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Introduction to Special Section on Data-Driven Research Challenge

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The *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management* (M&SOM) Data-Driven Research Challenge was initiated by the M&SOM Journal Board and the MSOM society executive committee. It is a biannual paper competition organized by the M&SOM journal with support from the MSOM Society.

Its objectives are to motivate, help support, develop, reward, and highlight high-quality operations management (OM) data-driven research papers by providing the community with a reach data set from an operationally driven firm. In this challenge, Cainiao (Alibaba's logistics arm) and the MSOM society partnered to offer MSOM members access to Cainiao's Transaction level data to encourage and empower them to conduct data-driven research.

Many individuals helped develop and launch this competition. Most notably, I would like to thank the steering committee of the challenge: Chris Tang (UCLA),

Lauren Lu (Dartmouth), Gabriel Weintraub (Stanford), Ilan Lobel (NYU), Max Shen (Berkeley), and Dennis Zhang (Washington University in Saint Louis).

The evaluation criteria considered by the Committee were the following:

Criteria 1: Data-Driven: the paper had to utilize the data either to derive novel insight or develop methods that are data driven.

Criteria 2: Potential Impact on Practice.

Criteria 3: Contribution to the Research Literature.

Criteria 4: Generalizability and Scalability of the Methods and Results.

Following the public presentations of all finalist papers at the annual 2018 INFORMS Annual Conference, this competition culminates with the publication in this issue of papers among those selected as prize winners or finalists. This issue includes the following papers:

First-Prize Winner

Operational Transparency: Showing When Work Gets Done

Robert L. Bray

<https://doi.org/10.1287/msom.2020.0899>

Finalists

Logistics Performance, Ratings, and Its Impact on Customer Purchasing Behavior and Sales in E-Commerce Platforms

Vinayak Deshpande and Pradeep K. Pendem

<https://doi.org/10.1287/msom.2021.1045>

Go Wide or Go Deep? Assortment Strategy and Order Fulfillment in Online Retail

Sanjith Gopalakrishnan, Moksh Matta, Mona Imanpoor Yourdshahy, and Vivek Choudhary

<https://doi.org/10.1287/msom.2022.1156>