ by account, industry, time period, etc.?

Deliverables:
- A document outlining the inputs, outputs, and logic the recommendation system should comprise of. We encourage a mix of quantitative modeling such as regression, ML, or classification models and qualitive logic in the vein of traditional strategy consulting. The document can include code (we prefer python and SQL), rules, tree diagrams, etc.
- A presentation outlining findings to the above business questions. The presentation should be oriented toward Sales and Marketing leadership, such as CMO, VP of Sales, Sales Manager, Account Manager, and Product Marketing roles.

This project is sponsored by a Foster ACL alumnus!

AstrasZeneca
Breast Cancer

WWW.ASTRAZENECA.COM
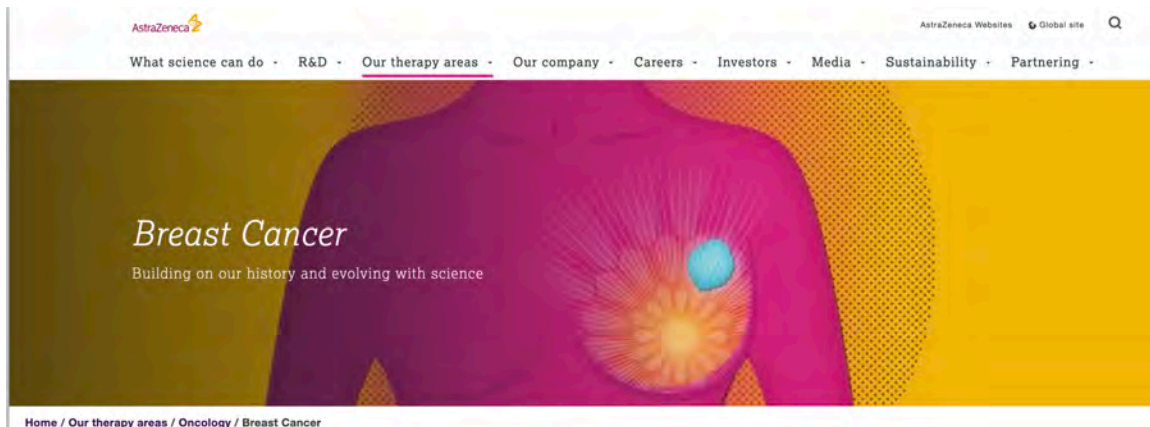
AstraZeneca has a number of medicines for breast cancer that are promoted to healthcare providers (HCPs) by sales representatives. Sales representatives typically do not get a lot of time with HCPs and so AstraZeneca created a next-best engine to help the sales representatives prioritize which medicines to talk about in the time they do get with HCPs. The next-best engine has been in use for approximately 18 months now and AstraZeneca would like to assess how well it is performing and how it can be refined and improved.

This project is sponsored by a proud ACL alumnus!!

Feral File

WWW.FEALFILE.COM
Software Art
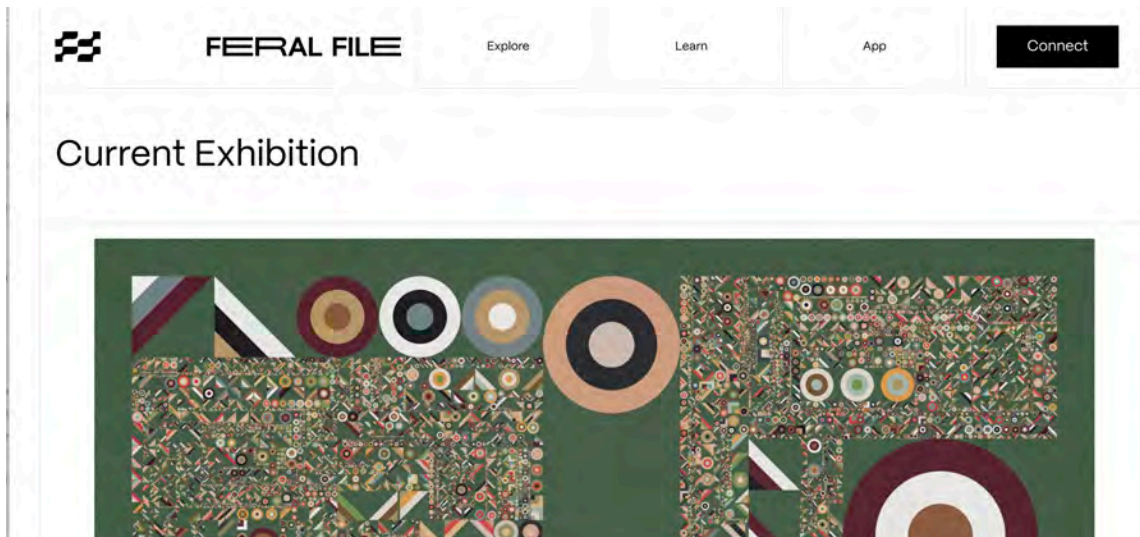
Feral File is a dynamic platform dedicated to showcasing software art. We collaborate with world-class institutions such as MoMA and over 200 renowned artists, including Yoko Ono, Refik Anadol, and Lu Yang, to bring curated art directly into homes. Our mission is to make art an integral part of everyday life, transforming how it's experienced and ensuring everyone can live with art.

Our market is fine art that is stored, authenticated, and transacted using blockchain technology. We call this segment "software art." It encompasses a wide range of creative disciplines and mediums, including code, media, digital painting, 3D sculpture, generative AI, and more. Unlike traditional visual art, which remains confined to galleries and specific global cities, software art can be accessed from anywhere, maintaining its original integrity whether displayed

in a museum or a living room. This universal accessibility is revolutionizing how art is consumed and appreciated, offering unprecedented access to museum-grade artworks. We're excited for this shift in which art becomes as ubiquitous as digital media like television and music.

Our use of blockchain technology for cataloging software art transactions offers unprecedented transparency and detail into the software art market. This data provides fertile ground for analytical exploration, posing questions about market trends, collector biases, and behavioral profiles compared to the traditional art market. These insights could significantly influence both the traditional art and software art sectors.

By participating in this project, your team will develop crucial analytical skills, applying data analytics in innovative ways to decode market trends and behaviors within the art world through hands-on experience with real-world data. The skills and insights gained through this project could enhance your career prospects in data analytics, technology, and the arts. Furthermore, the findings from your research have the potential for publication, underscoring our commitment to transparency and academic contribution.

