

Performance Metrics for Algorithmic Traders

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Introduction

- Trading changed rapidly over past decade. Now see:
 - More matching of buyers and sellers by computer; and,
 - Automation of many tactical trading decisions.
- Microstructure research guides optimal trading decisions.
- One particular change: how large orders are handled.
 - Block trades rarer, now often sliced into smaller orders.
- US 2010: \$13.4 bn spent on trading infrastructure.²
- Key question: What is the value of trading infrastructure?
- Implementation shortfall (*IS*) is too blunt to measure this.

²This includes \$1 bn on smart order routing to best prices.

Results Preview

- Proposed metrics more informative than *IS* for order slicers.
- Relate to price impact model (and allow parameter recovery).
- Can evaluate people or automated trading processes.
 - Moved prices too much at end of trading?
 - Execution, timing, or scheduling skill... or luck/noise?
- Find tests for front-running/information dissipation.
- Estimated savings: up to 4 bp/trade = 15% lower expenses.
 - \Rightarrow \$7.3 bn/year savings for US equity mutual funds.

Splitting Orders

- Kyle (1985): split orders to hide private information (alpha)
- Bertsimas and Lo (1998): split to reduce trading costs.
- Almgren and Chriss (2001): minimize mean-variance cost.
- Engle and Ferstenberg (2007): portfolio choice affected.
 - Optimize portfolio and order splitting together.
- Berke (2010) estimates 30% of volume from split orders.

Terminology

Need to be clear about terminology.

- E & F: slice *parent orders* into schedule of *child orders*.
- Call a collection of parent orders a *portfolio order*.
- *Algorithmic trading*: automated order creation, management.
- *Internal* use: performance auditor sees full info.³
 - Knows about unsent orders; can see gaming attempts.
 - e.g. Fund strategist optimizing in-house trading engine.
- *External* use: performance auditor lacks full info.
 - External metrics must be resistant to gaming.
 - e.g. Fund manager examining external execution providers.

³*Internal vs external* is as in Lehmann (2003).

Measuring Performance

- Common metric: Perold's (1988) *implementation shortfall*.
 - Parent order traded value – order starting value.⁴
- Instead, ask multiple counterfactual questions.
 - Some relate to parts of the trading process (e.g. software).
- Keep in mind: are metrics gameable?
 - Some are gameable, suitable only for internal use;
 - Others resist gaming, also suitable for external use.

⁴Assuming trading completed.

Types of Decompositions

Answer questions with two types of metrics:

- ① *Parent Order Metrics*, measuring:
 - information leakage, adverse selection, price impact.
- ② *Intertemporal Metrics*, using child orders to measure:
 - different types of skill versus luck/noise.

I assume no alpha to ease math; could adjust for alpha.
Also assume market impact precludes (dynamic) arbitrage.

But we first need a fair price for a time period.

VWAP is Fair

- VWAP: volume-weighted average price; common benchmark.
- Experience, Opiela (2006): cannot beat VWAP without alpha.
- For doubters: Only need this to hold over short timespans.

Proposition (VWAP is Fair)

Assuming no alpha and arbitrage-free market impact, VWAP is a fair metric, i.e. it cannot be beaten in expectation.

Proof (Sketch).

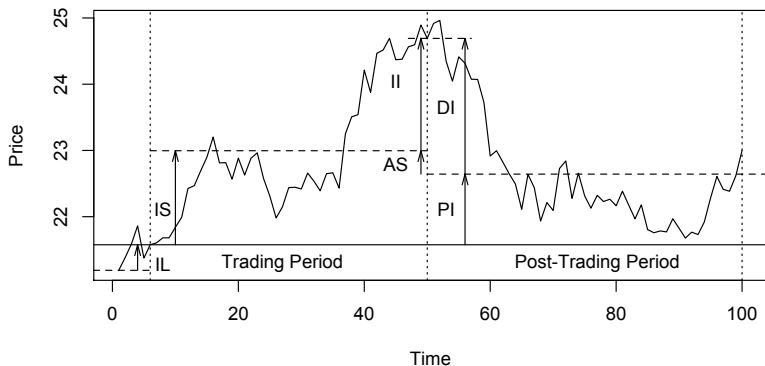
For 1, 2 traders: implied by arbitrage-free market impact, no info on others' orders, VWAP being average of fair (arb-free) prices.
For 3+ traders: Result follows by induction. □

Parent Order Questions

Metrics derived from asking about counterfactuals:

- What if trading began when somebody external saw our order?
- What was the marginal (incremental) cost of our last trade?
- What is the profit of providing liquidity to that last trade?
- What is the lasting effect our trading had on prices?
- How much worse did we do than that lasting effect on prices?

