

## REFEREE'S REVIEW

<b>Program:</b>	Master in International Business
<b>Student:</b>	Shaping a strategy for emerging market: Russian it-service company entry to Chinese education sector
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	Yury V. Kolesnik

<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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
<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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
<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.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
<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.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
<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.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
<b>Practical/applied nature of research.</b> 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
<b>Quality of thesis layout.</b> 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:

**As for justification of the topic choice.** The Yury Kolesnik's Master thesis is aimed to analyze internationalization of the IT-service company operating in education sector with focus on emerging markets. In addition to that, the author also provided some more detailed analysis of Chinese education sector. It seems to me that the topic of strategic development of Russian it-service companies is really relevant.

**As for research questions, logic and the structure of the paper.** The logic of research is rather traditional. Having made a literature review the author later offers an empirical study. The later deals with analysis of peculiarities of IT services in emerging markets, China included. It seems to me that the structure of the paper and its logic in general correspond to each other.

In his master thesis the author put three research questions: 1) What are the most important determinants of IT-service internationalization? 2) What peculiarities of education sector in emerging markets affect companies' strategies? 3) How should IT-service companies adapt their strategies on these markets on example of China? The main challenging point here is that all three research questions are logically not very much interlinked. Namely, the way we answer the first question is unable to affect how we answer the second question, or third.

**As for strong points of the Master's thesis as a whole.** It is evident that his paper is independent research. I do think that this study is able to convince a reader that Chinese government controls practically all firms, "which have to have connections with state institutions to successfully operate on the Chinese market".

Moreover, in education sector there is a strong government regulation. Till now foreign IT companies have to have a local partner not only to explore the local environment, but to do business in China in general.

**As for weak points of the Master's thesis.** From my point of view there are several weak points. The first one is that it is mainly a descriptive paper. The second one is that there is rather weak interconnection between so called theoretical and empirical parts of the thesis. The third one is that the so called "developed recommendations" to IT-service companies to enter Chinese market are very much close to common sense. Here are some examples of these recommendations. 1) The company should choose the right location; 2) The company should work with a local partner through establishing a joint venture; 3) The company should focus its resources on solving the cultural distance problem.

The paper is formed and designed in accordance with the required standards.

Master thesis of Yury Kolesnik meets the requirements of MIB program, and deserves a "good" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

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Referee: Ass. Professor



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