This opportunity will not only enhance your capabilities in data analytics and technology but also

expand your career prospects in the burgeoning intersection of art and technology.
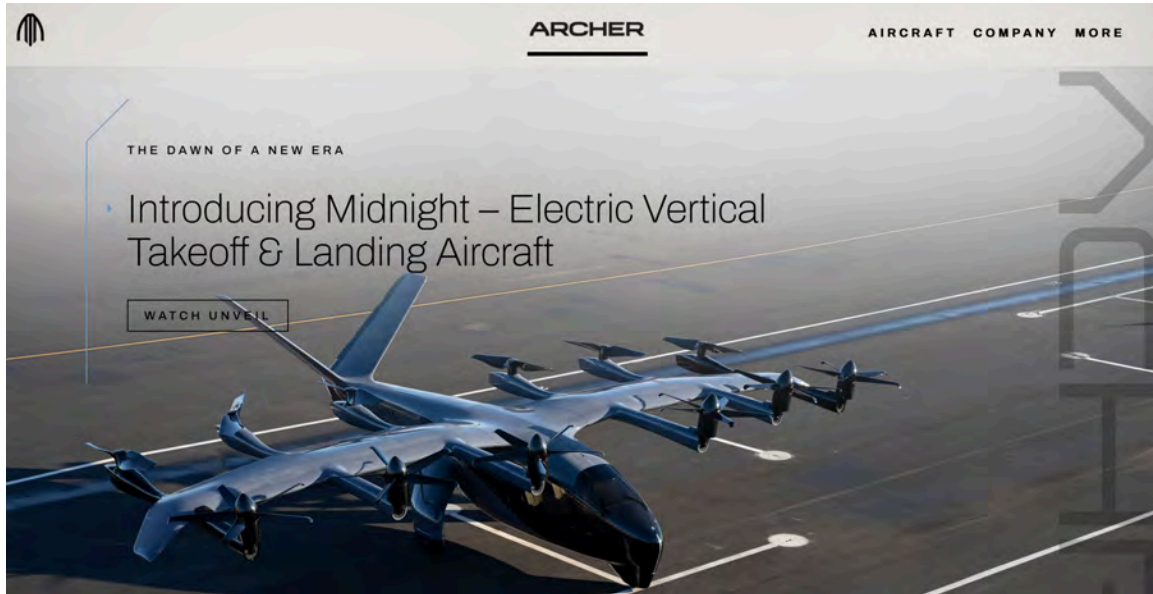
Potential research questions include:

1. What are the key predictors of transaction volume or pricing?

2. What is the impact of one successful artwork on an artist's entire catalog?

3. How do profiles of collectors compare to financial speculators, and how do these profiles differ from those in traditional art markets?

   Let's explore the intersection of art and data together!

This project is sponsored by a proud alumnus of the ACL!!

Archer

Strategic Positioning With Analytics

ARCHER

Project Description: Strategic Market Positioning for Urban Air Mobility

Objective: To help Archer Aviation develop a comprehensive market strategy by analyzing customer data to understand demand drivers for urban air mobility (UAM). This project will include evaluating market preferences, identifying ideal cities for initial deployment, and developing a strategic pricing framework to position Archer's services effectively.

Project Scope:

1. **Market Analysis**:
   - **Target Market Definition**: Identify and define potential customer segments for UAM, focusing on demographics, travel behaviors, and income levels. Determine the factors that influence these segments' adoption of new mobility solutions, such as convenience, sustainability, and technology affinity.
   - **Competitive Analysis**: Evaluate the current urban mobility landscape, including ride-sharing, public transport, and traditional air travel. Assess the competitive positioning of UAM in terms of speed, convenience, cost, and environmental impact.

2. **City Selection**:
   - **City Viability Assessment**: Develop a data-driven ranking system for potential UAM launch cities. Consider factors like commuter traffic patterns, average commute times, infrastructure, weather, regulations, and local economic conditions.
   - **Launch Strategy**: Develop tailored recommendations for initial city launches, considering factors such as demand hotspots (e.g., busy business districts, tourist areas), existing mobility challenges, and partnership opportunities.

3. **Strategic Pricing Framework**:
   - **Pricing Model Analysis**: Explore different pricing models, including pay-per-ride, subscription packages, and dynamic pricing based on peak and off-peak demand. Evaluate how each model aligns with customer expectations and market positioning as a premium or accessible service.
   - **Willingness to Pay:** Develop a model to analyze price elasticity and determine customer willingness to pay. Use this analysis to identify

ARCHER

optimal price points that balance customer affordability with company profitability.

- ○ **Competitive Benchmarking**: Benchmark Archer's proposed pricing against existing air mobility services, luxury ground transportation, and other premium urban transport modes. Identify opportunities for differentiation and competitive advantages.

Deliverables:

- A strategic market analysis report that identifies key customer segments, value drivers, and competitive positioning.
- Recommendations for top cities for Archer's UAM service launch, including regulatory, infrastructure, and demand considerations.
- A strategic pricing framework outlining pricing options, expected customer adoption, and potential revenue projections.

Archer is an ACL Alumni firm!!!!

Carleton House –
Seattle
Real Estate Analytics
To Sell or Not to Sell?

Client: Carleton House Condominiums Homeowner Association (HOA)

Goal: Advise the Association on the short- and long-term consequences of selling or continuing to rent out a living unit that is currently part of the HOA's common property.

Background

Carleton house is a small condominium building in Seattle. The building was built in 1975 and has 25 units, one of which is owned jointly by the HOA.

The HOA formerly employed a live-in property manager and provided the unit to the property manager as part of their compensation. About 2.5 years ago, the HOA Board fired the last property manager and started contracting for services ala cart from various vendors. Now, the unit is rented out, with a rent reduction to the tenant in exchange for some services provided directly to the HOA, such as moving the trash dumpster in and out twice a week and checking that doors are closed every night.

The Board recently polled the owners and there is strong interest in selling the unit if it makes sense.

The HOA seeks an analysis of scenarios, plus a recommendation. The scenarios envisioned would include at least (1) continuing as is and (2) selling the unit. Additional scenarios may also surface as the analysis proceeds. The scenarios would include information on the following, both in the short run and longer run:

- Expected sale price of the unit

- Expected appreciation of the value of the unit
- Share of total condominium interest to assign to the unit if sold
- Taxes and other deductions from the sales proceeds
- Costs of legal and consulting services required to proceed with a sale
- Government fees for changing and filing the necessary legal documents, such as the Declaration and land titles
- Cost of services to replace work now done by the tenant
- Cost to insure, maintain, and manage the unit as a rental
- Reduction in owners' assessments as a result of a sale
- Estimated time to complete a sale

Client contacts
- Main contact person will be the HOA Treasurer, Erica Groshen. She is a labor economist who currently serves as Senior Economic Advisor at Cornell University--ILR. She served as 14th Commissioner of the US Bureau of Labor Statistics from 2013-2017. Before that she was Vice President in the Research and Statistics Group of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Her research centers on employers' roles in labor market outcomes. She holds a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University and a B.S. in mathematics and economics from University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- The other current Board members include:
  o A senior executive coach and team effectiveness facilitator.
  o An attorney who specializes in condominium law.
  o A resident who has lived in the building for over 10 years.
  o A corporate attorney.
- The HOA has an accounting firm bookkeeper who can answer questions.
- Several former HOA Board members and residents of longer tenure are also available for interviews.

Search Fund and Growth Analysis

Search Fund Acquires a Company and Looks to Grow

The Four Stages of a Search Fund Lifecycle:

1 Fundraising
E.g. 10 Investors @ $45K each
Search Fund Vehicle (e.g. $450K invested)
Search Fund Principal sets up Search Fund vehicle and forms an investor group for the search stage.

