Timo Vogelsang

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PROFILE

I study how management accounting and control systems shape behavior in organizations. Specifically, I examine how firms design and use performance information and incentives, including the signals they send to employees. I primarily conduct field experiments in firms, complemented by laboratory and online experiments, surveys, and archival data. Several of my field experiments span more than 200 retail stores, and my work on sickness absence speaks to current policy debates in Germany.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Frankfurt School of Finance & Management — 2024 – Present
Associate Professor of Managerial Accounting
With tenure, granted after evaluation by external reviewers
Parental leave: 05/2025 – 07/2025

Frankfurt School of Finance & Management — 2020 – 2023
Assistant Professor of Controlling / Managerial Accounting

University of Cologne — 2015 – 2020
Research Associate, Chair of Personnel Economics and HRM
DFG Research Unit "Design and Behavior – Economic Engineering of Firms and Markets" (2015 – 2019)

EDUCATION

Ph.D. (Dr. rer. pol.), University of Cologne, 1st Supervisor: Dirk Sliwka, 2nd Supervisor: Matthias Heinz — 2020
M.Sc., Economics, University of Cologne — 2015
B.Sc., Economics, University of Cologne — 2012

ACADEMIC VISITS

University of Chicago (invited by Steven D. Levitt) — 2017

EDITORIAL ROLES

Associate Editor – **Accounting Open** — 2025 – Present
Editorial Board – **European Accounting Review** — 2026 – Present
Editorial Board – **Management Accounting Research** — 2025 – Present

PUBLICATIONS

The Hidden Costs of Dismissals: Behavioral Consequences of Impending Termination
Journal of Labor Economics, forthcoming, with Jakob Alfitian

Performance Pay, Gifts, and the Moderating Role of Wage Level
Management Accounting Research, 2026, 68, with Raoul Isselhard and Kathrin Manthei

The Algorithmic Assignment of Incentive Schemes
Management Science, 2025, 71(2): 1546–1563, with Saskia Opitz, Dirk Sliwka, and Tom Zimmermann

Social Comparison on Multiple Tasks – Sacrificing Overall Performance for Local Excellence?
Journal of Accounting Research, 2024, 62(4): 1309–1361, with Maximilian Kohler, Matthias D. Mahlendorf, and Mischa Seiter

When Bonuses Backfire: Evidence from the Workplace
Management Science, 2024, 70(9): 6395–6414, with Jakob Alfitian and Dirk Sliwka

Time is (not) Money: Incentive Effects of Granting Leisure Time
European Accounting Review, 2024, 33(2): 435–459

Information, Incentives, and Attention: A Field Experiment on the Interaction of Management Controls
The Accounting Review, 2023, 98(5): 455–479, with Kathrin Manthei and Dirk Sliwka

Leisure Time, Performance Pay, and Crowding-Out
Economics Letters, 2023, 231: 111266

Talking About Performance or Paying for It? A Field Experiment on Performance Reviews and Incentives
Management Science, 2023, 69(4): 2198–2216, with Kathrin Manthei and Dirk Sliwka

Performance Pay and Prior Learning – Evidence from a Retail Chain
Management Science, 2021, 67(11): 6998–7022, with Kathrin Manthei and Dirk Sliwka

Time for Helping
Journal of the Economic Science Association, 2016, 2(1): 36–47, with Anastasia Danilov

WORKING PAPERS

Supportive Control, Distracted Work: Evidence from a Field Experiment on Workplace Health-Tracking Wearables
with Yutong Chen and Yaxuan Chen
Revision requested at **Journal of Accounting Research**

Relative Conduct Information (RCI): Targeted Comparative Feedback on Workplace Absenteeism
with Maximilian Kohler, Matthias D. Mahlendorf, and Dirk Sliwka
Revision requested at **Accounting, Organizations and Society**

Relative Performance Information Design and Employee Effort: Median vs. Distribution Comparisons
with Maximilian Kohler, Matthias D. Mahlendorf, and Mischa Seiter
Revision requested at **European Accounting Review**

Discretion over Bonus Timing
with Sidney Block, Saskia Opitz, and Dirk Sliwka

Targeting Targets
with Saskia Opitz, Dirk Sliwka, Marina Talantceva, and Tom Zimmermann [available upon request]

