

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business Program
Student:	Fedorova Yulia
Title of thesis:	Influence of experiential branding on retail brand image (case of SPAR INT.)

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.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
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.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
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.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	<u>5</u>	4	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = poor.

Additional comments:

The Fedorova Yulia's **master thesis is aimed** to to prove the existence of the interconnection between experiential retail brand benefits and the retail brand image. The attempt to evaluate the effect of brand experience on retail brand image may be regarded as additional objective of the paper.

The author devotes first three chapters of her master thesis to the concept of brand image, brand experience and retail marketing. As a result she presents so called conceptual model. Afterward she presents research design followed by hypotheses formulation and hypotheses testing. She ends up presenting case study and conclusion. It seems to me that the structure of the paper and its logic correspond to each other.

As for strong points of the Master's thesis as a whole. It is evident that her paper is independent scientific research. I do think that the value of this paper is in the study of international retailer brand image in the Russian market. More over this research has proved the existence of the interconnection between experiential retail brand benefits and the retail brand image.

As for weak points of the Master's thesis. It seems to me that some author's recommendations like " it is important to have a clear vision of the store concept that is offered to the target audience and apply the experiential branding where it is applicable" are very much close to common sense.

The paper is formed and designed in accordance with the required standards. There are references as well as six appendixes.

General conclusion: the Master's thesis by Fedorova Yulia meets the requirements for Master's thesis of MIB program and deserves an "excellent" grade, thus the author of the thesis can be given the required degree.

24.09.2012

Chair of strategic and international management
Associated professor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vassily K. Dermanov', written over a horizontal line.

Vassily K. Dermanov