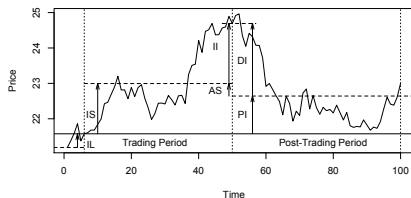
Parent Order Metrics: Diagram



Parent Order Metrics. Dashed lines represent average fill price (trading period) and next-period VWAP.

Note relationships: $IS = PI + AS = PI + DI - II$.

Parent Order Metrics



- *Information Leakage*: $IL = q(p_0 - p_-)$
 - increased cost from idea/revelation to trading start.
- *Incremental Impact*: $II = \tilde{q}(p_T - \bar{p}_T)$
 - average fill price to end-of-trading value change.
- *Adverse Selection*: $AS = \tilde{q}(\bar{p}_T - \check{p}_+)$
 - average fill price to next-period VWAP value change.
- *Decaying Impact*: $DI = \tilde{q}(p_T - \check{p}_+)$
 - end-of-trade to next-period VWAP value change.
- *Permanent Impact*: $PI = \tilde{q}(\check{p}_+ - p_0)$
 - trading start to next-period VWAP value change.

Intertemporal Metrics

- Can decompose benchmark-relative shortfall (e.g. *IS*).
- Break time into contiguous bins (j).
- Then ask about counterfactuals related to decisions/software.
- What if:
 - child orders filled at fair prices (bin VWAPs)? (MS SORT)
 - child orders filled when scheduled? (urgency settings)
 - fills followed average volume distribution? (MS BXS)
 - fills followed realized volume distribution? (noise)
- Since this is a decomposition, metrics are not orthogonal.

Intertemporal Metrics: Decompositions

Decompose Realized Implementation Shortfall *RIS*:

$$\begin{aligned}
 RIS = & \underbrace{\sum_j \tilde{q}_j(\bar{p}_j - \check{p}_j)}_{\text{Trading Shortfall}} + \underbrace{\sum_j (\tilde{q}_j - \tilde{q} \frac{q_j}{q}) \check{p}_j}_{\text{Fill Time Shortfall}} + \underbrace{\sum_j \tilde{q}(\frac{q_j}{q} - \bar{D}_j) \check{p}_j}_{\text{Order Timing Shortfall}} \\
 & + \underbrace{\sum_j \tilde{q}(\bar{D}_j - D_j) \check{p}_j}_{\text{Volume Shortfall}} + \underbrace{\sum_j \tilde{q} D_j \check{p}_j - \tilde{q} p_0}_{\text{Perfect VWAP Shortfall}}
 \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

- *Trading Shortfall*: due to fills worse than bin VWAPs.
- *Fill Time Shortfall*: due to fill times other than planned.
- *Order Timing Shortfall*: order plan vs. average volume dist.
- *Volume Shortfall*: due to variation of volume distribution.

Price Impact of Trading

- Analyze these metrics in light of a price impact model.
- Want arbitrage-free model, cf Huberman and Stanzl (2004).
- Recall: We split orders to allow liquidity to replenish.
- Use Obizhaeva and Wang (2011) model.
 - Replenishing order book \Rightarrow some impact decays to 0.
- Impact has 3 (or 4) components:

$$E(\bar{p}_j) = p_0 + \underbrace{\sum_{k=1}^j \pi \tilde{q}_k}_{\text{permanent}} + \underbrace{\sum_{k=1}^j \delta^{j+1-k} \tilde{q}_k}_{\text{decaying}} + \underbrace{\tau \frac{\tilde{q}_j}{t_j} + \phi[\tilde{q}_j]}_{\text{temporary (only trader pays)}} . \quad (2)$$

- Careful action can reduce decaying, temporary effects.

