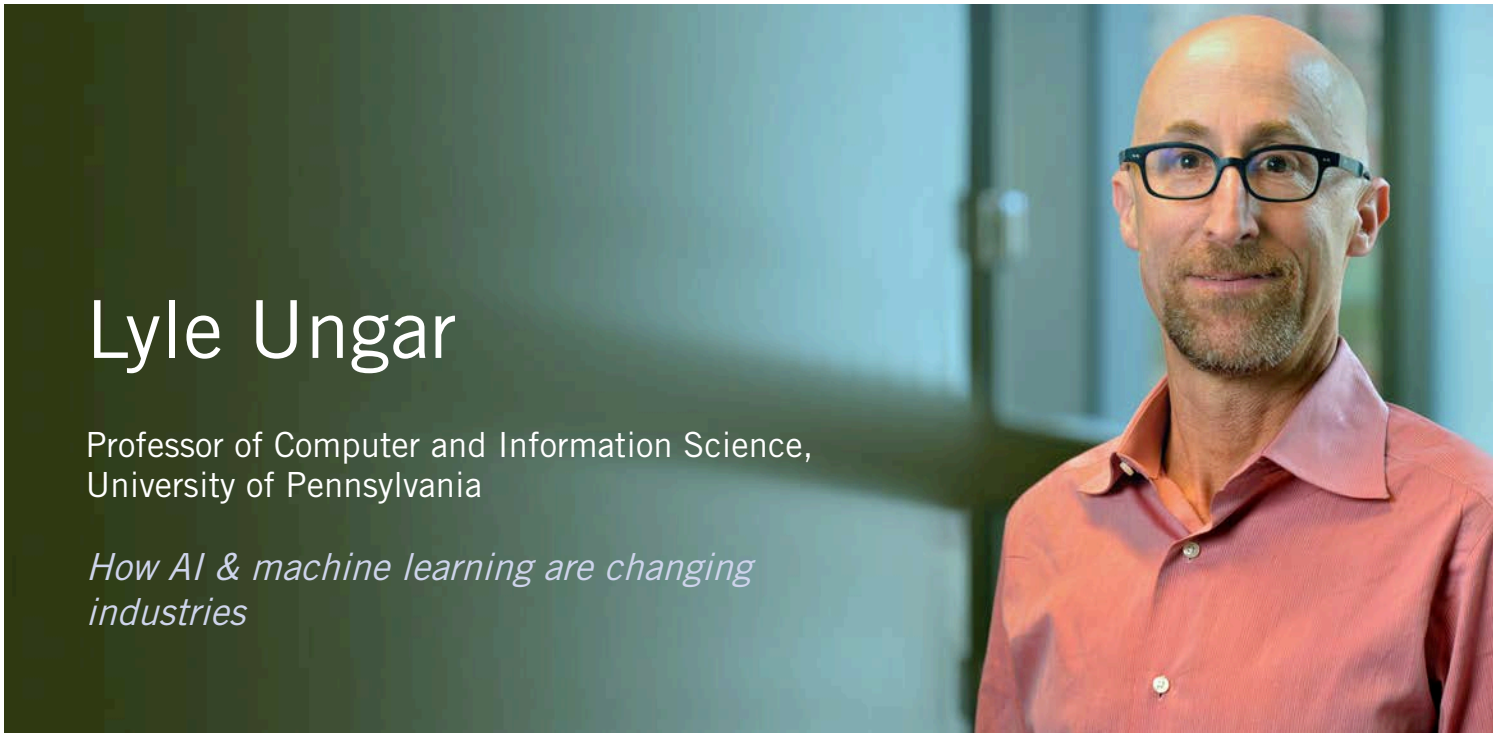

Lyle Ungar

Professor of Computer and Information Science,
University of Pennsylvania

How AI & machine learning are changing industries

Biography

Dr. Lyle Ungar helps organizations understand how computer automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning are changing their industries and our lives. Uniquely combining two areas of expertise—computer and information science with psychology and neuroscience—he specializes in applying machine learning and text mining methods to large collections of text to extract valuable information. A holder of eleven patents, Dr. Ungar is a Professor of Computer and Information Science at the University of Pennsylvania, and holds a number of other prestigious appointments.

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Innovation

Lyle Ungar

Professor of Computer and Information Science
at the University of Pennsylvania

Words as predictors. Professor Ungar researches how the words we use, especially in our social media, can predict both individual traits and trends and those of our communities. Mining the Facebook posts and tweets of tens of thousands of volunteers, he produces stunning word clouds that reveal the power of words to profile gender, age, personality, happiness, health behavior, and mortality.

The potential. Dr. Ungar is in the forefront of research into how we can improve the human condition using these new data mining tools. For example, Twitter can more accurately predict heart disease than such recognizable things as income and education (the highest correlation), smoking, obesity, or diabetes. In fact, it's a better indicator than all these factors combined.

Forecasting. Dr. Ungar also applies these tools to improving forecasting and group decision-making. He has special expertise in healthcare behavior and geopolitical forecasting — what will happen in Russia or the Middle East?

Credentials. In addition to his UPenn professorship in Computer and Information Science, Dr. Ungar is professor of Genomics and Computational Biology (School of Medicine), Operations, Information and Decisions (Wharton School of Business), Psychology (School of Arts and Sciences), and Bioengineering. He was director of Penn's Executive Masters of Technology Management for ten years and Associate Director of the Penn Center for Bioinformatics.

Dr. Lyle Ungar is a member of many associations and bodies devoted to advancing machine learning and related areas, including the Annenberg Public Policy Center, the Center for Cognitive Neuroscience, and the Institute for Biomedical Informatics.

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US Office
Campus View Plaza, 1250 Route 28
Suite 301A, Branchburg, NJ 08876
(908) 253.8600

Dublin Office
Pavilion House, 31 Fitzwilliam Square S
Dublin 2, D02 F403, Ireland
+353 1230 2322

Seoul Office
19F, West Center, Center 1 Building 26
Euljiro 5-gil, Jung-gu
Seoul, 04539, Korea
+ 82 2 6022 0562~5