

KARSON E. FRONK

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EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Accounting (Minor: Finance), University of Georgia	2023 (Expected)
MAcc	Brigham Young University	2018
B.S.	Accounting (Minor: Economics), Brigham Young University	2018

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Voluntary Disclosure; Data Visualization; Innovation Disclosure

TEACHING INTERESTS

Financial Accounting; Data Analytics

JOB MARKET PAPER

[1] *“Disclosure format in earnings conference call slides and investor information processing”*
(solo-authored dissertation)

- *Committee Members:* John Campbell (Chair), Ted Christensen, Josh Lee, Santhosh Ramalingegowda, and Jake Thornock
- *Invited Presentations:* 2022 BYU Accounting Research Symposium and University of Georgia

Abstract: Firms and third parties disclose a substantial amount of information during the earnings announcement window which investors must process. Managers can alleviate information processing costs by presenting information in earnings conference call slideshows using a variety of formats, including data visualizations, tables, and text. I examine the association between earnings call presentation format and capital market consequences (information asymmetry, market liquidity, and investor processing costs). I find three main results. First, the use of both data visualizations and tables are associated with decreases in information asymmetry. Second, only data visualizations are associated with an increase in market liquidity. Third, I find evidence of a negative association between any presentation format and investor processing costs. In additional analyses, I find that data visualizations are associated with decreases in processing costs for retail investors and that these effects are distinct from text slides. However, I do not find an association between retail trading consistency and disclosure format types. Overall, my results suggest that managers’ disclosure formatting choices can improve information saliency and help to alleviate investors’ processing costs.

WORKING PAPERS

[2] “*Data Visualizations in 10-K Filings*” (with Ted Christensen, Josh Lee, Karen Nelson)

- Preparing for 4th round submission at *Journal of Accounting and Economics*
- *Invited Presentations*: University of Georgia, Rochester Institute of Technology*, Santa Clara University*, University of Texas*, 2021 Lone Star Conference*, 2022 Haskayne and Fox Accounting Conference*, and 2022 AAA Annual Meeting

Abstract: The Securities and Exchange Commission encourages the presentation of information or data in graphical form to improve users’ ability to understand financial disclosures. We find a dramatic increase in the disclosure of both qualitative and quantitative infographics in 10-K filings over time and substantial cross-sectional variation in firms’ choices regarding picture types, data content, and the placement of infographics within 10-Ks. We provide evidence on factors determining firms’ use of infographics, and explore the persistence with which they are disclosed over time. Finally, we investigate capital market outcomes associated with the use of infographics. Overall, we find that infographics have become a key element of corporate financial disclosure.

[3] “*Analysts’ Use of Quantitative Information*” (with Steven Crawford, Josh Lee, Darren Roulstone)

- *Invited Presentations*: 2021 BYU Accounting Research Symposium, 2022 FARS Midyear Meeting, and 2022 AAA Annual Meeting

Abstract: We examine the use of quantitative information in analyst reports. We find that reports containing a greater amount of numerical information include more forecast and target price revisions and fewer recommendation revisions. Consistent with the notion that numbers convey more precise information, we find that analysts who produce reports with more quantitative information generate more accurate forecasts. Furthermore, we document that investor uncertainty decreases when reports contain more quantitative information as evidenced by stronger investor response to forecast revisions following reports containing a greater amount of quantitative information.

[4] “*Does Innovation Crowdsourcing Create Private Value for Firms? Evidence from GitHub*” (with Braiden Coleman and Kristen Valentine)

- *Invited Presentations*: 2022 BYU Accounting Research Symposium

Abstract: We provide the first large-scale empirical evidence on the firm-level consequences of innovation crowdsourcing. We employ firms’ online postings of software projects using the GitHub platform as a setting that facilitates crowdsourced software development. Our findings suggest that innovation crowdsourcing generates significant private value for adopting firms, as evidenced by greater future earnings and higher short- and long-window risk-adjusted returns. To mitigate endogeneity concerns, we employ entropy balancing on the determinants of GitHub adoption and exploit a sample of firms’ active on GitHub, but with significant variation in their usage of the platform. We find our inferences are robust. Cross-sectional results suggest the positive association between innovation crowdsourcing and future earnings is due to the extent to which GitHub repositories receive crowdsourced suggestions and are more widely adopted. Finally, we find the returns on innovation investment are greater for firms active on GitHub, consistent with innovation crowdsourcing improving innovation efficiency.

* denotes presentation by coauthor

WORK-IN-PROCESS

[5] “*Firm engagement with retail investors: Evidence from an interactive investor platform*” (with Braiden Coleman and Ryan Johnson)

- Data Analysis Phase

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Georgia	Athens, GA
- Introduction to Accounting (Avg. rating 4.3/5.0)	Spring 2021
- Introduction to Python, SAS, and STATA (to incoming PhD Students)	July 2021 & July 2022
Brigham Young University	Provo, UT
- Introduction to Accounting (Avg. rating 4.8/5.0)	Summer 2018
- Principles of Jogging (Avg. rating 4.6/5.0)	Fall 2017 – Summer 2018

ACADEMIC SERVICE

J.M. Tull School of Accounting Diversity & Inclusion Committee	2022
AAA Annual Meeting Ad Hoc Reviewer	2021 – Present
FARS Midyear Meeting Ad Hoc Reviewer	2020 – Present
BYU Accounting Research Symposium – Feedback to Authors	2016, 2017, 2019 – Present

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Miami Rookie Camp	2022 (planned)
BYU Accounting Research Symposium ⁺	2022
AAA Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA ⁺	2022
AAA FARS Midyear Meeting, Virtual Conference ⁺	2022
BYU Accounting Research Symposium ⁺	2021
<i>Contemporary Accounting Research</i> Conference Doctoral Consortium, Virtual Conference	2021
AAA FARS Midyear Meeting and Doctoral Consortium, Virtual Conference	2021
BYU Accounting Research Virtual Symposium	2020
AAA FARS Midyear Meeting, Nashville, TN	2020
BYU Accounting Research Symposium	2019
BYU Accounting Research Symposium	2017
BYU Accounting Research Symposium	2016

+denotes paper presentation

CERTIFICATES, HONORS, AND AWARDS

Deloitte Foundation Doctoral Fellowship	2022
Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion from UGA	2022
FARS Excellence in Reviewing Award	2022
Berton J. Barr Scholarship	2022
Ricky Rice PhD Fellowship	2021
George Erwin Keen Scholarship	2020
Berton J. Barr Scholarship	2019
Mountain Pacific Sports Federation Men’s Indoor Track and Field All-Academic	2016

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Church youth group leader	2019 – Present
Assistant Scout Master – Boy Scouts of America	2019
Church Mission Service – Montreal, Canada	2012 – 2014
Eagle Scout	2009

MISCELLANEOUS

Member of BYU Cross Country/Track and Field Team	2011-2012, 2014-2016
▪ Personal Best Mile: 4:07	
Languages: English, French (Conversational)	