

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Konkov Grigory
Title of thesis:	Marketing-sales department cooperation and its relation on direct sales performance: an example of a medium-sized oil company

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 topic of the thesis is actual in practical and theoretical sense due to (1) a great influence of marketing-sales cooperation on a company overall performance, and to (2) the limitations of the tradition of making theoretical analysis of marketing and sales separately.

The research goal of the thesis is defined as "to ascertain the model of cooperation between marketing and sales departments, and understand the impact of cooperative interface on the performance of the given business unit" (p.3).

This goal is presented quite clear. The objectives of the research are directly related to the topic and to the research goal.

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 research in general is conducted in a logical manner. It consists of three main theoretical and empirical chapters which are in good balance (Conceptualization of marketing-sales relationship; Practical projection of marketing-sales cooperation; Direct-sales performance from business practice perspective). The results and conclusions are directly followed from the 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 coverage of objectives is quite adequate and properly balanced. The research problem is formulated clearly. The main trends in modern literature of possible cooperation between marketing and direct-sales are carefully analysed and applied to the research.

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 research tools and methods are selected properly. The research is based on qualitative work. The empirical part of the study represents hermeneutic circle, where the author has set the aims, collected, analysed, and interpreted data. The validity of data collected from the interviews is quite adequate. The list of references is complete.

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 way of scientific thinking is quite independent. The conceptual research framework presented by the author can be shared and used for the researches related to marketing-sales cooperation in other industries and in general. The qualitative research is made on the mainstream level and the author demonstrated the ability to use the main but typical approaches.

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 theoretical background is directly related to the international and Russian practices of oil companies. The results are just and can be shared for theoretical as well as practical purposes.

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

The main Regulations for the master thesis preparation are fulfilled. The tables, figures, and references are presenter correctly.

The Master thesis of Grigory Konkov meets the requirements for master thesis of Master in International Business Program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date: June 17, 2012



Scientific Advisor: Yury E. Blagov
Dr., Associate professor