



## COLD-START RECOMMENDATION SYSTEM

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### Abstract

The recommender system is one of indispensable components in many e-commerce websites. One of the major challenges that largely remains open is the cold-start problem, which can be viewed as a barrier that keeps the cold-start users/items away from the existing ones. Facing this problem, recommender systems have several methods to overcome the difficulties posed by the initial lack of meaningful data. The aim is to break through this barrier for cold-start users/items by the assistance of existing ones. In particular, inspired by the classic Elo Rating System, which has been widely adopted in chess tournaments; we propose a novel rating comparison strategy (RAPARE) to learn the latent profiles of cold-start users/items. The center-piece of our RAPARE is to provide a fine-grained calibration on the latent profiles of cold start users/items by exploring the differences between cold-start and existing users/items.

### I INTRODUCTION

One of the major components of e-commerce and social websites, recommender system has become an inalienable part of these websites. During the last decade, many mainstream e-commerce companies have reported significant profit growth by integrating recommender systems into their applications. Recommender system is one of indispensable components in many e-commerce websites. One of the major challenges that largely remains open is the cold-start problem, which can be viewed as a barrier that keeps the cold-start users/items away from the existing ones. The cold start problem occurs when the system is unable to form any relation between users and items for which it has insufficient data. Here we aim to break through this barrier for cold-start users/items by the assistance of existing ones. The efforts in recommending the products to users can be divided into three classes. In the first class, a well designed interview process is introduced for cold-start users. Methods in the second class resort to side information such as the user/item attributes and social relationships for the cold-start problem. In the third class, the cold-start problem is tackled in a dynamic manner



## II LITERATURE SURVEY

**Author: Peng-yu Zhu (Beihang University), Zhong Yao (Beihang University).**

Description: A key challenge in recommender system research is how to make recommendations to new users. Recently the idea of solving the problem within the context of learning user and item profiles has been proposed. Those methods constructed a decision tree for the initial interview, enabling the recommender to query a user adaptively according to her prior responses. However, those methods have overlooked the new users' personal attributes. In this paper, we present the method CCFBURP, which constructs an algorithm with two steps, in the first of which we screen neighbors of the target user, using its personal attributes, while in the second of which we train the interview model on the dataset constituted of the neighbors and alternative projects. Then the recommender system forecasts goal of optional project ratings of the target user. Experimental results on the Movie Lens dataset demonstrate that the proposed CCFBURP algorithm significantly outperforms existing methods for cold-start recommendation.

**Author: Vozalis and Margaritis**

Description: Demonstrated a modified version of k-nearest neighborhood by adding a user demographic vector to the user profile and embedding it in the collaborative filtering algorithm for the calculation of similarity.

**Author: Lam**

Description: Developed a hybrid model based on analysis of two probabilistic aspect models. Their study combined the pure collaborative filtering with users' information to solve the cold-start problem. Communities' information, extracted from different dimensions of social networks, was used to help recommendation systems in solving cold-start problem based on the four latent similarities. Proposing a new similarity measure is also another solution which was used to solve this problem. In their study the authors used optimization based on neural learning to achieve better performance in recommending to new users.

**Author: Poirier**

Description: Proposed a method that exploits blog textual data to reduce the cold-start problem by labeling subjective texts according to their expressed opinions to construct a user-item-rating matrix and establishing recommendations through collaborative filtering

**Author: Zhang**

Description: Presented a recommendation algorithm that makes use of social tags, particularly user-tag-object tripartite graphs, to provide more personalized recommendations when the assigned tags belong to diverse topics

**Author: Preisach**

Description: Argued that many user profiles contain untagged resources that could provide valuable information, especially for the cold-start problem, and proposed a purely graph-based semi supervised relational approach that uses untagged posts

**Author: Wang**

Description: Introduced Credible and co-clustering filterBot for cold-start recommendations (COBA), which uses the rating confidence level to reduce the dimensionality of the item user matrix. The items and users were co-clustered, and the ratings within every user cluster were smoothed to overcome data sparsity. The recommendations were fused from item and user clusters to predict user preference.