2 Search & Acquire
Investors have first right to invest. Initial search capital also stepped up into Target Co.
Target Co
Principal uses fund to cover searching expenses – including a modest salary – and finds a suitable business to acquire.

4 Exit & Return Capital
Search principal and investors share proceeds as agreed
Buyer Co.   Target Co
Target Co. is sold and capital plus gain returned to investors and Principal.

3 Operate, Lead & Grow
Target Co
Principal becomes CEO of Target Co. and works with investors and Board to grow the business.

This project will help a recently acquired company in Seattle, WA. The company has been primarily based in the Pacific Northwest and is looking to expand nationwide. The owner is looking to expand geographically but needs to know what markets and customers are ideal, especially because of customer concentration issues.

The deliverables would be an exploratory data analysis, a short plan, and recommendation of the next markets we should pursue in the US. The project might answer: What states and geographies should we purse? What commercial customer should we target? Also, how do we make our operation more efficient and effective? And how can we do this with offshore talent or AI?

There's opportunity to analyze data from Federal/State/Local governments, and other proprietary data sources. As this is exploratory, we are open to a student team's creative ideas for what factors to examine.
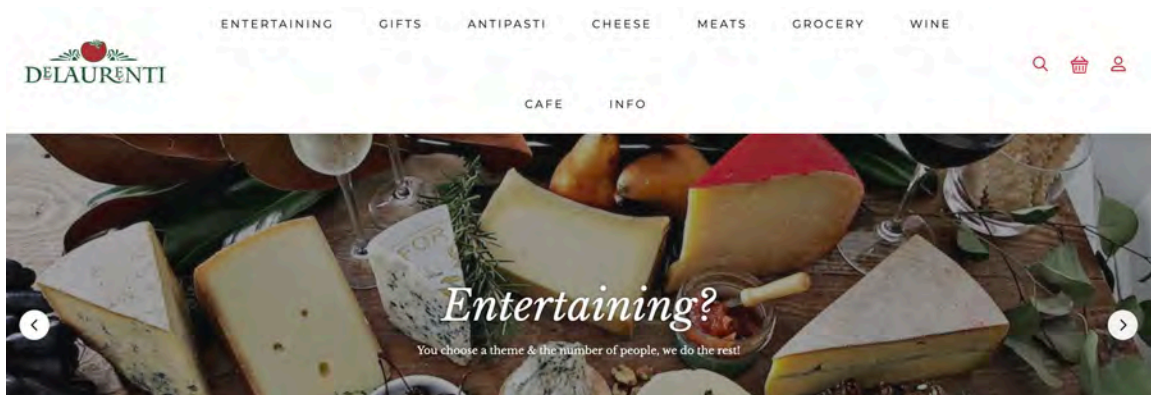
Focus will be on the Growth Phase mentioned in the graphic above.

This project is sponsored by a Foster ACL alumnus and will focus on his Search Fund Venture to grow a local Seattle Business.

De Laurenti
Fine Food Trends
Delaurenti.com

About:

De Laurenti, located at Historic Pike Place Market, offers a premier selection of fine foods and beverages. It is a Seattle institution.

Project:

As De Laurenti aspires to offer the best and most exciting and innovative foods to its clientele, the project will focus on measure and tracking new foods trends. What is so exciting and tasty that De Laurenti should feature it? You will work with the purchasing manager.

David Stine Furniture

Stinewoodworking.com

Brand Narrative

David Stine Furniture is an award-winning company specializing in custom, handcrafted, natural wood furniture for homes and commercial spaces. Using sustainably harvested hardwoods from our family forests in Illinois, our designs showcase the natural beauty of the wood.

Awarded *Best in Show, Sustainable Design* at the Architectural Digest Design Show, we are celebrated for our extraordinary craftsmanship, sustainable practices, and unparalleled customer service.

Clients & Sales

Our work is available to the trade and the public, with a high-end price point. Our top selling item is the custom dining table; the top-selling wood is walnut; and the top-selling style is live edge. (See DSF Sales Report for more detailed information.)

- 55% of our sales are to the trade/commercial clients; 45% is direct to the public.
- 55% of our sales are for commercial use (restaurants, offices, etc.); 45% for residential.

Social Media Narrative

DSF has the following social channels: Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and YouTube.

Our activity is most robust on Instagram, where we have 45,000 followers. We post in three categories: reels, stories, and posts (single panel and carrousel). We try to hit the following four content pillars: product, process, farm/family, clients/brand favorites.

We seldom post directly to Facebook; rather, our Instagram feeds directly to our DSF business page. We post on YouTube only when we have professional videos to share. We have items on our Pinterest pages but are not active on that site. We are not on TikTok.

Social Media Challenges

1. Wherewithal: Because we are such a small company, we do not have a dedicated social media or marketing position. We have one front-of-the-house person who handles everything that is not directly related to the actual crafting of the furniture: sales, billing, accounts receivables, accounting, shipping, payroll, marketing, etc. We are too small to afford a dedicated social media/marketing person.

The one time we did hire an outside firm to run paid social on Facebook and Instagram for us (in 2018), we spent $30,000 and got zero ROI. Literally – not a single sale could be attributed to the six-month spend, not did we see our following go up.

2. Expertise: We do not have the depth of knowledge of social media analytics, trends, and know-how to run effective social media campaigns, nor do we have the time needed to become fluent. In addition, we should be on TikTok, but we are only on Instagram because that is all we have time for. We should also be far more present on Pinterest.

3. Security: Since 2018, every time – without exception – we have run paid social on Instagram or Facebook our credit card has been stolen or our account has been hacked. This happened most recently in February of 2024, and we have not run any paid posts since. Meta is unresponsive to these issues, and our only recourse has been to report the fraudulent activity and close those credit cards.

   In sum, we have the content, but neither the time nor the wherewithal to run effective social campaigns.
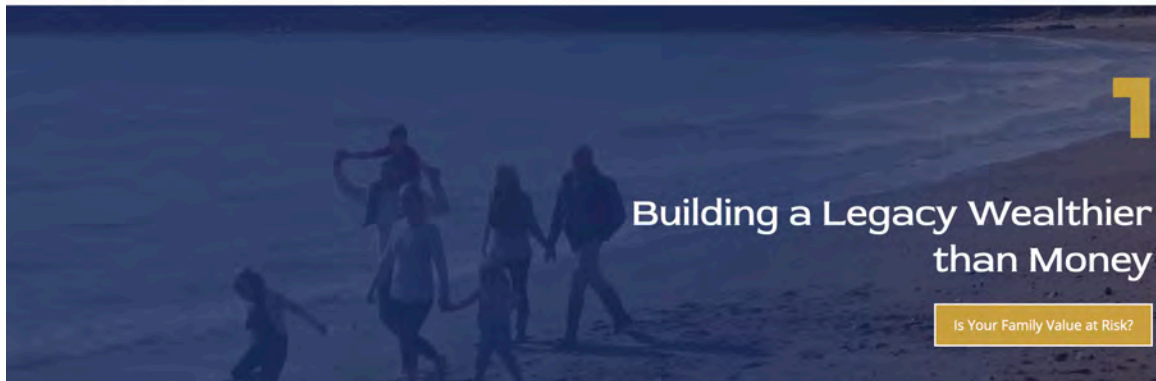
David Stine is an ACL Alumni Firm!!

