

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business Program
Student:	Tobias Watzinger
Title of thesis:	THE MANAGEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC ALLIANCES IN THE RUSSIAN ENERGY INDUSTRY

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.	5			
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.	5			
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			
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.	4			
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			
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.	4			
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5			

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

Additional comments:

The problem of identification of the key factors, influencing management efficiency by the international strategic alliances of the modern companies, is very important and actual. The choice the author of the energy sector of economy of Russia as a key branch for the analysis of the specified processes is quite adequate.

The theoretical part of work doesn't bear in itself new information, but testifies to deep studying by the author of the major researches in this sphere of management.

The practical part of dissertational research of mister of Watzinger is constructed on use a case method - the analysis of six real examples of the international strategic alliances of the Russian and European firms. Information basis for research and conclusions are interview to top managers of these companies. On the basis of the analysis of these interviews the author builds possible scenarios of future development of alliances. Scenarios are constructed on the analysis of motive forces, benefits and risks of the international cooperation of partners. Conclusions of the author are rather proved and it is possible to agree with them.

The choice of examples is rather interesting to the analysis and gives the chance for problem studying. At the same time, it is necessary to pay attention what not all from the alliances chosen for the analysis is reflected by radical processes in branch. The analysis of a number of better known alliances would allow to draw essentially more significant conclusions on specifics of processes of the international cooperation in this branch.

So author does in the work the short review of the most important branch alliances of the last time – TNK-BP, ERG-Lukoil, Gazprom Neft-Shell, Rosneft-Exxon, Novatek-Total. The analysis of these alliances, undoubtedly, would give deeper picture of a condition of the international cooperation in the

Russian ENERGY INDUSTRY. They give examples as highly effective cooperation (for example, alliance ERG-Lukoil), and deep contradictions between partners (an example, the relations between shareholders in the TNK-BP company).

The specified shortcomings don't reduce high level of reviewed work. Work has independent, research and complete character. It is written by a correct literary language, supplied by the necessary scientific device and issued according to shown requirements. The lacks don't reduce the general good impression of work.

Master thesis of Tobias Watzinger meets the requirements of MIB program, and deserves an “excellent” grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

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Referee: SP'sSU GSOM Associate Professor



Yuriy Laptev