

REFeree'S REVIEW

Program:	MITIM
Student:	Viktor Gregurek
Title of thesis:	CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT IN LEAN STARTUP PRINCIPLES: CASE OF GAME DEVELOPMENT STUDIO

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	4	3	2
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	4	3	2
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	4	3	2
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.	5	4	3	2
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	4	3	2
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.	5	4	3	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5	4	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = the thesis meets all the requirements, 4 = the thesis meets almost all the requirements, 3 = a lot of the requirements are not met in the thesis, 2 = the thesis does not meet the requirements.

Additional comments:

The founders of an early-stage startup typically confront considerable uncertainty about the viability of their venture's business model - especially, about demand for their proposed product/service (Thomas R. Eisenmann, Eric Ries, and Sarah Dillard, 2014). If they develop and market the product before resolving this uncertainty, they may waste resources on a product/service that no one wants. Since most startups are severely resource-constrained, such waste can be fatal for a new venture. Entrepreneur Eric Ries invented the term lean startup to describe organizations that follow the principles of hypothesis-driven entrepreneurship. So the topic is novel and forms an interesting research setting.

This thesis is a good example of a real case research.

The theoretic part describes the hypothesis-driven approach but doesn't compare this approach directly with other approaches often used to launch new ventures: "Build It and They Will Come", "Waterfall Planning", and "Just Do It". Author didn't identify specifics of lean startup implementation in the game industry either.

The work misses kParty game initial brief description (only two sentences, page 35), description of its evolution up to version 1.0 that is planned to launch on Facebook. Some properties of the product are encountered in the text, but not in one place. There is no karaoke games' market analysis and positioning of kParty v.1.0 on this market (author should prove that this game is unique and has no any competitors, or has some definite competitive advantage(s), page 35).

The planned launch on Facebook of the 1.0 version of the application will allow the further lean startup evaluation but no social media KPIs are prepared and discussed for this research.

Digital marketing strategy is crucial for gaming lean startups in Facebook, but author briefly mentions that only marketing plan was created.

Also this research definitely misses the usage of the crowdfunding campaign as a powerful research tool for lean startups today.

Thesis layout contains some typos and useless spaces,

Master thesis of Viktor Gregurek meets the requirements of the MITIM program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a good B grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date 12.06.2015

Referee:

Associate professor



Sergey Yablonsky