

REFeree'S REVIEW

Program:	MITIM
Student:	Oleg Sokolov
Title of thesis:	Customer preferences assessment for the launch of cloud analytics platform in Russia: case of IBM Watson

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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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	<u>4</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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 thesis of Oleg Sokolov investigates customer preferences assessment for the launch of analytics platform in Russia. On one hand, analytics is an evident trend nowadays due to rapidly growing amount of data and powerful technological progress. On the other hand, in order to produce and launch any product and service, companies must have tools for customer preferences analysis and market potential estimation – this is also relevant for companies, which produce and sell analytics platforms. So designing a tool for customer preferences assessment which is tailored for business analytics market is a relevant task.

In order to design such a tool the author identified a list of attributes that influence adoption decision of cloud analytics (using literature review and in-depth interviews), identified relative importance of each attribute (through a potential users survey based on choice-based conjoint analysis), chose market simulation model and implemented all these findings in Excel-based analytical tool for customer preferences analysis and market potential estimation. Author demonstrated how the tool works un a IBM Watson (an example analytics platform) case study. This tool can be used in product concepts assessment, customer analysis, competitor analysis, developing marketing strategy of a product and new product sales potential assessment. This thesis is a good example of design science research, which provides a useful artefact (analytical tool in the current situation) to solve typical and relevant real-life tasks.

The thesis is well structured. Quality of research design shows that the author is a good researcher.

Minor drawbacks:

The legend for figure 4 is in Russian.

Some language errors – e.g. “From the other hand”.

Master thesis of Oleg Sokolov meets the requirements of the MITIM program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a *excellent (A)* grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date 14.06.2015

Referee:
Dmitry Kudryavtsev, PhD,
Associate Professor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D.K.', is written over a faint rectangular stamp.