**Author: Chen**

Description: Employed additional information, such as the social sub-community and an ontology decision model, to assist the recommendation in the cold-start problem. The social sub-community was divided according to the exiting users' history data and the mining relationship between each other. An ontology decision model was then constructed on the basis of sub-community and users' static information, which makes recommendations for the new user based on his static ontology information

**III EXISTING SYSTEM**

A well designed interview process is introduced for cold-start users. During this interview process, a set of items are provided for the cold-start users to express their opinions. Methods in the second class resort to side information such as the user/item attributes and social relationships for the cold-start problem. The advantage is that these methods could be applicable for a new user/item with not rating at all. In the existing system the recommendation engine only recommends products for the user which are active products, the users will follow the recommendation products and buy those products. There are many underlying probabilities that those inactive products will never be recommended and unsold

***Problems in existing system***

The main disadvantage of methods in this class is the additional burdens incurred by the interview process. These methods are inapplicable when the information is not available due to some reasons (e.g., privacy issue, user's social network structure not existing). If a product is remained UN-recommended the product provider and the product will become inactive. The product provider will face loss because his products might become inactive and his product might become unsold. If the list of inactive items increases then there will be no active products available to sell.



## IV PROPOSED SYSTEM

The cold-start problem is tackled in a dynamic manner. The intuition is that, compared to existing users/items, ratings for cold-start users/items may be more valuable to improve the accuracy of recommendation for these cold-start users/items; consequently, methods in this class aim to provide fast recommendations for cold-start users/items specifically, and then dynamically and efficiently adjust their latent profiles as they give/receive new ratings.

It is aimed at eliminating the inactive products from recommendation system and makes every product active with the help of proposed RAPARE strategy. The key idea of RAPARE is to exploit the knowledge from existing users/items to help calibrate the latent profiles of cold-start users/items

### *Advantages of proposed system*

Compared with existing methods, the methods with dynamic view of the cold-start problem do not incur additional interview burden or rely on the access of side information. The inactive list of products will get eliminated and made active to recommend the cold-start user. The product vendor can get benefit as every product is recommended uniformly. Recommendation to new users and existing users is more simplified by comparing user profiles

## V IMPLEMENTATION

### *Admin*

Admin manages the entire system such as

- Maintain user profiles

The admin can accept or reject vendor and users profiles.

- View Product details

The admin can add, delete and modify the product details.

- View Transaction

The product details will be updated after every transaction. Each user transaction history will be saved and can be viewed by admin.

- View Rating

The admin can view the rating of products given by each user or overall rating of the product.

### *User*

User registers and login into the e-commerce website and they can search, buy, return products, view transactions and get recommendations based on:

- Profile interest similarities



Based on latent profile comparison the interest of user are taken and products similar to them will be recommended.

Profile transaction similarities

The transactions done by both the latent profiles are compared and similar products of existing user will be recommended to cold-start user

User rating behavior analysis

Based on the rating given by the users the product ratings and user rating status will be determined.

### ***Elo Rating System***

Elo Rating System, which is first adopted in chess tournament, can be used to measure the relative skill levels between players in a certain competition. The basic idea behind Elo Rating System is that a player's rating (skill level) is determined by the competition outcomes against her opponents and the ratings of these opponents. It pays special attention to the cold-start users/items, and aim to calibrate the latent profiles for cold start users/items with the help of the existing users/items. We will describe how to calibrate the latent profiles for cold start users/items

In this section, we instantiate RAPARE with two existing collaborative filtering methods (i.e., matrix factorization and neighborhood-based methods) in cold-start scenario.

### ***KNN Algorithm***

K-Nearest-Neighbors method (KNN) is one of popular approaches in neighborhood based collaborative filtering. The key of K-Nearest-Neighbors method is to calculate the similarities between users or items. There are two kinds of KNN (i.e., user-based KNN and item-based KNN) in recommender systems based on the type of similarity calculation.

User-based KNN: The key intuition of user-based KNN is that users with similar tastes may give the similar ratings to the same item. Calculating the similarity between each pair of the given users is the key part of this method.

