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#### ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

## Probabilistic Forecasting with Discrete Choice Models: Evaluating Predictions with Pseudo-Coefficients of Determination

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#### Abstract

Probabilistic forecasts from discrete choice models, which are widely used in marketing science and competitive event forecasting, are often best evaluated out-of-sample using pseudo-coefficients of determination, or pseudo- $R^2s$ . However, there is a danger of misjudging the accuracy of forecast probabilities of event outcomes, based on observed frequencies, because of issues related to pseudo- $R^2s$ . First, we show that McFadden's pseudo- $R^2$  varies predictably with the number of alternatives in the choice set. Then we evaluate the relative merits of two methods (bootstrap and asymptotic) for estimating the variance of pseudo- $R^2s$  so that their values can be appropriately compared across nonnested models. Finally, in the context of competitive event forecasting, where the accuracy of forecasts has direct economic consequence, we derive new  $R^2$  measures that can be used to assess the economic value of forecasts. Throughout, we illustrate using data drawn from UK and Ireland horse race betting markets.

Keywords: Forecasting, Decision analysis, Finance, Discrete choice models, Horseracing

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