The Lerner Group AI Investment Opportunities

Hightoweradvisors.com

Lerner is looking for a team to do analysis on the investment landscape and the impact of AI on various industries. To that end it would be great if teams can do research to provide insight on the following –

- Overall overview definition and classification of AI (e.g., Generative AI, RPA)
  - Define AI as it currently stands and where it is evolving
  - Who are the key players
  - What are the major trends / where investment is being made
  - Companies making the biggest investments and use cases
  - Applicable use cases to investment management firms

- Provide a deep dive into the impact of AI on top and bottom lines of companies
    - Drivers of Revenue growth
    - Ability to reduce cost
- Identify segments that stand to benefit
    - AI technology producers,
    - Enterprise implementors (e.g., Accenture, Cap Gemini)
    - Support industries (utilities/energy)
    - End users (e.g., firms that use the tool to grow their company)
- Identify segments that would be negatively impacted
    - Companies that may be disintermediated

Companies lagging on investment that may get overtaken by smaller competitors

The Lerner Group is a proud ACL alumni Firm!!!

PitchBob.io

PitchBob.io: Empowering Early-Stage Entrepreneurs with AI
About PitchBob.io

PitchBob.io is an AI-powered platform designed to assist early-stage entrepreneurs in crafting pitch decks, preparing investor materials, and validating business ideas. With over 50,000 users worldwide, it helps founders build and refine their startup ideas through a co-pilot system that generates documents like pitch decks, executive summaries, and more. It simplifies the process of turning an idea into a structured presentation for investors, accelerators, or grants.

Project Overview: Identifying Patterns and Trends in Super Early-Stage Startups

Objective

The goal of this project is to analyze PitchBob's extensive database of user responses, identify recurring patterns, and develop an analytical report highlighting key trends in early- stage startups. Students will have access to anonymized data from a diverse range of entrepreneurs globally, providing a unique opportunity to explore the early-stage startup landscape.

Key Tasks

• Analyze user responses collected from PitchBob's platform.

• Identify common patterns, trends, and insights in how entrepreneurs present their ideas.

• Classify key factors such as industry focus, business model preferences, and common challenges faced by early-stage founders.

• Create visualizations of the data to make insights easily understandable.

Research Goals

• Trend Analysis: Detect emerging patterns in startup ideas, industries, and innovation trends.

• Benchmarking: Understand what early-stage entrepreneurs prioritize and how they structure their pitch materials.

• Insight Generation: Provide valuable insights for improving the user experience and guiding future feature development for PitchBob.

Expected Outcome

The expected outcome of this project is a comprehensive analytical report that outlines trends in super early-stage startups. This report will:

• Highlight common themes and challenges faced by early-stage founders.

• Provide data-backed insights into emerging industries or innovations.

• Suggest areas for improving the PitchBob platform to better serve its users.

Why Participate?

By participating in this project, students will:

• Gain hands-on experience in data analysis and pattern recognition.

• Work directly with a leading AI startup tool in the entrepreneurial space.

• Contribute to meaningful research that impacts thousands of global entrepreneurs. This is an exciting opportunity to apply data analysis skills to real-world challenges faced by early-stage startups!

Zerone Analtiqs

Zeroneanalytiqs.com

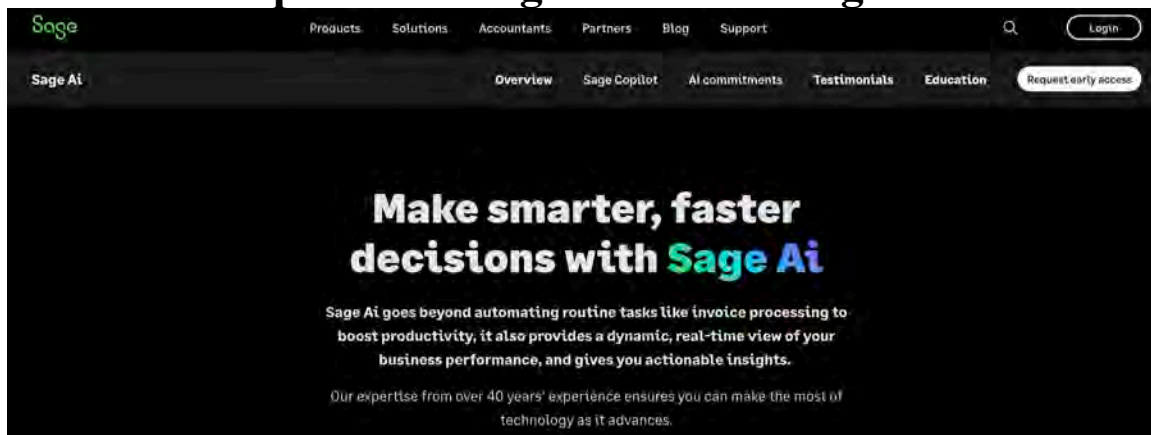| UW Foster ACL Projects	
Company Name	**Zerone Analytiqs**
Company Background	Zerone Analytiqs is a data analytics company with a mission to empower decision-making with data and analytics. We aim to fuel Africa's development with the possibilities of data and envision being the trusted partner in providing analytics and intelligent solutions to corporations, non-profits and governments across the African continent. By helping organizations optimize their risk-based decisions and enabling consumers to understand and manage their personal information, Zerone seeks to empower organizations with the provision of in-depth analysis and insights particularly on Africa. When individuals, researchers, educators, corporations and governments have access to more complete and multidimensional data, they can make better informed decisions, create innovations, reach new frontiers and reduce their risk. Zerone Analytiqs is a startup company incorporated in Ghana in 2022. Our primary focus is on Africa. We have two projects available for MBA students to work on. Students may choose to work on any one of the two projects.
Project 1: Banking Industry Analysis and Strategy	
Project Focus Area(s)	Data Analysis, Customer Profiling, Strategy Development, Business Development
Scope of work	Zerone Analytiqs has collected customer interests, preferences, and feedback on banking experiences in Ghana through its new mobile application, ZeroneData. The company seeks an MBA team to analyze the data and provide actionable insights to help banks in Ghana optimize customer acquisition and retention strategies. The key focus of this project is to develop customer personas, assess marketing strategies for financial institutions, identify gaps in the banking industry, and recommend market entry strategies for North American banks interested in entering the Ghanaian market. We would like the MBA students in UW's Foster ACL to analyze relevant user data points and determine the following: 1. Create suitable personas/profiles for different categories of customers you identify from the data. 2. What marketing techniques/channels will be best situated for bank/financial institutions who are seeking to grow their customers based on the different customer profiles you identified about. 3. What market gaps can you identify in the Ghanaian Banking Industry based on responses and other publicly available research/data. 4. Based on gaps in the market (as revealed by survey responses), suggest 2-3 entry strategy that a prospective North American (US & CA) bank seeking to enter this market can adopt to be successful. key initiatives that Zerone can propose to any 3 of the top 10 banks in Ghana to help capture more value from new and existing customers.
Deliverables	1. A Comprehensive report detailing customer personas, strategic marketing recommendations for Ghanaian financial institutions, market gap analysis and opportunity identification and entry strategy for North American banks with actionable recommendations. 2. Presentation to the co-founders summarizing analysis, findings and recommendations

