

Dear M4 participants, Dear forecasters...

Many thanks for the initial positive feedback and participation on this ongoing competition

We have more than 50 registered users now and already **7 submissions** for the 1<sup>st</sup> set of Forecasts (*High Profile Fortune 500 Companies (Live) Dataset*). This is a very challenging part of the competition as you are allowed to gather any data for these companies before you prepare your forecasts, and as benchmarks will also be using forecasts from Bloomberg, Business Week etc

We decided to **extend** the deadlines for all the submissions so as to attract as many submissions as possible, and also to use the forthcoming summer - where all the major conferences take place - for advertising this large scale empirical evaluation. So the new deadlines are as follows:

- **December 30, 2010** - Submission deadline for the 1st Forecast of High Profile Fortune (Live) Dataset
- **March 31, 2011** - Submission deadline for the **1st** Release (Datasets: Inventory, Finance, High Profile Economics & Finance, High Profile GDP Pyramid I, High Profile GDP Pyramid II)
- **June 30, 2011** - Submission deadline for the **2nd** Release (Datasets: Inventory, Finance, High Profile Economics & Finance, High Profile GDP Pyramid I, High Profile GDP Pyramid II)
- **September 30, 2011** - Submission deadline for the **3rd** Release (Datasets: Inventory, Finance, High Profile Economics & Finance, High Profile GDP Pyramid I, High Profile GDP Pyramid II)
- **December 31, 2011** - Submission deadline for the **4th** Release (Datasets: Inventory, Finance, High Profile Economics & Finance, High Profile GDP Pyramid I, High Profile GDP Pyramid II)
- **December 31, 2011** - Submission deadline for **Static Datasets** (Datasets: Economics, Business / Industry, Demographics, Climate, Internet & Telecommunications, High Profile Industry Pyramid)

The Next steps:

- a) We will be releasing pretty soon a **memo detailing all the rules** (metrics, method description requirements, benchmarks), the latest by the first week of January
- b) I will be **contacting** each and every of you in person to get some feedback on the process

Looking forward for your submissions and any queries on the process

On behalf of the M4 Competition Team

Kostas

Dr. K. Nikolopoulos, Professor of Decision Sciences, Bangor Business School

**PS:** *Apologies for a minor formatting problem with some of the high profile series that was just spotted and fixed, and you were informed with a separate email on the 22nd of Dec*