

Title:

Dynamic Contest Design: Theory, Experiments, and Applications

Abstract:

Contests are a common mechanism for extracting effort from participants. Their use is widespread in a variety of settings like workplace promotions, crowdsourcing innovation, and healthcare quality. One of the pivotal aspects of contest design is the contest's information structure: what information should the contest designer provide to participants and when should this information be revealed? The answers to these questions directly impact the behavior of players and the outcome of the contest, and also have broader implications for institutional and policy design. We derive the contest's optimal information disclosure policy within a large class of policies and design a novel experiment to evaluate how these policies perform in the lab.

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