Item-based KNN: The key of item-based KNN is on the similarity calculation of items.

### ***Matrix Factorization***

This mathematical model helps the system split an entity into multiple smaller entries, through an ordered rectangular array of numbers or functions, to discover the features or information underlying the interactions between users and items.

Matrix factorization is one of the most sought-after machine learning recommendation models. It acts as a catalyst, enabling the system to gauge the customer's exact purpose of the purchase, scan numerous pages, shortlist, and rank the right product or service, and recommend multiple options available. Once the output matches the requirement, the lead translates into a transaction.

The RAPARE instantiation with matrix factorization can be called as RAPARE-MF. Here, a fast learning algorithm for RAPARE-MF to solve the optimization problem in which is based on the following two key observations of the inherent structure in the optimization formulation. First, there are usually a small set of possible ratings (e.g., 1–5 stars) for most recommender systems. Second, the contribution of the ratings from different existing users to item is equal to each other if they share the same rating value on item. For a given rating from the cold-start user to item, we can now aggregate the existing ratings from the existing users to item with the same value, to the basic update unit.

### *Initialization Details*

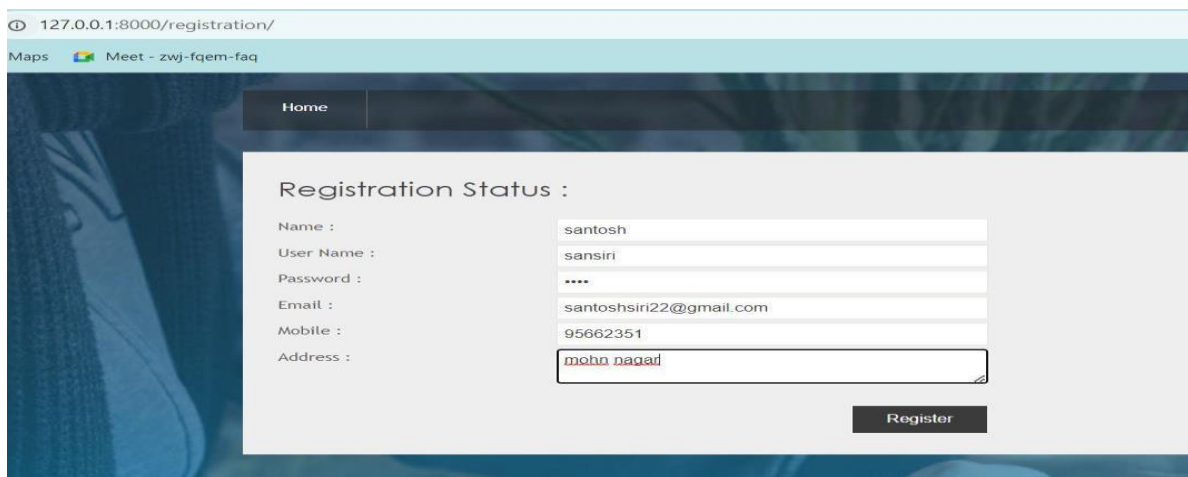
Initialization can be done in three ways:

Random initialization: The simplest initialization of RAPARE-MF is to randomly initialize each profile of cold start user.