Project 2: Beverage Industry Market Insight and Strategy	
Project Focus Area(s)	Market Research, Data Analysis, Consumer Behavior Analysis, Data Visualization, Strategy Development
Scope of work	Zerone Analytiqs, using its new mobile application – ZeroneData – has gathered data on customers preference, consumption frequencies and feedback from consuming beverages in Ghana. The company seeks MBA students to analyze this data and produce a market insight article that helps beverage companies understand customer behavior and develop successful strategies.
	This project will focus on identifying beverage preferences, analyzing industry leaders, and predicting future trends. Additionally, the team will recommend entry strategies for new players in the beverage market, including North American brands looking to expand into Ghana.
	We would like the MBA students in UW's Foster ACL to analyze relevant user data points and write a market insight article (with data visualizations) that addresses the following questions:
	1. What type of customers prefer which types of beverages?
	2. What are the best performing beverage companies doing differently? What channel are the most successful?
	3. As a potential new entrant into the beverage market – what entry strategy will be best
	4. Predict the direction of future customer preferences (pricing, product, appeal, channels, etc) and how beverage companies should position themselves for success?
	5. Considering Ghanaian beverage consumers' behavior/preferences determine a top 2-3 North American (US & CA) beverage brands that could successfully enter and operate in this industry. What characteristics are uniquely common to the consumers of these north American beverages and the Ghanaian beverage consumer.
Deliverables	1. A comprehensive market insight report on the beverage industry in Ghana with data visualizations and customer segmentation analysis, strategic recommendations for beverage companies to stay competitive and innovative and strategies for top 2-3 North American beverage brands that could enter the Ghanaian beverage industry. Include predictions on future trends and consumer behavior in the beverage industry.
	2. Presentation to the co-founders summarizing analysis, findings and recommendations.

SAGE
AI Opportunities
https://www.sage.com/en-us/sage-ai/

Project Description: Revolutionizing Financial Management with AI-Driven Insights

Sage, a global leader in accounting and financial management software, is seeking innovative MBA candidates to contribute to a groundbreaking project at the intersection of artificial intelligence and business strategy. This initiative aims to transform how small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) interact with their financial data, leveraging cutting-edge AI technology to unlock unprecedented insights and productivity gains.

Key Project Highlights:

1. Strategic AI Integration: Be part of Sage's ambitious FY25 strategy to implement AI across its product suite, positioning the company at the forefront of the AI revolution in financial software. This includes the development of Sage Copilot, an AI-powered assistant designed to enhance productivity and deliver valuable insights to SMBs.

2. Customer-Centric Innovation: Develop a comprehensive customer profile template by consolidating data from various Sage products. This profile will serve as the foundation for personalized, AI-generated financial reports and insights, enabling a more tailored and valuable experience for Sage customers.

3. Large Language Model (LLM) Application: Explore the application of domain-specific LLMs in accounting and finance, creating a digital assistant tailored explicitly for financial applications. Work with state-of-the-art models like LLAMA 3.1, Mixtral/Mistral, PHI, and Claude to push the boundaries of what's possible in AI-assisted financial management.

4. Business Use Case Development: Contribute to the ideation and refinement of high-impact use cases, such as:
   - Personalized tax guidance and planning
   - VAT compliance assistance with real-time regulatory updates
   - Predictive financial forecasting incorporating market trends and company-specific data

5. Cross-Functional Collaboration: Work alongside AI researchers, accounting experts, and industry partners to ensure the project's success and real-world applicability. Help bridge the gap between technical innovation and practical business solutions.

6. Market Positioning: Help shape how Sage differentiates itself in an increasingly AI-driven market, focusing on delivering unique value to SMBs through advanced AI capabilities. Develop strategies to communicate the benefits of AI-enhanced financial management to potential customers and stakeholders.

7. Data Strategy and Governance: Contribute to the development of robust data ingestion, cleaning, and processing pipelines that will form the backbone of Sage's AI capabilities. Help define best practices for data governance and ethical AI use in financial services.

This project offers a unique opportunity to blend business strategy with cutting-edge technology, providing hands-on experience in shaping the future of financial management technology. Join us in driving innovation at the intersection of AI, finance, and business strategy.

Sage is led by multiple Foster Alumni!!

Amtrak

UW-Amtrak Project Description:

Understanding and Re-engaging Amtrak Lapsed Customers

Project Overview: The Market Research team at Amtrak wishes to collaborate with students in the UW Foster Analytics Consulting Lab to explore the behavior of our lapsed customers—those who have used our services in the past but have not returned in recent years. This project will provide students with an opportunity to dive deep into our customer data, work with cross-functional teams, and develop strategic recommendations to re-engage these valuable riders. With new fleets and infrastructure coming onboard in the foreseeable future, it is the opportune time to receive proposals on how to re-capture these customers.

Objectives:

Data Analysis: Students will analyze various fields from our database, including, but not limited to:
- Guest Reward Status
- Travel history/frequency
- Routes Utilized
- Demographic information
- Delays/Cancellations

*Data will be scrubbed of customer PII

Trend Identification: While analyzing this data using preferred software packages and techniques, students should identify patterns in trends that shed light on why customers may have lapsed in travel. These trends may be identified and grouped by different routes, customer types, time periods, etc.

Survey Design: Students will have the opportunity to work with the Amtrak Market Research team to send a survey to these lapsed riders and collect primary data/feedback. This survey will be designed to close gaps in knowledge that are identified in the dataset, and merge both qualitative and quantitative data.

Deliverable: Based on their findings, students will address reasons behind lapsed ridership, and propose strategies that aim to regain them as customers. Amtrak is open to innovative ideas and solutions and encourages students to approach the project with creativity. Reports should include both a detailed summary of their data analysis/insights and a pitch deck of their proposals, but are ultimately up to the professor's discretion.

TMRW Sports

tmrwsportsgroup.com/

TMRW Sports – TGL Ticketing Analysis
Students will work closely with the Ticketing and Team Marketing & Business Operations departments at TMRW Sports to provide a deep dive on TGL's initial season of ticketing data. Through this project, students will analyze detailed marketing & financial data to glean insights on marketing effectiveness, fan journeys and pricing frameworks to help drive future ticketing strategy. Students will need to leverage multiple data analytics platforms for this project (e.g., Excel, Adobe Analytics) and will present their findings to senior leadership across TMRW Sports.