Signaling Purpose
with Dirk Sliwka and Marina Talantceva [available upon request]

WORK IN PROGRESS (SELECTED)

Misconduct Reporting and Identity
with Yutong Chen and Hari Ramasubramanian

Employee Turnover and Identity
with Dirk Sliwka and Paula Scholz

Algorithms and the Reduction of Information Overload
with Saskia Opitz, Dirk Sliwka, Luis Winter, and Tom Zimmermann

Image Concerns and Production – A Field Experiment in the German Wine Sector
with Yuanhao Xiang and Frederik Schwerter

Scaling as a Control Problem

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

International:

When Bonuses Backfire. *Harvard Business Review*, 08/2025, with Dirk Sliwka

Give Employees More Leisure to Boost Productivity. *California Management Review: Insights*, 2025

Performance Measures and Incentives – Evidence from Field Experiments in Firms. *Handbook on Performance Measurement for Management Control*, A. Lillis & J. Grafton (Eds.), 2024, with Matthias D. Mahlendorf

National:

Weniger Infos, mehr Fokus, bitte! *Harvard Business Manager*, 2026, with Dirk Sliwka

Signalwirkungen im Controlling. *Controlling*, 2025, 6

Der Anwesenheitsbonus – Ein Feldexperiment zur kausalen Evaluierung. *Personalwirtschaft*, 2025, 3

Zeit ist Geld! Auch bei Bonuszahlungen? *Controlling & Management Review*, 2025, 69(6)

Anwesenheitsboni: Evidenz, Evaluierung und Ausblick. *Personalmagazin*, 2025, 3

Bessere Performance im Lebensmitteleinzelhandel. *Controlling & Management Review*, 2021, 65: 42–45, with Maximilian Kohler, Matthias D. Mahlendorf, and Mischa Seiter

New Work = New Pay? Spotboni in Form von Freizeit. *Personalführung*, 2020, 6

Boni steigern nicht zwingend die Leistung. *Controlling & Management Review*, 2019, 63(3): 24–29

MEDIA AND OUTREACH

Policy Engagement:
Exchanges with the Minister of Health and the CDU's health policy spokesperson on sick-leave certification and sickness absence (2026)

International Media Coverage (selected):

The Economist: "When workplace bonuses backfire: The gelignite of incentives" (10/2024)
Harvard Business Review: "How to Avoid a Bonus Backlash" (09/2024)
Fortune: "Mo' money, mo' problems? Bonus incentives are backfiring and making some employees worse at their jobs" (09/2024)
The Economist: "Why managers deserve more understanding" (06/2022)
Financial Times: "Bonuses are outdated in the age of knowledge work" (05/2022)

National Media Coverage (selected):

