Diffusion and Cascading Behavior in Random Networks

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(1) Diffusion Model inspired from game theory and statistical physics.

(2) Results from a mathematical analysis.
(0) Context

Crossing the Chasm
(Moore 1991)
(1) Diffusion Model

(2) Results
(1) Coordination game...

- Both receive payoff $q$.

- Both receive payoff $1-q > q$.

- Both receive nothing.
(1)...on a network.

- Everybody starts with ICQ.
- Total payoff = sum of the payoffs with each neighbor.
- A seed of nodes switches to Talk BETA.

(Morris 2000)
(1) Threshold Model

- State of agent $i$ is represented by
  
  $$X_i = \begin{cases} 
  0 & \text{if } \text{icq} \\
  1 & \text{if } \text{talk} 
  \end{cases}$$

- Switch from $\text{icq}$ to $\text{talk}$ if:
  
  $$\sum_{j \sim i} X_j \geq qd_i$$
(1) Model for the network?

Statistical physics: bootstrap percolation.
(1) Model for the network?
(1) Random Graphs

• Random graphs with given degree sequence introduced by Molloy and Reed (1995).
• Examples:
  – Erdös-Rényi graphs, $G(n,\lambda/n)$.
  – Graphs with power law degree distribution.
• We are interested in large population asymptotics.
• Average degree is $\lambda$. 
(1) Diffusion Model

$q = \text{relative threshold}$

$\lambda = \text{average degree}$

(2) Results
(1) Diffusion Model

$q = \text{relative threshold}$

$\lambda = \text{average degree}$

(2) Results
(2) Some experiments

Seed = one node, $\lambda=3$ and $q=0.24$
(source: the Technoverse blog)
(2) Some experiments

Seed = one node, $\lambda=3$ and $1/q>4$
(source: the Technooverse blog)
(2) Some experiments

Seed = one node, $\lambda=3$ and $q=0.24$ (or $1/q>4$)
(source: the Technoverse blog)
(2) Contagion threshold

In accordance with (Watts 2002)

No cascade

Global cascades
(2) A new Phase Transition
(2) Pivotal players

- Giant component of players requiring only one neighbor to switch.

Tipping point: Diffusion like standard epidemic

Chasm: Pivotal players = Early adopters
(2) $q$ above contagion threshold

- New parameter: *size of the seed* as a fraction of the total population $0 < \alpha < 1$.
- Monotone dynamic $\rightarrow$ only one final state.
(2) Minimal size of the seed, $q > 1/4$

Tipping point: Connectivity helps

Chasm: Connectivity hurts
Conclusion

• Simple tractable model:
  – Threshold rule introduces local dependencies
  – Random network: heterogeneity of population

• 2 regimes:
  – Low connectivity: tipping point
  – High connectivity: chasm

• More results in the paper:
  – Heterogeneity of thresholds, active/inactive links, equilibria of the game and coexistence.
Thanks!

- Diffusion and Cascading Behavior in Random Networks. Available at http://www.di.ens.fr/~lelarge