TGL presented by SoFi is a new indoor golf league, combining advanced technology with teams of top players from the PGA TOUR for two-hour weekly competitions in prime time starting in January 2025.

The project is led by an ACL alumnus!!

Changing Tastes

Food, And Environment Economics

Changing Tastes is a strategy, culinary, and sustainability consultancy creating successful ventures and meaningful change in the food sector.

We work with our clients to achieve greater success by understanding and finding opportunities at the intersection of five key trends that are driving change in our food system: sustainability, public health, information technology, demographics, and the changing role of the culinary professional and foodservice industry.

Can AI Build a Superior Diet for Gen Z?

AI is increasingly providing guidance to consumers and content for business decision makers. In the field of food, nutrition and sustainability, decisions are becoming increasingly complex and the body of knowledge is growing rapidly. This is the tremendous application for AI. But there is no one answer for what is the best food to eat. From a sustainability perspective, it may be a glass of water has the lowest environmental footprint and nutrition advice various by age and many other factors.

AI also learns from its users and those relying on AI for some of the most important and personal decisions aren't necessarily demographically representative of the general public. So do AI services provide accurate information, or is it skewed by their programmers and those who ask questions. And at this early stage, can we — and this group of students — train AI to do better.

Here is the challenge: the team will ask AI what is the best diet for them (Gen Zers), and then see if the addition of concerns about sustainability and our planet or interest in common health benefits change that advice. And by asking over the length of this project, also see if the answers change as AI learns that Gen Zers are concerned about sustainability or are seeking some specific functional benefits, from energy and focus to building muscle and having calmness and better sleep, and more.

If all goes very well, we may also get insight into whether or not AI provides great dietary advice from the start, or like any other nutritionist, provides generic advice until it gets to know you personally.

Changing Tastes in an Alumni firm of the ACL!!!

Lawrence and Scott

Marketing (Google) Analytics: Selling Luxury Items Online

LAWRENCE | & | SCOTT   Accents ˅   LIULI Crystal Art   Lighting ˅   Fine Art ˅   Gifts   About us   Blog   Contact Us   Showrooms

Home / About Us

About Us

On the bedside of Jennifer Aniston's bedroom, as seen in Architectural Digest

Our Mission

Founded in 1961, Lawrence & Scott is now an AAPI-owned small business in Seattle that has come to be one of the most trusted and preferred sources for interior designers and the most discerning clients nationally.

Inspired by nature, beauty, and the great appreciation of Asian cultures, Lawrence & Scott's original designs of fine lighting and curated home accessories are elegant in aesthetic and diverse in material, with an obsessive level of attention to detail and made "quietly sophisticated".

Under the new ownership team since 2018, Lawrence & Scott refreshed its core values, which include the implementation of environmentally sustainable practices throughout the company, the ethical treatment of staff and fabricators, and, of course, the creation of visually enchanting, luxury quality home décor.

L&S is an Envirostars℠ certified company for sustainability practices.

Our Values

• We are inspired by the beauty of different cultures and their interpretation of nature.
• We treasure timeless, exceptional craftsmanship to create designs that will stand the test of time.
• We take care of our clients the way we would like to be taken care of, with integrity, respect, care, and attention to detail.
• We respect our artisans, employees, partnerships, and communities so we can take care of our customers with exceptional service.
• We are stewards of this planet, and we implement sustainable practices throughout the entire organization.

About:

Lawrence & Scott is one of the longest-running Seattle original high-end luxury brand for home decor and lighting products "to-the-trade" since 1961 ("To-the-trade" means selling exclusively through interior designers). The new ownership acquired the business in 2019 and is looking to revitalize the business, and bring it up to 21st century. While the end-user clients "write the checks", most of the design decisions are made by the clients' interior designers. To raise awareness among designers, Lawrence & Scott has been doing in-person marketing and online advertising through Google Ads (to increase brand awareness) and Instagram/Facebook ads (to generate leads and sales)

Impressively, Lawrence and Scott was named a top luxury retailer by Chairish in 2021 and 2020.

Project Description:

The team's goal is to identify the optimal demographics and methods to target advertising for a small luxury home goods brand in Seattle. The team will have access to our Google Analytics and our Google Ads data analytics.

Leo Lam, PhD is the owner and is a UW and Foster alumnus! Lawrence and Scott is an alumni firm of the ACL!!!

UW Athletics – Analyses

Teams may select from the two projects below:

1. What is the University of Washington Intercollegiate Athletics program's advertising value equivalency? Determine the Husky Athletics' advertising value equivalency and provide insight on the University's return on investment related to intercollegiate athletics.

2. How should the University of Washington Intercollegiate Athletics statistically measure the program's impact on (1) stakeholders' emotional connection to the university, (2) the general student body satisfaction, and (3) sense of belonging (students and alumni)?

    UW Athletics is an alumni partner of the ACL!!! GO DAWGS!!!

José Andrés Group— Paella for Americans – US Market Analysis

Customer Tastes and Market Development

A Market Study of the US for a Paella Kit for Americans

Paella is a festive dish, often considered the quintessential dish of Spain and even thought of as the national dish of Spain. Americans enjoy a very international diet, with homemade pizza and tacos being common meals. Each offer a warm, tasty, economical, and ethnic cuisine. Paella, and Spanish cuisine, has not enjoyed the adoption of tacos and pizza. This begs the question, can a paella kit be developed and marketed to meet the US consumer needs? There are pizza and taco kits, for instance.

In this market analysis, the team will be expected to analyze:
1. The US market for Paella demand, with growth projections
2. Obstacles and hurdles to paella adoption
3. Solutions to the obstacles and hurdles
4. Marketing ideas, inclusive of social media positioning
5. The 4Ps: Price, Placement, Product, Promotion

ACL is proud to partner with the José Andrés Group on this project!!!

Tubepoka Development Initiative — Malawi Study

Economic Prosperity and Development

In an effort to develop Malawi in a manner to bring prosperity to its people, the Tubepoka Development Initiative (TDI) proposes a research project on the development of a comprehensive business plan for the feasibility of entering the banana industry and provide strategic recommendations for successful market entry and growth.

As you may be aware, the global demand for bananas has continued to rise owing to population growth in the region and elsewhere, making it a lucrative and

promising market. However, the banana industry is highly competitive, and developing a robust business plan is critical for long-term sustainability and profitability. The objective of this research project is to provide the necessary analysis and insights to guide TDI's decision-making process in entering the banana market.

The proposed research will consist of the following key components:

1. **Market Analysis:** This will include an in-depth examination of the current banana market in Malawi, including global and regional demand, key competitors, pricing trends, customer preferences, and potential barriers to entry. By understanding the market dynamics, TDI can identify its unique value proposition and target customer segments.

2. **Supply Chain Assessment:** The research will assess the banana supply chain, from sourcing and production to distribution and retailing. Understanding the supply chain's efficiency, potential risks, and cost structures will enable TDI to develop a competitive advantage and ensure smooth operations.

3. **Financial Analysis:** A comprehensive financial analysis will be conducted, evaluating the investment required for setting up banana plantations, processing facilities, transportation, marketing, and overhead expenses. This analysis will also forecast revenue streams, profitability, and potential return on investment for TDI.