Süddeutsche Zeitung: "Wie senkt man den Krankenstand?" (07/2026)
Süddeutsche Zeitung: "Krankschreibung: Schärfere Regeln, offene Wirkung" (07/2026)
Capital: "Schafft nicht das Mitarbeitergespräch ab – schafft das schlechte ab" [guest article] (06/2026)
Personalwirtschaft: "Krankenstand: So kann ein einfacher Brief Fehlzeiten stark reduzieren" (04/2026)
Capital: "Mit diesem Trick wehrt sich eine Supermarktkette gegen Blaumacher" (03/2026)
FAZ: "Teure Krankentage: Was Unternehmen gegen 'Blaumacher' tun können" [interview] (03/2026)
Der Spiegel: "Krankmeldungen im Job: Brief reduziert Fehlzeiten bei Supermarktpersonal" [interview] (02/2026)
ARD: "Morgenmagazin" [television, interview] (02/2026)
Handelsblatt: "Führungskräfte: Was gegen auffällig häufige Krankmeldungen im Team hilft" (02/2026)
SAT.1: "Frühstücksfernsehen" [television, interview] (02/2026)
FAZ: "Mit einem Brief das Gewissen von Blaumachern wecken" [guest article] (02/2026)
Personalwirtschaft: "Krankentage: Warum ein Brief mehr bewirkt als Bonuszahlungen" (02/2026)
Der Stern: "Mit diesem Trick wehrt sich eine Supermarktkette gegen Blaumacher" (01/2026)
FAZ: "Kündigungen und ihre ungeahnten Konsequenzen" [guest article] (11/2025)
Game Changer: "When Bonuses Backfire: Rethinking Attendance Incentives" [podcast] (05/2025)
WDR: "Markt: Krank oder krank gemeldet?" [television, interview] (03/2025)
Die Zeit: "Krankheit von Arbeitnehmern: Warum sind plötzlich so viele krank?" (01/2025)
Capital: "Ökonom testet Rezept gegen Blaumachen – mit erstaunlichen Resultaten" (01/2025)
WirtschaftsWoche: "Hoher Krankenstand: Was bringen Anwesenheitsbonus und Karenztag wirklich?" [guest article] (01/2025)
Der Stern: "Bonus für Anwesenheit kann das Gegenteil bewirken: mehr Fehltage" (01/2025)
Manager Magazin: "Diese Unternehmen locken mit einer Prämie, wenn man sich nicht krankmeldet" (01/2025)
Personalwirtschaft: "Karenztage: Bewirken sie den gegenteiligen Effekt?" (01/2025)
WDR 2: "Motivation im Arbeitsalltag" [radio show] (01/2025)
Der Spiegel: "Anwesenheitsprämien im Job: Was Menschen zur Arbeit lockt" (11/2024)
Harvard Business Manager: "Warum die Fehlzeiten steigen, sobald Anwesenheit belohnt wird" (11/2024)
Personalwirtschaft: "Experiment: Anwesenheitsbonus à la Tesla geht nach hinten los" (08/2024)
Handelsblatt: "Boni für gute Leistungen können mehr schaden als nützen" (12/2023)
FAZ: "Mehr Freizeit statt finanzielle Boni für die Motivation" [guest article] (12/2022)
FAZ: "Geld ist nicht alles" (03/2022)
Capital: "Für gute Leistungen gibt es einen Bonus obendrauf" (03/2022)
Harvard Business Manager: "Bonus mit Haken" (09/2020)
Bento: "Was motiviert uns bei der Arbeit mehr – Geld oder Freizeit?" (12/2019)
FAZ: "Die Macht der Boni" (11/2019)
brand eins: "Wie wäre es damit?" (09/2019)
QZ-Online: "Sind finanzielle Anreize Motivationskiller?" (08/2019)
Die Welt: "Das motiviert dich im Job mehr als Geld" (10/2017)

Practitioner Seminars and Workshops:

MINT EC – Managerial Accounting for High School Students (2022), MINT EC – Managerial Accounting for High School Students (2021), Stay tuned to Frankfurt School (online, 2020), Annual Meeting of the German Association for Human Resource Management (DGFP, online, 2020), Webinar on "Time Bonuses" (DGFP, online, 2020)

INVITED SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

Invited Seminars:

2026: Tilburg University (scheduled)
2025: Harvard Business School, University of Amsterdam, University of Cologne
2024: University of Tübingen
2023: Erasmus Accounting Workshop (plenary speaker), Ulm University

2022: Maastricht University
2021: London School of Economics, LMU Munich
2020: University of Linz
2018: WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management Vallendar, Frankfurt School of Finance & Management
2017: University of Chicago