Analysis: Parent Order Metrics (*IS* and *II*)

If we choose t_j s.t. $\tilde{q}_j = \frac{\tilde{q}}{n}$, then get:⁵

- Implementation Shortfall: combination of all impact forms.

$$E(IS) = \pi \tilde{q} \frac{n+1}{2n} + \frac{\tilde{q}\delta}{n(1-\delta)} + \tau \frac{\tilde{q}}{n^2} \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{t_j} + \phi[\mathbf{q}] + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \quad (3)$$

- Incremental Impact: combines permanent, temporary impact.

$$E(II) = \pi \tilde{q} \frac{n-1}{2n} - \tau \frac{\tilde{q}}{n^2} \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{t_j} - \phi[\mathbf{q}] + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \quad (4)$$

⁵*N.B.* Variances in paper; no distributional assumptions.

Analysis: Parent Order Metrics (*AS*, *DI*, *PI*)

If next-period volume distribution not degenerate:

- Adverse Selection: combines all impact forms.

$$E(AS) = \frac{\tilde{q}\delta}{n(1-\delta)} - \pi\tilde{q}\frac{n+1}{2n} + \tau\frac{\tilde{q}}{n^2} \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{t_j} + \phi[\mathbf{q}] + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \quad (5)$$

- Decaying Impact: eponymous, related to decaying impact.

$$E(DI) = \frac{\tilde{q}\delta}{n(1-\delta)} + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \quad (6)$$

- Permanent Impact: eponymous, related to permanent impact.

$$E(PI) = \pi\tilde{q} + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \quad (7)$$

- Note: *IS*, *IS*, *AS* are amalgams; *DI*, *PI* are very clean.

Analysis: Intertemporal Metrics (TS)

- Trading Shortfall: related only to temporary impact.

$$E(TS) = \sum_{j=1}^n \tilde{q}_j \left(\tau \frac{|\tilde{q}_j|}{t_j} + \phi[\mathbb{I}q] \right) \left(1 - \frac{|\tilde{q}_j|}{V_j} \right) \quad (8)$$

- Other metrics not so cleanly related to impact.
- However, other metrics may be stated as covariances.

Analysis: Intertemporal Metrics as Covariances

- Fill Time Shortfall: Cov(overfills, worse prices)

$$E(FTS) = \tilde{q} \text{Cov}\left(\frac{\tilde{q} \cdot}{\tilde{q}} - \frac{q \cdot}{q}, \check{p} \cdot\right) \quad (9)$$

- Order Timing Shortfall: Cov(larger orders, worse prices)

$$E(OTS) = \tilde{q} \text{Cov}\left(\frac{q \cdot}{q} - \bar{D} \cdot, \check{p} \cdot\right) \quad (10)$$

- Volume Shortfall: Cov(volume surprises, worse prices)

$$E(VS) = \tilde{q} \text{Cov}(\bar{D} \cdot - D \cdot, \check{p} \cdot) \quad (11)$$

- Can also look across instruments to study each bin.

Recovering Impact Model Parameters

- Can use clean forms for DI , PI , and TS for inference.
 - *Caveat*: DI is not robust to gaming. (More later.)
- Recover impact model parameters via regression, rewriting.
- The β_0 's are nuisance parameters.
- Could also add bias terms ($O(\frac{1}{n^2})$, etc.).

$$PI = \beta_{0,PI} + \pi \tilde{q} + \epsilon_{PI} \quad (12)$$

$$DI = \beta_{0,DI} + \frac{\delta}{1-\delta} \tilde{q} + \epsilon_{DI} \quad (13)$$

$$TS_j = \beta_{0,TS} + \tau \tilde{q}_j \frac{|\tilde{q}_j|}{t_j} \left(1 - \frac{|\tilde{q}_j|}{V_j}\right) + \phi \tilde{q}_j \left(1 - \frac{|\tilde{q}_j|}{V_j}\right) + \epsilon_{TS} \quad (14)$$

A Note on Gaming

- Noted earlier: some measures only suitable for internal use.
 - These are metrics which may be gamed in subtle ways.
 - Extra care should be taken if they are used externally.
- Other metrics are gaming-resistant, better for external use.
 - That may still be gamed, but. . .
 - The effect is either obvious or small at most.