4. **Sustainability Practices:** Given the increasing importance of sustainability in consumer decisions, the research will explore best practices in sustainable banana farming and production. This consideration will enable TDI to align with environmental and social responsibility standards, enhancing brand reputation and customer trust.

5. **Risk Analysis:** The research will identify and assess potential risks and challenges, such as climate change, disease outbreaks, fluctuating market prices, and regulatory constraints. This risk analysis will allow TDI to develop effective risk management strategies and contingency plans.

6. **Strategic Recommendations:** Based on the findings from the above analyses, the research will provide strategic recommendations for TDI to successfully enter the banana market, including market positioning, target markets, marketing strategies, and growth opportunities.

The proposed timeline for this research project is approximately 10 weeks, with regular updates and progress reports. TDI kindly seek your contribution and support for the initiation of this research project and further believe that conducting thorough research with UW Foster ACL will serve as a foundation for

the successful development and implementation of a banana business plan for Tubepoka Development Initiative (TDI) and will advance the lives and prosperity of the people of Malawi.

ACL is proud to support this project and one of the TDI thought leaders is an ACL alumnus!!

United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM)

John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School

People Analytics

This project is sponsored by the Chief Data Officer or the US Special Operations Command (SOCOM). Broadly, the data will be on students that enter the special forces training and will focus on the analysis of their trajectories in their careers with the US military. This data sets available include all for Soldiers who tried out for assessment & selection to be a Green Beret (SF), Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations officer. Some of the students are already serving in the Army.

Project Goal: "Women in Special Forces Recruiting, Assessment, and Selection."

Available data include:

1. Raw data for recent years
2. Data Dictionary
3. Broad analyses of raw data
4. Reading material on the history of assessment and selection and searching for "the right stuff."
5. Website as to which recruiting stations are located where.

Recruiter Directory (army.mil)

6. A recent promo of the training the Soldiers go through: Robin Sage: Inside the Final Test of Special Forces Training - YouTube

Check out the Podcast on the JFK War Center and School:

UW and Foster as proud supporters of the US Military Leadership!

NATURACUR

Project Description Follows with Links

This project is sponsored by a FOSTER EMBA Alumnus!!!

Introduction:
Naturacur Wound Healing provides innovative and accessible topical wound healing technologies for acute and chronic wounds to healthcare practitioners worldwide who wish to employ low-risk, high impact protocols. This year, Naturacur launched their first product, WoundCur® Gel. This unique Gel incorporates the benefits and accessibility of hydrogel wound care into an effective topical wound care and injury treatment. The Gel has been very successful in preliminary clinical testing with the treatment of Acute and Chronic Wounds. At the moment, WoundCur is sold via Ecommerce and available to all un-sanctioned countries.

Naturacur Wound Healing would like to work with a consulting team who can help us with a *market segmentation* and *targeting analysis* where we can eventually develop a marketing strategy and budget for its first product launch, WoundCur® Gel. Given that this company is a startup, identifying strategies that optimize impact per dollar for its first marketing campaign will allow Naturacur to leave room for R&D.

Company Bio:
Naturacur, Inc. was founded in 2022 by two students, Todd Cutter, CEO and Josh McDonald, CFO at the University of Washington Foster School of Business Executive MBA program (Cohort W39). Fellow EMBA alumni, Dr. Kunal Joshi, joined their team in 2023. In addition, they partnered with Dr. Madalene Heng, MD, FRACP, FACD, FAAD (https://hengmedicalinc.com/), the inventor of the predicate technologies, who eventually became their medical advisor. For more information about their journey: https://poetsandquants.com/2024/02/04/2023-most-disruptive-mba-startups-naturacur-wound-healing-university-of-washington-foster/

Website: www.naturacur.com
Awards: https://naturacurwoundhealing.com/awards
Research Publications: https://naturacurwoundhealing.com/research-publications-1
Advisory Board: https://naturacurwoundhealing.com/meet-the-medical-advisors

Market Space Positioning:
Naturacur WoundCur® gel is still in beta testing. They are evaluating and exploring all the options on how to position their current product offerings as a topical wellness product, given the increasing use of traditional medicine combined with integrative medicine.

The term "cosmeceutical" represents topical preparations for external use and sold as a cosmetic but with performance characteristics suggestive of pharmaceutical actions. They may offer therapeutic benefits beyond simple cosmetic improvement but cannot qualify as a drug if they have not yet undergone 510K FDA clearance. The category remains formally unrecognized by international regulatory agencies including the European Union (EU) and the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The global cosmeceuticals market size was valued at USD 63.59 billion in 2023 and is projected to grow from USD 68.67 billion in 2024 to USD 138.26 billion by 2032, exhibiting a CAGR of 9.1% during the forecast period, 2024-2032 (https://www.fortunebusinessinsights.com/cosmeceuticals-market-102521). According to a 2022 report published by MDPI, a Swiss scientific journal, cosmeceutical prescriptions accounted for 40% of the total dermatologic prescriptions globally. The significant rise in cosmeceutical prescriptions, coupled with an increasing number of market players providing key products for these conditions, is expected to drive market growth. The examples of growth drivers: Rising Consumer Awareness, Aging Population, Developments in Cosmetic Science, Effect of Social Media & Ecommerce Growth, Emerging Trends in Health and Wellbeing, Customization and Personalization, Regulatory Support, Growth in Preventative Care.

Possible Topics for Marketing Analysis:

- Market Segmentation, Segment Members, and Description of Lifestyle
- Managing Customer Heterogeneity, 1-to-1 Marketing, and Customer Migration Patterns
- Customer Retention and Customer Lifetime Value
- Risks and Managing Sustainable Competitive Advantage while considering Resource Tradeoffs
- Recommendations for Market Space Positioning

Foster
Climate Risk Lab
Sustainability Economic Analytics

UW Climate Risk Lab
On a mission to make the best climate risk data, analysis and tools available to all.

Teams may select from one of the two projects that follow.

Foster Climate Risk is an Alumni Firm of the ACL!!!

Master of Science in Business Analytics - Spring 2025 Capstone
"Analyzing the Effects of Drought on Washington State's Agricultural Sector"

Project Overview:
In this 10-week capstone project, Master of Science in Business Analytics students will analyze how drought conditions impact Washington State's agricultural sector, with a specific focus on the supply chain. Students will select a specific agricultural supply chain (e.g., apples, wheat, or dairy) and assess how drought-induced disruptions in water availability affect production, distribution, and financial performance. The final output will be an interactive **Tableau data story** that visualizes the impacts of drought on the selected supply chain and provides actionable insights for industry stakeholders.

Key Deliverables:

● **Tableau Data Story:**
-Develop a data-driven Tableau dashboard that illustrates how drought conditions affect the selected agricultural supply chain.
-Use visualizations to highlight production disruptions, cost increases, and downstream impacts on distribution and business operations.
-Include metrics that show the economic impact of drought on various stages of the supply chain.

