

## REFeree'S REVIEW

<b>Program:</b>	Master in Management (MIM)
<b>Student:</b>	Ekaterina Artiukhova
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	Big data analytics as a marketing tool: the best practices of Russian companies

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

*Please, elaborate on the above mentioned criteria (about 250 words)*

Addressing big data as a marketing tool is a relevant and topical aspect. Numerous opportunities are given to businesses to increase their performance and improve the return on investment by getting insights from the customer, operations and other data. Because of the economy growth period Russian businesses have mainly neglected this opportunity in favor of extensive growth. Current economic trend of economy recession, stagnating and even shrinking consumer incomes force businesses to reevaluate their marketing toolkit and priorities. This forces marketers to discover internal sources of growth and customer insight, whereas big data is providing a timely opportunity to be used.

With these assumptions in kind, however, little is known about what have actually Russian firms learned from the crisis and whether they are now seriously considering big data analytics as a marketing tool.

The topic of the thesis thus is more than timely defined, with high practical relevancy. Author starts by introducing the overview of marketing tools, known over the last 5-6 decades. An introduction of big data analytics as a management tool follows. Author is introducing new opportunities of data types, as location or image data which might be used by the firm. Examples of big data platforms and successful cases are presented. This chapter is smoothly concluded by an introduction to the situation in the Russian market, its overview and research questions.

Case study method is well justified, as well as the choice of the two industries is appropriate for the topic in hand. The results are beneficially presented in a comparative way, are well structured and provide an overview in terms of the angles and criteria investigated by the Author (see for example, table on p. 70-71). As expected in case of case study research, the information is triangulated and various data sources are used when representing case companies. The results of case studies comparison opens floor for a discussion, particularly considering variation in how case companies assess the performance outcomes of their big data initiatives. The overall summary is well thought through (p.80).

Master thesis of Ekaterina Artiukhova meets the requirements of the MiM program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a/an "excellent (A)" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date May, 31 2016

Referee:

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