

CALL FOR PAPERS

2nd International Conference on **Discourse approaches to financial communication**

Building trust in the markets with story and argument

July 3-6, 2017

Università della Svizzera italiana

Lugano –Switzerland

www.dafc.usi.ch



Keynote Speakers

Mark Aakhus, Rutgers University

Walter Aerts, Antwerp Management School

Onno Bouwmeester, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

Bill McDonald, University of Notre Dame

Conference organizers

Andrea Rocci, Institute of Argumentation, Linguistics and Semiotics, USI

Rudi Palmieri, Department of Communication and Media, University of Liverpool

François Degeorge, Swiss Finance Institute, USI

Daniel Perrin, Department of Applied Linguistics, Zurich University of Applied Sciences.

Conference theme

The conference on *Discourse approaches to financial communication* (DAFC) is an interdisciplinary forum for discussing innovative research based on the analysis of texts, discourse, conversations and multi-modal messages in financial disclosures and investor relations, in business and financial media, and in the communication of financial intermediaries and regulators. Discourse-based studies at the interface between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and financial communication, interested in sustainable investment and the legitimacy of financial institutions, are also welcome.

The focus of the second edition of DAFC will be on **how story and argument contribute to build sustainable trust** in financial actors (CEO, corporate directors, analysts, etc.), institutions (banks, regulators, rating agencies, etc.), and in the whole market. While trust has been always recognized as one of the most crucial components of finance, the concrete communication processes by which individual, organizational and inter-organizational trustworthiness is preserved over time or restored after a crisis remain substantially under investigated. To fill this gap, we call for studies examining the discursive dynamics of trust in the financial context from different theoretical and methodological perspectives, similar to those presented during the first DAFC edition held in 2014 at Monte Verità (Ascona, February 2014).

Text-based sentiment analysis has gained prominence within financial studies as a means to capture how participants in the financial market anticipate news. Text analysis is now part of the burgeoning Big Data revolution that is leaving its mark also in financial communication. While the short-term connections between news, sentiment and markets have now been explored with the tools of automated quantitative text analysis, the issues of the creation of trust, of its sustainability, dissolution and recovery pose a new challenge require more diverse and sophisticated methods and deeper hypotheses on the relationship between discourse and belief change and on the social and organizational constraints of the production and use of discursive financial information.

In this context, **qualitative approaches** aiming at capturing the deeper texture of discourse in terms of **narrative and argument** acquire a new significance. Interesting studies adopting a qualitative perspective have been undertaken both within financial accounting research and within communication disciplines, such as discourse analysis, argumentation and rhetoric, corporate/business communication. These approaches constitute promising attempts to investigate how trust issues are communicated by financial actors and institutions (e.g. How does an equity story build trust? How narrative disclosures influence stakeholders' impression on corporate trust? How arguments are structured and presented in order to persuasively justify a trust-related standpoint?). More in general, they can provide empirical evidence for the **rhetoric-based theories** on managerial behaviours, by illustrating concretely and explaining how discourse contributes to build institutional legitimacy within the financial market.

Furthermore, the conference invites the contribution of the growing strand of accounting research on **impression management**, particularly research focusing on the discursive strategies of impression management by corporate executives aimed at creating an image of credibility and trustworthiness. Evaluative studies aiming at detecting signs of manipulation, hubris and other irrational behaviours can shed light on the communication processes that lead to

unhealthy persuasion and, ultimately, to a loss of trust by market participants. At a practical level, discourse based evaluations of corporate message reliability can provide the investment community with a detection tool enhancing decision-making, thereby potentially reducing capital misallocation, overreaction and market inefficiencies.

We strongly encourage the submission of papers embracing a **dialogical and even polylogical perspective** on financial communication. The diffusion of Web2.0 and social media channels has created **rhetorical arenas and sub-arenas** where investors and other stakeholders can timely react to corporate disclosures. As hinted by the recent crisis communication literature, studying how trust is discussed in these contexts represents an interesting research area with important interdisciplinary implications. To this purpose, theoretical contributions that help clarifying the definition and reciprocal relationship between kindred concepts like **image, reputation and trust** are also relevant. Finally, we welcome papers which aim at analysing **large-scale multi-stakeholder debates** revolving around trust-related issues.