● **Drought Risk Assessment:**
-Analyze historical and forecasted drought data to identify trends in water shortages and their impact on agriculture in Washington State.
-Assess how reduced water availability affects key agricultural production areas within the state.

● **Supply Chain Impact Analysis:**
-Select an agricultural supply chain (e.g., apples, wheat, or dairy) and map out how drought conditions disrupt each stage of the process—from crop growth and harvest to distribution and market pricing.
-Quantify the financial losses caused by reduced crop yields, increased water costs, and disruptions to supply chain logistics.

● **Macro-Micro Approach:**
-Micro-Level Focus: Zoom in on a specific stage of the supply chain, such as a family-owned apple orchard or a large wheat farm, and analyze how drought disrupts operations. Use Tableau to visualize financial risks, production delays, and increased costs (e.g., irrigation or alternative sourcing).

-Macro-Level Focus: Expand the analysis to assess the statewide implications of drought for the broader agricultural sector. Evaluate how disruptions in one supply chain can impact other industries (e.g., food processing, exports) and overall economic stability in the region.

Expected Outcomes:

● **In-Depth Understanding of Drought Risk to Agriculture:**
-Students will gain a detailed understanding of how drought conditions affect agricultural production in Washington State and the financial risks posed to businesses along the supply chain.
-They will learn how to interpret drought data and apply it to real-world business scenarios.

● **Practical Application of Data Analytics:**
-Students will develop skills in data analysis and visualization using Tableau to create compelling, data-driven stories.
-They will learn to translate raw data into insights that can inform decision-making for agricultural businesses and policymakers.

● **Team Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement:**
-Students will work collaboratively to build the Tableau data story, ensuring that insights are effectively communicated to stakeholders.
-They will enhance their ability to engage with industry professionals by translating technical data into business-friendly recommendations.

Learning Objectives:

● **Climate Risk Management in Agriculture:**
-Understand how drought conditions create vulnerabilities in agricultural supply chains and what businesses can do to mitigate these risks.
-Explore strategies to manage drought risks, such as adopting water-efficient farming practices or diversifying crop choices.

● **Data Storytelling:**
-Build effective visual narratives using Tableau, focusing on the agricultural sector's vulnerabilities to climate risks.
-Hone the ability to transform complex data into a cohesive and impactful story that drives decision-making.

● **Macro-Micro Analytical Approach:**

-Learn to conduct both detailed, case-specific analyses and broader assessments of statewide agricultural impacts.
-Understand how local supply chain disruptions can have cascading effects on Washington State's economy and beyond.

This project will give students the opportunity to apply their data analytics and visualization skills to a critical real-world problem—drought risk in agriculture. Through this work, they will develop an understanding of climate risk management, data storytelling, and strategic decision-making in the context of supply chain resilience.

Background:

The UW Climate Risk Lab is a multidisciplinary research and innovation center based at the University of Washington Foster School of Business in the Department of Finance & Business Economics. Established in 2022, we advance research and technology solutions to issues in climate-related financial risk for corporate and government decision-makers. Professor Phillip Bruner, co-founder of the UW Climate Risk Lab, currently serves as our Executive Director.

We bring together academics and professionals in climate finance, risk management, business analytics, data engineering, computer science, atmospheric sciences, supply chain management, information systems and AI. We collaborate with several initiatives within the University of Washington which include the Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship, Clean Energy Institute, Creative Destruction Lab, Global Business Center, eSciences Institute and Urban Infrastructure Lab.

Our external partners include: the Duke Energy Data Analytics Lab, EGADE Business School, Pacific Northwest Mission Accelerator Center, NY Climate Exchange and Washington Maritime Blue.

Our mission: "To make the best climate risk data, analysis and tools available to all."
Our vision: "A future where climate risk is accounted for in all organizational decision-making worldwide."

The Thomas Group

Develop the Next Great Community in Seattle

Project Description Follows with Links

This project is sponsored by a FOSTER EMBA Alumnus!!!

The Thomas Group: Colmar Village
Analytics Consulting Lab, Foster School of Business, UW
October 2024

Background:
The Thomas Group is a start-up organization that exists to provide safe, easy, innovative social spaces for people to step out of daily life and celebrate what makes us uniquely human. Specifically, we have designed a new model of development around creating community in constrained markets: a high-density, equitable, sustainable village. As Cascadia's premier entertainment hub, the town square can be transformed to an event venue for major artists and events up to 30,000-person capacity. This design includes access to housing workers can afford, minority and women-owned business enterprises, and is not car dependent.

Cascadia Innovation Corridor (CIC), co-led by Former Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire and Fmr British Columbia Executive Greg D'Avignon, wrote a white paper, requesting ideas for high-density new hub-cities to help offset the incredible influx of growth in Cascadia. This is the mandate that the Thomas Group is supporting: to facilitate dialogue to build more intentionally.

Overview of Colmar Village:
It is our goal to show the path for how development can happen at a greater scale: increasing housing, housing workers can afford, and showcasing the experiences residents, visitors, and workers want. We have designed Colmar Village to be an example of good peri-urban development, not dependent on cars.

People will be able to use Colmar Village as a jumping-off place to many outdoor activities. Overgrown tree-lined paths and courtyards will be filled with homes, hotels, hearty breakfast spots, breweries, art, technology, and activities for anyone to enjoy.

This project is considering sites in two counties – each has land available that allows for an initial phase of ~800 homes. Our financial model is designed with guidance from leading housing developers in the region. We're doing this under regional parameters: equitably, and sustainably. These sites include space for an additional 1,500+ homes in future phases.

Research Topics:
There are two possible research topics that the Thomas Group would like help to validate through this effort. Our team will work with you to coordinate the necessary data and advisors based on the selected research.

- **Data Monetization**: What are the most profitable data capture sources and use cases that Colmar Village should consider?

- **Event Sizing**: What is the optimal number of sleeping units (e.g. number of pillows) to capture an event capacity of 30,000 one hour north of Seattle?

Non-Exhaustive Data Source Examples:
- Puget Sound Regional Council: https://www.psrc.org/
- Chamber of Commerce (multiple)
- CoStar, HVS
- State of Washington: https://ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/population-demographics/population-forecasts-and-projections/state-population-forecast
- King County: https://kingcounty.gov/en/legacy/services/gis.aspx
- Snohomish County: https://snohomishcountywa.gov/1402/Maps-GIS
- Kittitas County: https://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/it/gis/gis.aspx
- US Census: https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/WA/PST045222
- City of Seattle: https://www.seattle.gov/opcd/population-and-demographics

Partnerships:
Based on the research topic selected, you will be working with the Thomas Group executives, along with a mix of advisors representing different areas of the planning team. An example of advisory partners you will engage with include:
- Zahoor Ahmed, CFO, RC Hedreen
- Don Miller, Managing Director Seattle, Deloitte US
- James Hao, Computational Physicist
- Kathy Lambert, Former State Congressmember and County Councilmember
- Joe Shanahan, Event Promoter
- Amy Brockhaus, Deputy Director, Mountain to Sound Greenway Trust