Interpretation of IL , IS

- Information Leakage IL : good for external use.
 - Yields a t -test for possible front-running:

$$t = \frac{\llbracket q \rrbracket (p_0 - p_-)}{\sigma_p \sqrt{t_0 - t_-}} \quad (15)$$

where σ_p is *price volatility* ($= p\sigma_r$).

- Implementation Shortfall IS : unclear for performance tuning.
 - However, IS is applicable to all orders.
 - Pricing of unfilled quantity may be slightly gamed.

Interpretation of II , DI

- Incremental Impact II : where we leave the market.
 - High II : may have attracted liquidity providers. (Bad.)
 - Maybe should have traded over longer period; or,
 - Last orders were too aggressive. (Why “get done”?)
 - Very gameable: “end” time affects whole metric.
- Decaying Impact DI : more direct eponymous measure.
 - High DI suggests trading over longer period; or,
 - Chose poor times to send child orders.
 - Very gameable: “end” time affects whole metric.
- Ease of gaming II , DI suggests only using them internally.

Interpretation of PI , AS

- Permanent Impact PI : measures inescapable impact.
 - Should expect PI to be consistent over time.
 - May be useful to measure effects of market changes.
- Adverse Selection AS : depends on all impact forms.
 - Like different ways models impound such fears?
 - High AS should suggest high adverse selection cost.
 - However, not so clear with this impact model.
- PI , AS : gaming-resistant (use of average prices).
 - Liquidity provision skews next period? Look farther ahead.
 - Thus may be suitable for external use.

Single Parent Order Metric?

- Is there a *portmanteau* parent order metric for tuning?
- Maybe. Can correct *AS* with *PI*:

$$E\left(AS + PI \frac{n+1}{2n}\right) = \frac{\tilde{q}\delta}{n(1-\delta)} + \tau \frac{\tilde{q}}{n^2} \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{t_j} + \phi[\mathbf{q}] + o\left(\frac{1}{n}\right) \quad (16)$$

- Intuition: correct *AS* for including some permanent impact.

Interpreting Trading Shortfall

- Trading Shortfall TS : clean measure of execution skill.
 - Good traders have consistently small TS .
 - Disciplined but bad: consistently large TS .
 - Sloppy: noisy/inconsistent TS .
- TS may even indicate front-running.
 - Front-runner position accumulation, disposal biases TS .
 - Would see high TS earlier, low TS later; can test this:

$$P(b \text{ of } n/2 \text{ worst } TS_j\text{'s in first half}) = \binom{n/2}{b} \frac{1}{2^{n/2}}. \quad (17)$$

- Might also use TS if alpha traded without Kyle model.
- Gaming (obvious): If all volume in bin j , $TS_j = 0$.
- Gaming (subtle): letting external provider define bin times.

Interpreting Fill Time, Order Timing Shortfalls

- Fill Time Shortfall *FTS*: skill of gauging aggressiveness.
 - Good (“cool hand”): consistently low *FTS*.
 - Too passive: low *FTS* earlier, high *FTS* later.
- Order Timing Shortfall *OTS*: order scheduling skill.
 - Good: consistent and/or low *OTS*.
 - (Some benchmarks schedule orders to lower variance.)
- Volume Shortfall *VS*: tough to interpret; noise.
 - Unless one has skill at predicting volume surprises. (!)
- Gaming *FTS*, *OTS* is tough if bin times pre-defined.
- Gaming *VS* pointless. (*VS* is noise; ignore it anyway.)

Conclusion

- Proposed more informative metrics for algorithmic traders.
- Metrics relate to counterfactuals, trading decisions/software
- May express metrics in terms of realistic price impact model.
 - Can even use a few metrics to recover model parameters.
- Helps managers assess where traders/software excels (or not).
 - Execution, timing, or scheduling skill. . . or luck/noise.
 - Useful for evaluating people or automated trading processes.
 - Is person/process overly timid, volatile, or consistent?
 - Helps reward superior service and punish subpar service.
- Found tests for possible front-running, information dissipation.
- Extension: relate performance variation to other schedules.
 - e.g. surprises in volatility, spread, depth, volume.

Merci beaucoup de votre attention!