Conferences:
Journal of Accounting Research – Registered Report Conference (invited participant, 2024), 19th Annual Conference for Management Accounting Research (WHU Vallendar, 2023), 18th Annual Conference for Management Accounting Research (WHU Vallendar, 2022), European Accounting Association Annual Congress (Bergen, 2022), Journal of Accounting Research – Second Registered Reports Conference (online, 2021), 11th EIASM Conference on Performance Measurement and Management Control (online, 2021), 12th Swiss Accounting Research Workshop (online, 2021), Empirical Research in Management, Accounting & Control (online, 2021), 17th Annual Conference for Management Accounting Research (online, 2021), European Accounting Symposium for Young Scholars (EASYS, 2021), 16th Annual Conference for Management Accounting Research (WHU Vallendar, 2020), 12th Conference on New Directions in Management Accounting (online, 2020), European Network for Experimental Accounting Research (ENEAR, 2020), 15th Annual Conference for Management Accounting Research (WHU Vallendar, 2019), Emerging Scholars in Accounting Conference (Frankfurt, 2019), European Accounting Association Talent Workshop (Madrid, 2019), Colloquium on Personnel Economics (Munich, 2018), 14th Annual Conference for Management Accounting Research (WHU Vallendar, 2018), IMEBESS (Florence, 2018), Maastricht Behavioral and Experimental Economics Symposium (M-BEES, 2018), Natural Experiments and Controlled Field Studies (Munich, 2018), Colloquium on Personnel Economics (Zurich, 2017), Center for Social and Economic Behavior Conference (Cologne, 2017), IMEBESS (Barcelona, 2017), Maastricht Behavioral and Experimental Economics Symposium (M-BEES, 2017), Natural Experiments and Controlled Field Studies (Munich, 2017), Lectures in the Economics of Organizations and Human Resources (Summer School, Cologne, 2017), Experimental Methods in the Study of Firms, Entrepreneurs and Management (Lund, 2017), Center for Social and Economic Behavior Conference (Cologne, 2016), Natural Experiments and Controlled Field Studies (Munich, 2016), Maastricht Behavioral and Experimental Economics Symposium (M-BEES, 2016), Symposium on Motivation & Self-Control (Cologne, 2015), III London Experimental Workshop (2015), Lectures in the Economics of Organizations and Human Resources (Summer School, Frankfurt, 2015), Experimental Design Workshop (Frankfurt, 2014)

RESEARCH GRANTS AND RANKINGS

Awarded:

Granted access to 50,000 km² of Planet satellite imagery (worth ≈$100,000)	2026
ECONtribute Cluster of Excellence (Universities of Bonn and Cologne), six research grants (total €109,770)	2020 – 2025
Center for Social and Economic Behavior (C-SEB) Junior Start-Up Research Grant (€4,000)	2016
C-SEB Workshop Grant for organizing a workshop on "Structural Estimation" (€2,000)	2016

Submitted:

ERC Starting Grant proposal "ABSENT" (ERC-2027-StG), Principal Investigator, €1.4 million requested	10/2026

Rankings:

Ranked 2nd among German-speaking business researchers under 40, based on A+ publications [Forschungsmonitor.de]	2025

TEACHING

Lectures:

Ph.D.: Field Experiments	2022, 2024
Undergraduate: Managerial Accounting [Module Coordinator] (in English, approx. 300 students)	2019 – Present
Undergraduate: Internes Rechnungswesen [Module Coordinator] (in German, approx. 300 students)	2020 – Present
Undergraduate: Corporate Development (online)	2020

Mean student evaluation (1 = best, 6 = worst): undergraduate 1.9, Ph.D. 1.2

Seminars:

Undergraduate: Topic and Data Generation in Managerial Accounting	2023, 2024, 2025
Graduate: Seminar on Empirical Evaluation of Management Practices	2015, 2016
Graduate: Business Projects (*various topics*)	2016 – 2020
Undergraduate: Seminar on Empirical Studies in Personnel Economics	2015, 2017

Supervision:

Yutong Chen (Ph.D. Student, Main Supervisor)	Ongoing
Qi Zhang (Ph.D. Committee, Placement: Chinese University of Hong Kong)	2023
Tanja Keeve (Ph.D. Committee, Placement: Tilburg University)	2023
Weijia Zhi (Ph.D. Committee, Placement: Chinese University of Hong Kong)	2023
Felix Fritsch (Ph.D. Examiner, Placement: University of Mannheim)	2022

Bachelor Theses (>40) and Master Theses (>20)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

University Governance:

Frankfurt School of Finance & Management (current memberships)
Member, Faculty Council
Member, Accreditation and Improvement Committee
Member, Curriculum Committee (MBA)

Ad Hoc Referee:

Economic Inquiry, European Accounting Review, International Review of Economics, Journal of Accounting Research, Journal of Economics & Management Strategy, Management Accounting Research, Management Science (Accounting, Behavioral Economics and Decision Analysis, Business Strategy), The Accounting Review, The Scandinavian Journal of Economics

Conference Referee:

Society for Institutional and Organizational Economics Conference, Management Accounting Midyear Meeting

Conference Organization:

Emerging Scholars in Accounting (2022, 2023), Workshop on Structural Estimation with Charles Bellemare (2016)

PERSONAL

Married, three children (twins born 2024, third child born 2026)