While trust-oriented financial communication will be a central focus of this DAFC edition, the conference warmly welcomes any contribution which may enhance the understanding of financial market interactions from a **discourse analytic perspective**. Relevant topics include but are not limited to:

- Discourse and genre analysis of corporate financial disclosures (e.g. annual reports, quarterly announcements, M&A documents), emergent genres (e.g. analysts' and investors' conferences).
- The discourse of 'information intermediaries' (e.g. Rating agencies' announcements, Analysts' recommendations, printed and online news articles, comments and opinions) and of financial regulation (e.g. the discourse of central banks, discursive interactions in international accounting standard setting process).
- The persuasive design of corporate reporting documents and other financial discourse genres.
- Cognitive-semantic frames and financial knowledge in expert and lay financial discourse. Constructions, key phrases, and key-words. The cognitive, affective and persuasive role of metaphors in financial discourse.
- The analysis of factuality, modality, probability and (un-)certainty in financial discourse: combining discourse analysis, corpus linguistics and natural language processing.
- Narrative analysis of financial documents.
- Analyzing argumentation in financial discourse. Reconstructing argumentative strategies. Detecting bias, fallacies and irrationality through argument analysis.
- Mining financial texts to enhance security price predictions: exploring the predictive value of different indicators (e.g. the role of length, readability, parts-of-speech distribution, etc.).
- The analysis of evaluative language, affect, and verbally expressed sentiment in financial discourse: enhancing sentiment analysis with discourse analysis.

Scientific Committee

Emanuele Bajo, *University of Bologna*; Giovanni Barone-Adesi, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Marco Bigelli, *University of Bologna*; Niamh Brennan, *University College Dublin*; Russell Craig, *Victoria University*; Belinda Crawford Camiciottoli, *University of Pisa*; François Degeorge, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Elizabeth Anne Demers, *University of Virginia*; Patrick Gagliardini, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Laurent Gautier, *Université de Bourgogne*; Sara Greco, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Marianne Grove Ditlevsen, *Aarhus Universitet*; Geert Jacobs, *Ghent University*; Daphne Jameson, *Cornell University*; Alexander Laskin, *Quinnipiac University*; Leo Lentz, *Universiteit Utrecht*; Tim Loughran, *University of Notre Dame*; Jens Martin, *University of Amsterdam*; Doris Merkl-Davies, *Bangor University*; Johanna Miecznikowski, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Rudi Palmieri, *University of Liverpool*; Daniel Perrin, *ZHAW*; Carlo Raimondo, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Catherine Resche-Ricard, *Université Panthéon-Assas - Paris 2*; Henrik Rham, *Lund University*; Andrea Rocci, *Università della Svizzera italiana*; Rob Schumaker, *Central Connecticut State University*; Renata Stenka, *University of Reading*; James Thewissen, *KU Leuven*; Michel Van Der Yeught, *Université de Provence Aix-Marseille I*; Alexander Wagner, *Universität Zürich*; Marlies Whitehouse, *ZHAW*; Simeon Yates, *University of Liverpool/John Moores University*.

Abstract submission

New Submission deadline: DECEMBER 15, 2016 (EXTENDED)

Submissions should include a one-page abstract of maximum 500 words, including title, research aim and questions, methodology and (expected/provisional) results. Please, specify the author(s), name, position, affiliation, contact details. Abstracts will be evaluated by the Scientific Committee in terms of relevance, quality and originality.

Abstracts have to be submitted using the following website:

conftool.dafc.usi.ch

Fees

Early registration	CHF 200
Regular registration	CHF 300
Ph.D. Students	CHF 150
Gala Dinner	CHF 60

Key dates

Extended Deadline for abstract submissions: December 15, 2016

Notification of acceptance: February 10, 2017

Early registration: March 15, 2017

Conference: July 3-6, 2017

For further information: dafc@usi.ch (person of contact: dr. Carlo Raimondo).