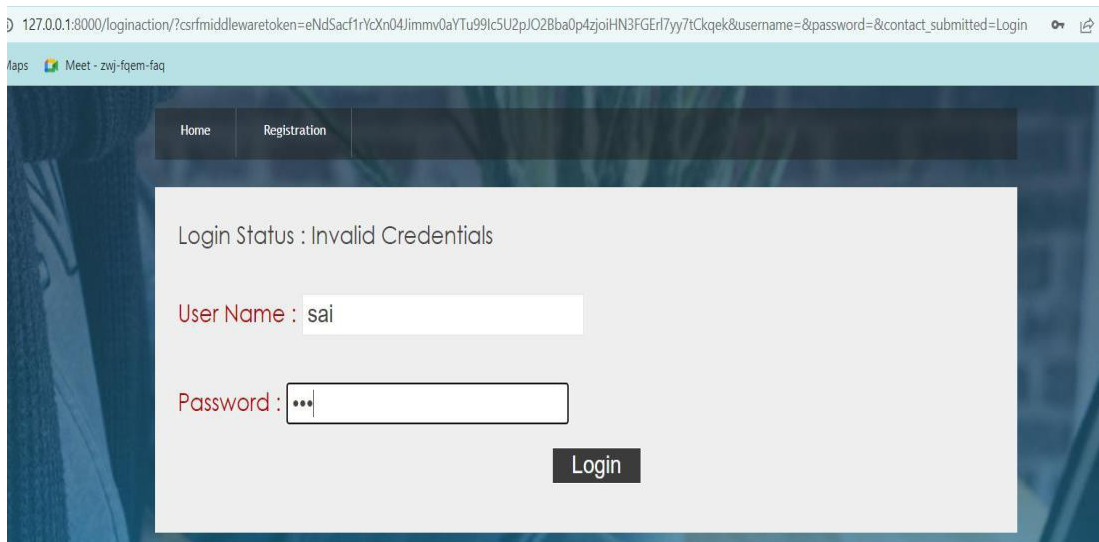
Average initialization for a cold-start user and an item that user has rated, this average method first finds the set of existing users who have given the same rating to item as user does, and then computes the average cold start user profile over these existing users

Clustering-based initialization. In this method, we first cluster the existing users into several groups (e.g., by k-means algorithm), each of which is accompanied with a representative latent profile. During initialization, this method chooses the best representative latent profile: if the cold-start user has rated the item, this method will test all the representative latent profiles from each cluster, and choose the one with the lowest error as profile of the cold start user.

