

## SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

<b>Program:</b>	Master in International Business (MIB) Program
<b>Student:</b>	Kornyshev, Philipp
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	Developing an entry strategy for emerging markets: the case of the Russian snack food industry

<p><b>Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis.</b> 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.</p> <p>The author provides some justification for the choice of topic by explaining his focus on SMEs in the snack food industry in the Russian market, which is thought to be unique (p.11). The rationale for the selection of this particular industry needs to be explained in more detail, though. Besides, the author should distinguish clearly between the thesis' aim and objectives. The aim is only mentioned in the abstract and the conclusions (starting on p. 64). A more concise statement of the objectives is required. Definitions of important terms are presented in the thesis.</p>
<p><b>Structure and logic of the text flow.</b> Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.</p> <p>Even though the overall structure of the thesis is logical, there are some inconsistencies (such as the introduction of a theoretical model (p. 29) before the section "5. Theory development" (starting on p. 39).</p>
<p><b>Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives.</b> 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.</p> <p>The author presents a comprehensive description of the research literature, grounding the discussion of entry modes in theories of internationalization. He takes into account competing theoretical views and new developments in the field of international business (such as the "born global" phenomenon). Empirical studies, in particular, need to be reviewed in more detail. The theoretical framework (pp. 29-30) must be explained. The hypotheses are derived from the literature. It is necessary to formulate more precise propositions, though. In the discussion section, in which the author compares the challenges and entry mode decisions of two companies, as well as the applicability of theories of internationalization, the linkages to the research literature presented in Figure 10 need to be discussed in more detail.</p>
<p><b>Quality of data gathering and description.</b> 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.</p> <p>The author studies two cases to test his hypotheses. Even though the case study method is described at length, its specific purpose for the present study needs to be explained in more detail. A longitudinal research setup would have been necessary to study stages of internationalization. The data collected through six interviews with four respondents is not sufficient to develop rich explanatory cases. Additional case study evidence could possibly compensate for this shortcoming to some extent, but it is not discussed in sufficient detail. The author provides some details on qualitative content analysis (p. 53). References to the literature related to this analytical technique and more details on its application in the present study are required, though. The appendix includes interview summaries, which are useful for exploring the data in more detail. The author should change the heading of this appendix ("Interview Guide"), though.</p>
<p><b>Scientific aspect of the thesis.</b> 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.</p> <p>The attempt to cross theoretical boundaries and take into account a variety of theoretical perspectives is of potential value. However, a sharper focus on key concepts and messages would be beneficial. The literature review is mainly descriptive. The contributions of the study are not clearly outlined in the discussion section.</p>

**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.

In principle, the study topic matters for executives interested in the Russian market. To create value for this target group, though, the author needs to prioritize his findings and offer specific, actionable recommendations.

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

The quality of the thesis layout needs to be improved. Among other things, the author has to adopt a clear and consistent table format (e.g., a standard format should be used for Figure 4 and Figure 6; instead of resorting to the copy-paste method, the author needs to re-design Table 1 to make it consistent with the table format elsewhere in the thesis).

### **Conclusion:**

The Master thesis of Philipp Komyshov meets the requirements of the Master in International Business (MIB) program. Thus, the author of the thesis can be awarded the desired degree.

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Scientific Advisor:



Prof. Dr. Kai-Alexander Schlevogt (D.Phil. Oxford)  
Professor, Holder of Endowed Chair in Strategic Leadership  
Graduate School of Management, St. Petersburg State University