

Abstract

We employ user-generated data from the website Yelp.com to estimate how spatial and social frictions combine to shape consumption choices within cities. Travel time, from both home and work, plays a first-order role in consumption choices. Users are two to four times more likely to visit a venue that is half as far away. Social frictions also play a large role. Individuals are less likely to visit venues in places demographically different from their own neighborhood. A one-standard-deviation increase in demographic distance is equivalent to a 21% increase in travel time in terms of reduced visits. Higher crime rates reduce visit probabilities. Women are about 50% more responsive than men to local robbery rates.