

## SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

<b>Program:</b>	MITIM
<b>Student:</b>	Gregurek, Viktor
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	Customer Involvement in Lean Startup Principles: Case 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.

Master thesis of Viktor Gregurek focuses on the exploration of the customers' role in implementing lean start-up principles in new venture during new product development stage. Lean start-up methodology is currently perceived as one of the most comprehensive approaches of new product development in modern uncertain and unpredictable business environment. This is particularly important for start-up companies that try to introduce new product or new technology. One of the key elements of lean start-up methodology is customers' involvement and their participation at the early stage of the product development. Viktor formulate the goal of his master thesis as is to find out how customers are involved in lean startup methodology implantation and increase the likelihood of new venture survival. In order to achieve this goal Viktor implements case study strategy based on action research method.

**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.

Structure of master thesis is designed to achieve the main goal and research question stated. The master thesis has explorative nature and is based on the inductive approach, starts with extensive literature review and leads to the empirical study. The master thesis consists of seven parts, including introduction, conclusion and five chapters. After introduction that includes justification of research topic, formulation of the research question and research goal, the second part is dedicated to the literature review on the studied issue. Third part of the master thesis presents the theoretical framework based of lean start-up methodology. The fourth part provides the description and justification of methodology of the empirical research. Viktor shows the deep understanding of the approaches to main research strategies and provides rational explanations for chosen research design. In the fifth part, he represents the results of the empirical analysis of single case study and summarizes the main research findings. The sixth part of the master thesis includes the further in-depth analysis of researched case, followed with the explanation given. The last part provides several important conclusions as well as summarises the aspects discussed in the theoretical and empirical parts of the master thesis.

**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.

Viktor formulates research questions in the proper and accurate way. In order to address the research questions Viktor applies inductive approach which allows developing theory based on the empirical study. As a research strategy for empirical part of the study the author implements the deep analysis of single case based on action research method. The justification of the chosen research design is presented in the proper way; the reliability of main findings is proven by the methodology implemented in accurate way.

**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.

One of the most important author's contributions is his active involvement in new venture creation process as a co-founder of the company chosen for study. Being involved in both new venture creation process and new product development process, Viktor gets a very comprehensive understanding of the role of customers' involvement in those processes. Also it is allowed Viktor to implement such methods for data collection as participant observation as well as action research. The appropriate and elaborated description of research design and research strategy proves the reliability and validity of main findings and justifies the main conclusions and theoretical propositions.

**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 theoretical part includes the deep literature analysis and allows author to develop theoretical framework and research question in appropriate way. The literature review is presented in the good scientific manner and includes the description and explanation of the chosen literature for analysis. The methodological and empirical parts of the research include all necessary elements of the good scientific paper in business and management studies. Author demonstrates the ability to both analyses of the existing literature and synthesis main findings in order to provide his own ideas in this field.

**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 results of the study have both theoretical and practical implications. From the theoretical perspective, this study extends the existing literature on the lean start-up methodology by emphasizing the role of customers' involvement in new product development process that in turns influences the new venture survival and success. As for managerial implication, the results suggest that entrepreneurs should take into account the customers' role and develop specific environment in order to enhance new venture creation process including new product development process as well.

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

Overall, layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, all tables and figures are given in the appropriate way.

The Master thesis of Viktor Gregurek meets all requirements for master thesis of MITIM program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

June 10, 2015.

**Research advisor**

Professor,

Strategic and International Management Department



Galina Shirokova