‘March Madness,’ keeping customers, why we lie & more

Can an algorithm take the guesswork out of selecting and seeding teams for ‘March Madness?’ A new study says, ‘Yes!’

New research in the INFORMS journal Interfaces has developed an automated approach for narrowing down and ranking the field of Division 1 college basketball teams from 351 to the 68 that would play in the annual “March Madness” basketball tournaments, watched by more than 80 million people each year.

- **INFORMS**, March 7

Want to be happier at work? Make friends with your female co-workers

The movies and TV are full of stories of women sabotaging other females at work. Miranda Priestly in “The Devil Wears Prada,” Katharine Parker in “Working Girl” and Amanda Woodward in “Melrose Place” immediately come to mind. But a new study has found that the “queen bee” syndrome in the workplace might not just be fictional. Turns out, women are more likely to clash with their female co-workers than with their male colleagues, according to a study in the INFORMS journal Organization Science.

- **OZY**, Feb. 28

It’s not you, it’s me: How customers break up with sellers

Companies invest billions of dollars in expensive customer service programs, sales forces and sophisticated discounting programs such as Groupon to lure and retain customers only to find that churn remains one of their biggest and most expensive challenges. According to a new study in the INFORMS journal Marketing Science, customers have a tendency to send clear signals before they “break up” with a company, but you have to know what to be monitoring, and the key to any relationship remains effective communication.

- **INFORMS**, March 5

Society News INFORMS: 2018 INFORMS Business Analytics Conference

Every year, analytics professionals from around the world attend the INFORMS Business Analytics Conference to interact with and learn from leading analytics professionals and industry experts and to gain real-world insights on a successful analytics strategy. From April 15-17, 2018, nearly 1,000 attendees, at all stages of their analytics careers, will travel to Baltimore — the hometown of INFORMS and a vital hub of discovery and growth in Maryland — for the 2018 INFORMS Business Analytics Conference.

The conference provides attendees many opportunities to share ideas, to network, and to learn about a range of current topics and trends that can help businesses and organizations improve their analytics prowess by applying science to the art of business.

- **Solver International**, Feb. 27

How to keep computers out of landfills and recyclers out of prison

INFORMS members Mark Ferguson of the University of South Carolina and Beril Taktay of the Georgia Institute of Technology, along with Aris Oraiooulos of the University of Cambridge, explored solutions to the challenges and legalities of refurbishing and reselling computers to extend their lifespan.

- **Green Biz**, Feb. 27

Special INFORMS journal collection explores the origins of strategy science

Where do great strategies come from? How can opportunities be maximized? How can the most successful strategies be identified? These questions and more are explored in a one of a kind collection of essays by prominent thought leaders in strategy science that have been published in the INFORMS journal Strategy Science.

- **INFORMS**, Feb. 13

National Academy of Engineering elects 83 members and 16 foreign members

Three INFORMS members are among those elected to the National Academy of Engineering in 2018: Stephen C. Graves of MIT, Ali H. Sayed of the University of California and Jianjun Shi of the Georgia Institute of Technology.

- **National Academy of Engineering**, Feb. 7

Super Bowl 2018 data

A study published in the INFORMS journal Marketing Science examined the link between Super Bowl viewership across the top advertising markets in the U.S. and corresponding sales in those markets for advertisers’ brands during the 2006-2011...
period. Focusing on the beer and soda categories, the authors estimated in one
highlighted finding that “sales of Budweiser can increase as much as 10 six-packs per
thousand households for a 10-point increase in ratings during the week leading up to the
Super Bowl.”

- MarketingCharts.com, Jan. 31

Movie magic hinges on more than
dazzling use of technology, study
finds

“Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs,”
released in 1937, was the first animated
feature-length film, with each frame
painted painstakingly by hand. Since 1937,
animation technology has advanced beyond
recognition, with most animated films
using computer-generated images to bring
colorful fictional worlds to life. However,
according to a study in the INFORMS
journal Organization Science, “Drawing
Snow White and Animating Buzz Lightyear:
Technological Toolkits Characteristics and
Creativity in Cross-Disciplinary Teams,” a
film needs more than dazzling animation
technology to impress.

- Engineering & Technology, Jan. 29

‘Critical’ blood shortage comes down
to weather, flu and supply chain

INFORMS Fellow and professor at the University of Massachusetts Anna
Nagurney discusses how the decreasing
number of blood donor centers is putting
additional pressure on an already strained
blood supply.

- New England Public Radio, Jan. 25

Is your 10:30 medical appointment
really for 11:15?

Patients often wait weeks or months
for medical appointments, and often face
further delays upon arriving at a physician’s
office. This in-office waiting occurs for
many reasons. Perhaps those patients arrived
early, or earlier patients put the physicians
behind schedule, or urgent calls interrupted
them. However, according to INFORMS
member Michael J. Armstrong, professor
at Brock University, and his colleagues,
sometimes clinics purposely schedule
appointments before physicians expect to
be ready. They do this to ensure physicians
don’t run out of work.

- The Conversation, Jan. 21

The Eagles’ secret weapon? An
analytics-fueled attack

The situations in which the [Philadelphia] Eagles football team decides to
strike might seem random, but in fact they are
quite calculated. And they’re often decided
before the start of the game, or even before
the start of the season. The approach is
driven by analytics teams so involved that
two members of the department
communicate with the coach during the
game.

- ESPN, Jan. 18

Where’s your most-wanted
prospect going? Iowa student’s
formula holds the answer (maybe)

Every spring, college football fans
will ponder, debate, agonize and pray over
which school their most-coveted recruits
will choose on National Signing Day. But
a mathematical model has already made
the call for all of them — sort of. The model,
described in a study to be published in the
INFORMS journal Decision Analysis, relies
on social media posts and “basic biographical
information” — presumably including
publicly available data like hometown and
school.

- Gridiron Now, Jan. 17

INFORMS selects 2018 UPS
George D. Smith Prize finalists
from leading university O.R. and
analytics programs

INFORMS, the leading international
association for professionals in operations
research and analytics, has selected two
finalists for the 2018 UPS George D. Smith
Prize, which recognizes excellence in
preparing students to become practitioners
of operations research and analytics.

- INFORMS, Jan. 16

Liar, liar

Dishonesty in general is concerning,
but when a group decides to lie, it’s even
more troubling. The article, “I Lie? We
Lie! Why? Experimental Evidence on a
Dishonesty Shift in Groups,” published in
the INFORMS journal Management
Science, describes an experiment conducted
to determine whether individuals or groups
are more likely to tell falsehoods when they
can benefit from doing so.

- TD Magazine, Jan. 15

Does an artist’s mood help
determine the value of their work?

A new study in the INFORMS
journal Management Science finds artwork
created by artists when they are unhappy is
valued at less than their other artistic works.
In the interview, Stuart Holman delves into
this study with one of the authors,
Kathryn Graddy, a professor at Brandeis
with an interest in the economics of art.

- WYXU.org, Jan. 12

Beware of (dis)incentives

The “ratcheting” up of bonus goals
can make workforces less motivated,
so managers need a clear system of
communicating changes to incentives, says
a new study in the INFORMS journal
Management Science, co-authored by
INFORMS member Francisco Bahnh of
Cambridge Judge Business School.

- Cambridge Network, Jan. 11

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