

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Yaroslava V. Kulik
Title of thesis:	Marketing communications as the main stimulating instrument of hedonic consumption in luxury fashion business

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.

The chosen topic seems to be absolutely in tendencies of time: rapid development of luxury fashion business in Russia, the period of radical change in attitudes to luxury consumption, as well as lack of studies of Russian fashion market and Russian consumers makes the work very actual and of scientific interest.

Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.

The thesis has the following structure: the first part is about the definition and specifics of luxury fashion industry, including luxury brand, marketing communications in luxury fashion business and the concept of luxury consumption. Also the author describes what hedonism is about and speaks about hedonic aspects of consumption. Further parts are focused on methodology and presentation of empirical study.

Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives. Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.

The author shows profound knowledge of theoretical approaches to studied area. It is especially important that the author is familiar with current models of communication strategy of fashion brands which include interactive communication channels. The author meets her objectives.

Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.

The author uses two key methodology approaches: desk research analysis (covering both text and images) and primary research (qualitative research using in-depth interviews). Standards of qualitative research methodology are met, taking into account the limitations of luxury segment which is characterized by low accessibility of information sources.

Desk research analysis is also made on proper level. The Author shows her ability for generalization.

Scientific aspect of the thesis. Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.

The major advantage of the thesis is the Author's intention to offer practical solutions for marketing projects implementation in luxury segment. In terms of thesis content, the Author has concentrated on description of different approaches to marketing communications, and tries to cover all opportunities to stimulate usage which are offered by marketing communication. It should be mentioned, though, that deeper analytical approach would have been helpful for the paper.

Practical/applied nature of research. Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.

The paper is extremely interesting for managerial practice as at the moment we observe shortage of information on the role of marketing communication for luxury goods and substantial demand for practical models of communication strategies in this area. Besides, analysis of hedonistic consumption is especially important as, according to experts' opinion, Russian luxury market moves from demonstrative to hedonistic consumption. Sociological aspects of this problem are analyzed in the paper with a special depth.

Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.

Paper layout is correct, all requirements to the layout of Master theses are fulfilled.

The Master thesis of __Kulik Yaroslava meets for master thesis of Master in International Business program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date 27/10/2012

Scientific Advisor: (*academic title, name*)

Associate Professor Ludmila N. Bogomolova