

ADRIANO SALERNO

Bocconi University

Department of Accounting
20136 – Milano – Italy

E-mail: adriano.salerno@phd.unibocconi.it
Phone: +39 3887954500

EDUCATION

Bocconi University, Italy

Ph.D. in Economics, Finance, and Accounting
Accounting Track
Supervisor: Prof. Antonio Marra

Sept 2021 - Present

The Wharton School - University of Pennsylvania, US Visiting PhD – Accounting Department

Aug 2023 – June 2024

Bocconi University, Italy Predoctoral Fellow

Oct 2020 – Aug 2021

Bocconi University, Italy MSc in Accounting, Financial Management, and Control Final Grade: 110/110 cum laude

Sept 2018 - Oct 2020

Bocconi University, Italy BSc in Economics and Management Final Grade: 110/110 cum laude

Sept 2015 - July 2018

Loughborough University, UK Exchange Student, BSc

Oct 2017 - Feb 2018

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research focuses on firms' signaling through voluntary disclosure, with an emphasis on managers' commitment to payout policy. I am also interested in topics related to investors' processing costs and firms' valuation.

WORKING PAPERS

- Retail Investors' Processing Costs and Disclosure Timing
Solo Authored – Job Market Paper

While the role of processing costs in retail investors' trading behavior is well-established, it is unclear whether managers account for these costs in their disclosure decisions. As retail investors base their investment decisions on publicly available corporate disclosures, I hypothesize that managers consider the information processing costs of targeted retail investors when making disclosure choices. I test this prediction in a setting where the benefits of disclosing to institutional investors remain constant, while the benefits of disclosing to retail investors increase due to a plausibly exogenous reduction in their processing costs. Specifically, I examine managerial dividend guidance choices following the initial coverage of an influential social media analyst specialized in dividend-paying firms. Leveraging a novel dataset of dividend-related statements and utilizing ChatGPT to classify their content, I find that managers increase dividend forecasts following the reduction in retail dividend investors' processing costs. Consistent with dynamic disclosure theory, the decision to provide dividend forecasts signals managers' commitment to the dividend policy. These findings suggest that managers strategically time their disclosures to engage targeted retail investors effectively.

Presented at: Zurich University. EAA Doctoral Colloquium (scheduled)

-
- Commitment through Forecasting: Managerial Buyback Guidance and Payout Policy
With Z. Kaplan (Washington University in St. Louis), L. Vollon (University of Notre Dame), X. Wu (Bocconi University)
2nd Round R&R at Journal of Accounting and Economics

We develop a novel database of buyback guidance forecasts and use this database to examine the association between buyback guidance and actual repurchase policy. Motivated by dynamic disclosure theory, which shows that current disclosure creates expectations of future disclosure, we argue that repurchase policy is jointly determined with the decision to issue guidance. While buyback guidance usually covers only the current fiscal year, we hypothesize that short-term buyback forecasts signal a long-term commitment to repurchases. Consistent with this hypothesis, we find that firms issuing buyback guidance repurchase more shares, exhibit more persistent repurchase behavior, and continue to issue guidance in the future. We find larger market reactions to the first instance of buyback guidance, consistent with our proposed mechanism that the initial forecast signals a shift to a more intensive capital return policy. Tests examining the determinants of guidance and subsequent changes in

repurchase intensity suggest a key driver of forecast issuance is the potential for repurchases to be accretive, increasing earnings per share. Examining the costs of this commitment, we find no evidence that guiders substitute investment for repurchases but do find evidence forecasting firms pay 1-5% more for their repurchased shares.

Presented at: The Wharton School University of Pennsylvania, Bocconi University, HARC Conference, EAA Annual Conference (scheduled), ESSEC Symposium (scheduled)

Co-author Presentation: Tulane University, Arizona State University, University of Miami, AAA Annual Conference (scheduled)

-
- Payout Policy, Innovation Value and Investors' Beliefs
With T. Martens (Bocconi University)
Under Review at Contemporary Accounting Research

We examine whether a firm's payout policy influences investors' beliefs about the value of its investments. We argue that the uncertainty underlying the investment process and the commitment implied by the payout policy jointly affect investors' valuation of a firm's investment. Leveraging the high uncertainty surrounding the timing and outcomes of the innovation process, we predict managers will increase their payout commitments as uncertainty resolves positively. Consistent with this hypothesis, we find that managers with more successful and valuable innovations raise sticky dividends while reducing more flexible share repurchases. The higher commitment of dividend payments implies a different information value for investors compared to share repurchases. By exploiting the plausibly exogenous timing of patent grants (i.e., the resolution of uncertainty), we provide asset-level evidence that investors assign a higher value to patents granted following dividend increases but find no evidence they do so following repurchase authorizations. Taken together, our findings suggest that innovative firms adjust their payout commitments based on the expected value of current investments in innovation, prompting investors to update their beliefs accordingly.

Presented at: Padua Bolzano Early Researcher Consortium, The Wharton School University of Pennsylvania, Bocconi University

Co-author Presentation: MaCCI Annual Conference, EASYS Workshop, Leibniz University Hannover, Hitotsubashi University, Kobe University, IU Junior Financial Archival Research Conference

WORK IN PROGRESS

- Voluntary Disclosure of Target Payout Ratio
With Z. Kaplan (Washington University in St. Louis), L. Vollon (University of Notre Dame), X. Wu (Bocconi University)
- Third-Party Certification and Voluntary Disclosure: Evidence from Michelin Stars
With A. Marra (Bocconi University), R. Shalev (Rotman School of Management)

TEACHING INTERESTS

My teaching interests primarily relate to fundamental analysis and valuation.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Bocconi University

Instructor – Ranked in the top 8% of faculty members (600+)

Financial Statement Analysis – 3 rd Year Undergraduate <i>Student Evaluations: 9.25/10; Number of students=46</i>	2024-2025
Microeconomics – 1 st Year Undergraduate <i>Student Evaluations: 8.75/10; Number of students=88</i>	2022-2023
Intermediate Financial Accounting – 2 nd Year Undergraduate <i>Student Evaluations: 8.29/10; Number of students=51</i>	

Teaching Assistant (TA)

Fair Value Accounting, Reporting and Valuation	2024-2025
Intermediate Financial Accounting	2021-2023
Financial Statement Analysis	2021-2023

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Bocconi University, Milan

Instructor

Sept 2022 - Present

Bocconi University, Milan
Research and Teaching Assistant

Sept 2020 – June 2023

PwC, Milan
Transfer Pricing Intern

June 2019 - Sept 2019

Internship in transfer pricing, valuation, and economic analysis

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

2025	HARC Conference; EAA Annual Conference (scheduled); EAA Doctoral Colloquium (scheduled); ESSEC Symposium (scheduled); Bocconi Accounting Symposium
2024	The Wharton School Accounting Conference; Bocconi Accounting Symposium; Padua Bolzano Accounting Workshop
2023	EAA Annual Conference; Bocconi Accounting Symposium; Padua Bolzano Emerging Research Consortium
2022	Journal of Business Finance and Accounting Conference

SERVICE

2024-25	Ad-hoc Reviewer (AAA Conference, Financial Reporting)
2024-25	Co-organizer Bocconi Accounting Symposium

HONORS AND AWARDS

2021-25	Ph.D. Fellowship – Bocconi University
2023-24	Visiting Ph.D. Fellowship – Bocconi University
2020-21	Predoctoral Fellowship – Bocconi University

SKILLS

Languages: Italian (Native), English (Fluent), Spanish (Intermediate), French (Beginner)

Computer Software: Stata, LaTeX, R, Python