

REFeree'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business Program
Student:	Ján Široký
Title of thesis:	«Application of counter-marketing: case of the online video game market for Russian consumers»

<p>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 has selected for his study a <i>topic</i> which is exceptionally <i>actual</i> although still quite complicated to uncover. There are numerous knowledge gaps in the marketing theory which lead us to develop this study, mainly that counter-marketing is not clearly defined in the literature and is currently not taken as a full and relevant part of marketing studies.</p> <p>The <i>main goal</i> of the current master thesis is to define the sense and scope of the counter-marketing and analyze its tools and activities from the viewpoint of counter-marketing capacities applied to managing such irrational consumption that exists among the gamers in the field of video games.</p>	5	4	3	2
<p>Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.</p> <p>In general the work gives an impression of <i>a complete and logical study</i>. The thesis consists of three chapters that are interconnected as they follow the objectives stated in the introductions.</p> <p>The research paper is composed of 3 chapters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the first chapter identifies the framework of the research, reviews the general practices of similar researches, prepares the basis for the hypotheses statement and indicates scientific gap, which is going to be explained in the further chapters; 2) the second chapter provides a deep video games industry analysis that includes classifications of video games, its payment systems and a marketing model of video games. Causes and negative consequences of playing video games, such as lower productivity at workplace or in school, are also discussed along with socio-economic characteristics of adolescents and their addictive behavior; 3) the third chapter is devoted to the study of social learning and social cognitive theory and also to development of a consumer behavior model under the effects of formal and informal counter-marketing. <p>Every chapter of the research is connected to the objectives stated in the introduction and leads to the initial aim of the research.</p>	5	4	3	2

<p>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.</p> <p>The <i>objectives</i> stated in the thesis <i>are fully covered</i> by the represented analysis. Due to the theory overview the student came up to some specifications and problems that exist nowadays. As for the bibliography list, it looks representative as it includes various sources of publications. The articles and monographs were picked up in accordance with the topic and helped the author to make deep theoretical overview of the current problem.</p> <p>The author's counter-marketing model based on the social cognitive theory is designed and tested with the help of the online survey arranged by the author.</p>	5	4	3	2
<p>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</p> <p>. Quality of selecting research tools and methods is rather high.</p> <p>Methodology is based on exploratory research. The main purpose of exploratory research is to become familiar with phenomenon of counter-marketing, get a deeper insight into it and find new insights and ideas.</p>	5	4	3	2
<p>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.</p> <p>The revision of the work showed <i>the individual approach</i> of the student to the stated problem. It is shown by the literature that was chosen and analyzed, methodology of the research and the practical application</p> <p>The <i>objectives</i> stated in the paper <i>are fully covered</i> by the represented analysis.</p> <p>The strongest part of the paper is its clear research character. The topic of research is rarely studied which might indicate challenges in it – the complexness and sophistication of counter-marketing activities.</p> <p>The referee pays special attention to author's erudition, competent use of interdisciplinary research methods, including philological analysis and sociological approaches to realize counter-marketing concept in practice.</p> <p>Speaking about the weak sides of the paper, the referee should mention that the author should have been more clearly to separate the concept of counter-marketing, social-ethical marketing and anti-crisis marketing. Secondly, the author should be more fully reveal the limitations of conducted research.</p> <p>This does not decrease the high quality of the presented thesis.</p>	5	4	3	2
<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.</p> <p>Thesis produces impression as a creative, practice-oriented work, aimed at achieving practical concrete results.</p> <p>The author recommends to expand developed by him Counter-Marketing Model, in order to give better basis for further counter-marketing studies. This will have a great impact on a way of counter-marketing to become a full and relevant part of counter-marketing studies and practice.</p> <p>The author proposed a number of effective counter-marketing tools that could be applied to the Russian market of video games.</p>	5	4	3	2
<p>Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.</p> <p>Master thesis has neat appearance and makes a positive overall impression. All the figures and tables of the work have sources and references.</p>	5	4	3	2

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

General conclusion: The Master thesis of **Ján Široký** meets the requirements for master thesis of MIB program and deserves an *excellent grade (5 A)* , thus the author of the thesis can be given the required degree.

Referee:

Doctor of Economics,
Associate Professor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S.A. Starov', with a large, sweeping flourish underneath.

S.A. Starov

15/06/2015