

## SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

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

<p><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.</p>
<p>In the era of big data analytics has emerged as the engine driving transformation. Today more and more organizations are using analytics to harness the power of data that helps them make better decisions with speed and confidence and to turn information into insight and insight into business outcomes to achieve competitive advantage. The cloud analytics platforms are a promising and powerful business model in the digital economy. So the master thesis of Oleg Sokolov, aimed to investigate an entry strategy for launching cloud analytics platform, in particular the stage of customer preferences analysis, appears to be actually topical.</p>
<p><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.</p>
<p>The thesis consists of 3 parts and is structured in the following way. Chapter 1 investigates the state-of-art in cloud analytics platforms and discusses the procedure of cloud analytics launching. Chapter 2 gives a review of the theoretical literature and main definitions on the key concepts of Oleg's thesis. Finally it presents the research methodology. Chapter 3 is dedicated to designing a tool for customer preferences assessment. Chapter 4 illustrates the application of the analytical tool to the case of IBM Watson and contains discussion of the research results. The conclusion finalizes the main findings and conclusions. List of references completes the thesis. The overall text is presented in a logical manner.</p>
<p><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.</p>
<p>This master thesis is built on the three theoretical concepts: adoption of IT, customer preferences analysis and market simulation. Theories about user adoption of IT were reviewed and a list of features that influence adoption decision was derived. This list was adjusted to the case of cloud analytics by means of in-depth interviews with corporate employees that used or were going to use cloud analytics in their work. Next was an application of conjoint analysis. This analysis aimed to derive utilities of different levels of different attributes and estimate relative importance of each attribute in the adoption decision. Using the utilities obtained with the help of conjoint analysis, an analytical tool was developed that allows to model new product adoption in an existing market. Finally, to demonstrate the process of tool application, the case of IBM Watson was studied. The author of the thesis demonstrates analytical thinking, being able to analyse critically various approaches.</p>
<p><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.</p>
<p>The online survey in the form of full profile type of choice-based conjoint analysis questionnaire was conducted. The analysis of the empirical data is done in quite comprehensive manner.</p>
<p><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.</p>
<p>Oleg has demonstrated himself as a researcher with independent scientific thinking. Research findings and managerial implications of the study might be useful for researchers and managers. Analysis of the literature and selection of the research model has been done by Oleg by himself, as well as refining research methodology that would fit his research goals.</p>
<p><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.</p>
<p>Using the utilities obtained with the help of conjoint analysis, an analytical tool was developed that allows to model new product adoption in an existing market. Input for the tool is the attribute levels for</p>

all products in the market and for the new product. Output is the distribution of customer preferences among these products. This tool, integrated into Microsoft excel, is the practical implementation of research.

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

Thesis layout contains some typos and useless spaces.

The Master thesis of Oleg Sokolov meets the requirements for master thesis of MITIM program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date 12.06.2015

Scientific Advisor:  
*Associate professor*



*Sergey Yablonsky*