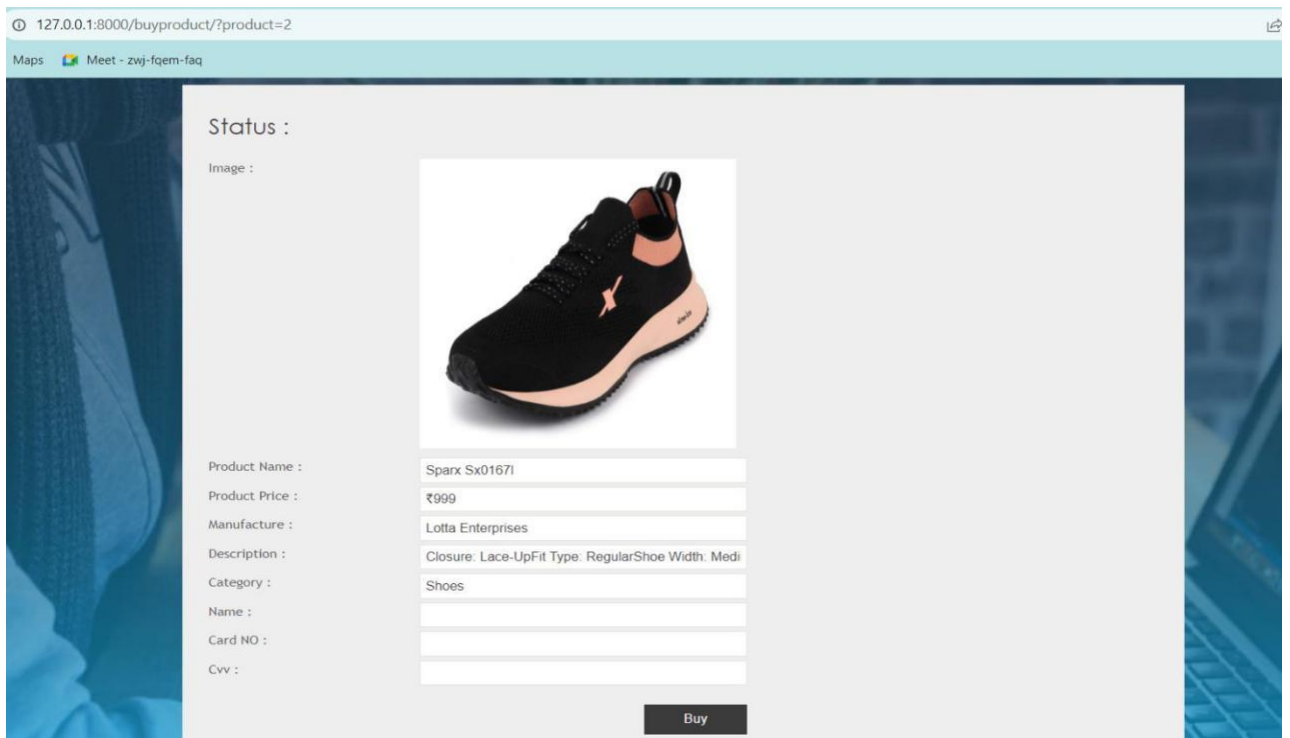
## VI RESULTS



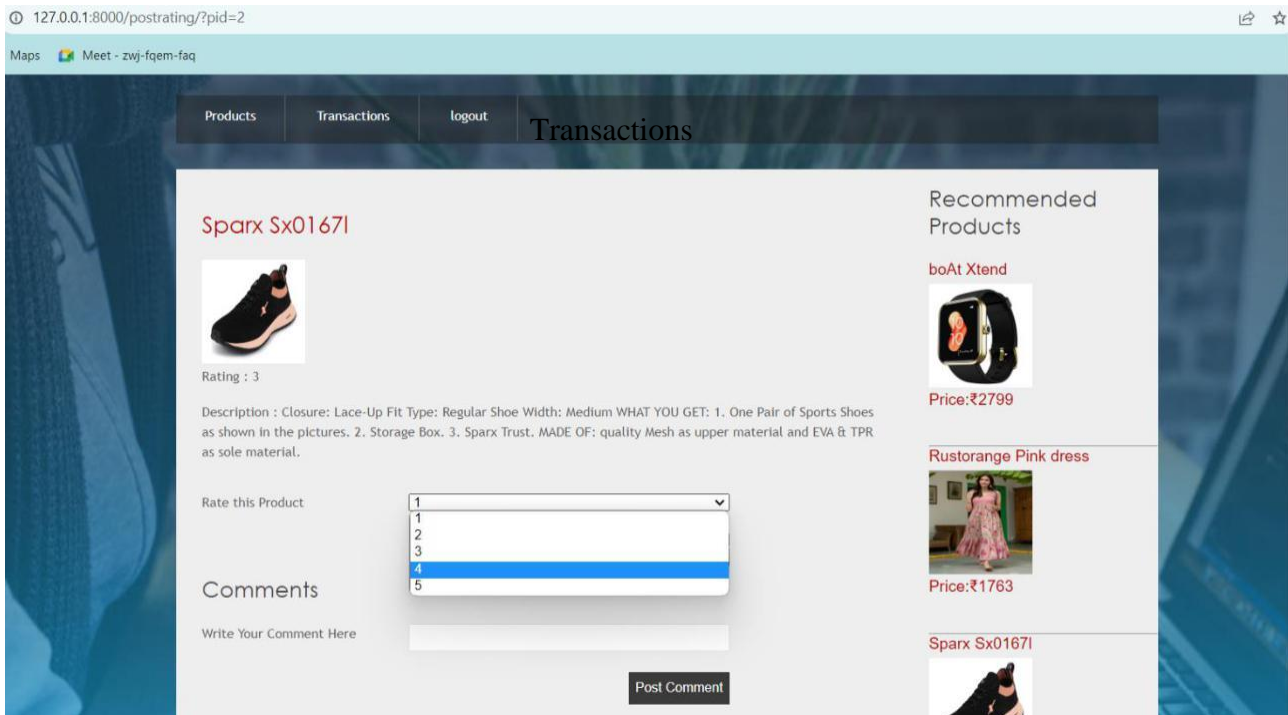
Registration page



Login page



Home page



## VII CONCLUSION

A generic rating comparison strategy (RAPARE) to make proper recommendations for cold-start problem will be developed. In particular, the RAPARE strategy provides a special, fine-grained treatment for cold-start users and cold-start items. This generic strategy can be instantiated to many existing methods for recommender systems.

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