

SeongYeob Kim

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Education

Ph.D. in Economics Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa April 2026 (Expected)
B.A. in Economics Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea February 2016

Fields of Interest

Industrial Organization, Market Design, Platform & Digital Economy

Working Papers

Product Purchasing Contest Job Market Paper [↗](#)

The Impact of Cannabis Tourism on the Airbnb Industry

with Minsek Ko and David Bojanic

Minor Revisions, *Tourism Economics*

Rent Seeking and Dissipation in Contests with General Power Functions

Product Purchasing Contest under Incomplete Information

Research in Progress

- The First Spark: Early-Bird Incentives to Ignite Social Spillovers in the Movie Industry

Teaching Experience

Lab Instructor (Iowa State University)

Courses

Microeconomic Analysis 2 (Ph.D. core)

Quantitative Methods (Master)

Econometrics (Undergrad)

Math Camp for Incoming Ph.D. Students

Intermediate Microeconomics

Evaluation Rating

4.78 / 5

4.86 / 5

4.39 / 5

Not surveyed

Not surveyed

Semester

Spring 2022

Fall 2021

Fall 2021

Summer 2022

Fall 2022

- Teaching Assistant: Principles of Micro/Macro, IO, Econ of Sports (ISU); Industrial Strategy (Yonsei)

Conferences

- 2026: AEA (poster)*, (* = scheduled)
- 2025: SEA*, EARIE, Econometric Society World Congress, Midwest Theory Conference, EEA
- 2024: Asia-Pacific IO Conference, SEA (Graduate Student Session [↗](#)), MVEA, MEA

Honors

- **Best Graduate Student Paper Award**, MVEA Oct 2025
- **Best Discussant Award**, EGSA Seminar Series, ISU May 2025
- **James R. Prescott Scholarship**, Department of Economics, ISU April 2023
- **BK21 Plus Scholarship**, Yonsei University Fall 2017, Spring 2018
- **Tied 3rd Place**, Monetary Policy Challenge (Seoul Division), Bank of Korea Jul 2014
- **Seoul Metropolitan Mayoral Award**, Outstanding Personnel of the Fire and Disaster HQ Jul 2012

Research Experience

The Economics of Science Project

Research Assistant, supervised by Dr. Joshua L. Rosenbloom

Aug 2022 – May 2024

- Contributed to two papers on data sharing practices and the effects of research funding in the U.S.

Work Experience

- Administrative Graduate Assistant, Yonsei Economic Research Institute Mar 2016 – Feb 2018
- Military Service, Seoul Metropolitan Fire and Disaster HQ Jul 2010 – Jul 2012

Academic Service

- Reviewer: AAEA Annual Meeting 2025
- Discussant: MEA 2024, MVEA 2024, EEA 2025
- “Ask an Economist” Forum Contributor, ISU
(*e.g.*, [credit card surcharges](#) – 2,922-word question; 1,229-word response)

Additional Information

- Languages: English (Fluent), Korean (Native)
- Software: R, Stata, Python, Matlab
- Citizenship: Republic of Korea

References

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Dr. Joshua L. Rosenbloom

Project Advisor
Professor, ISU
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Appendix: Research Abstracts

Product Purchasing Contest

Abstract: Loyalty-driven industries increasingly adopt contests in which consumers compete for rewards through repeated purchases, raising concerns about excessive consumption. Unlike monetary bids, consumption-based investment generates utility while incurring production costs. I develop a framework that extends contest design from allocation rules to investment technology. Because the firm can extract all welfare generated by competitive consumption, the profit-maximizing design implements the first-best outcome while fully appropriating consumer surplus. Since welfare now depends on who spends how much—not just total spending—the conventional equivalence across mechanisms breaks down. This structure creates a trade-off between efficiency and distribution, revealing a designer-regulator tension.

The Impact of Cannabis Tourism on the Airbnb Industry with Minsek Ko and David Bojanic, Minor Revisions *Tourism Economics*

Abstract: Despite the growing importance of the sharing economy and cannabis tourism, no research has examined their intersection. This study examines how recreational marijuana legalization affects the hospitality sector of the sharing economy (e.g., Airbnb). We introduce the concept of localized cannabis tourism—the experiential value created when legal cannabis access is spatially concentrated alongside cannabis-friendly accommodations and services—as a potential mechanism linking legalization to lodging demand. Using panel data from Denver, Colorado (October 2014–August 2022), we analyze how the presence of recreational marijuana stores influences Airbnb performance, including revenue, rental price, reservation days, and listings. Results show that a 20% increase in store numbers is associated with a 2.24% rise in average revenue, a 1.24% increase in reservation days, and a 4.28% growth in listings. Findings suggest that localized cannabis tourism stimulates participation in the sharing economy, highlighting the role of public policy in shaping economic opportunities in tourism and hospitality.

Rent Seeking and Dissipation in Contests with General Power Functions

Abstract: This paper investigates the property of mixed strategy Nash equilibrium of Tullock Contest (Tullock 1980) with a more general class of cost function. As a preliminary result, the formal proof for the existence of the equilibrium is established for the case where the cost function is $c(x) = x^k$ such that $k > 1$, extending Alcalde and Dahm (2010) with $c(x) = x$.

Product Purchasing Contest under Incomplete Information

Abstract: This paper examines product purchasing contests, where firms incentivize product purchases by leveraging exclusive rewards through competitive mechanisms. I analyze the relative performance of winner-pay and all-pay auctions in this setting, where the contest designer has incomplete information about consumers' valuations of the rewards. Unlike conventional contests that use monetary bids, product purchasing contests require participants to submit their purchase quantities of regular goods as bids. This fundamental difference introduces two distinct effects: regular goods generate utility while incurring production costs, and firms can control the contest structure by adjusting product prices. I demonstrate that all-pay auctions outperform winner-pay auctions in both firm profits and total welfare, diverging from the classic Revenue Equivalence Theorem (Myerson, 1981). This dominance stems from the interplay between consumers' diminishing marginal utility from regular good consumption and firms' linear production costs, which makes dispersed consumption under all-pay auctions more efficient than concentrated consumption under winner-pay auctions. These findings suggest that concerns about wasteful competition in all-pay formats should be weighed against their superior economic performance.

The First Spark: Early-Bird Incentives to Ignite Social Spillovers in the Movie Industry

Abstract: I investigate the antitrust implications of contests as a strategic tool for firms in markets with incomplete information, such as those for experience goods. In these markets, consumers often rely on sales rankings or star ratings to assess product quality. This reliance may incentivize firms to induce excessive initial purchases through contests, in order to influence subsequent consumer decisions and trigger a bandwagon effect. Additionally, the fixed costs associated with contests provide larger firms with a competitive advantage, potentially raising concerns about market concentration and entry barriers. This issue can also be examined through the design of information channels, as they play a crucial role in shaping consumer behavior and market outcomes. Furthermore, I am

working on an empirical project focusing on the movie industry, where word-of-mouth effects play a crucial role in determining box office revenues. By combining movie performance datasets with web-scraped data on promotional early-bird merchandising contests, I aim to quantify how these contest strategies dynamically influence consumer behavior through social learning channels, and thus market outcomes. My panel dataset comprises 494,007 observations tracking individual movies over their theatrical runs, accounting for 99.53% of total box office revenue during the study period. This research contributes to both theoretical and empirical Industrial Organization, while providing insights for antitrust policy.