

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master of International Business
Student:	Yuliya Denisova
Title of thesis:	Brand portfolio analysis in the female segment of Russian market: the case of Gillette company

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.

The topic of brand architecture is quite important for the companies: it defines the company's strategy in the future, influences its position in the market and positioning of the company's products in the consumers' minds. The main goal of the current master thesis is the research of the brand portfolio architecture. Brand portfolio analysis is made from two perspectives: analysis of the theoretical concepts and models of the brand portfolio architecture; and the practical analysis of the Gillette Company brand portfolio in the female segment of Russian market. With this example the author aimed to make a practical application of the brand architecture theories and to check their viability in the real business cases. The goal required several objectives to be investigated and all of them were formulated to logically reflect the steps of the study.

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.

The structure is logically built as it goes from the general issues of the topic and comes to more precise ones. The thesis consists of two parts that are interconnected as they follow the objectives stated in the introductions. In the first chapter the author presents a wide overview of the theoretical models in the field of brand architecture and analyzed main papers written on this topic. The first paragraph of the first chapter reveals the concept of brand portfolio and main principles of brand portfolio building. In the second paragraph the author discusses the fundamental models of brand portfolio architecture. These models are Kapferer's brand strategy mode; brand relationship spectrum (Aaker and Joachimsthaler); model of "Branded house" and "House of brands" introduced by Kapferer; and Keller's brands classification model according to position at hierarchy levels. The example of Gillette Company brand architecture was presented in the second chapter. The research was made according to the method of brand architecture audit. This method consists of four steps: brand roles analysis in the brand portfolio; brands roles analysis in the product offering; structural analysis; and the visualization analysis of the brand architecture.

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.

The objectives stated in the paper are fully covered by the represented analysis. Due to the theory overview the student came up to some specifications and problems that exist nowadays. As for the bibliography list, it looks representative as it includes various sources of publications. The articles and monographs were picked up in accordance with the topic and helped the author to make deep theoretical overview of the current problem.

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.

Quality of selecting research tools and methods is high. Research for the current topic was made in two steps: the secondary data research and the primary data research. The secondary data research was held according to the structure defined in the first part of the second chapter. All these aspects were analyzed for the Gillette Company on the female market according to company's reports, official information from the web-sites, data base resources and news articles. Primary data research was based on the in-depth interviews with Gillette and Venus brand managers. The author made eleven interviews with brand managers who are working in Gillette Company. The empirical part of the thesis includes a sample questionnaire that corresponds with the objectives and goal of the research.

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 revision of the work showed the individual approach of the student to the stated problem. It is shown by the literature that was chosen and analyzed, methodology of the research and the practical application. For example, the student identifies key conspicuous consumption drivers from a massive body of research in various fields that she later on applies to the research. This shows the individual approach to the analysis of the material and the ability to build own frameworks on the issue.

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.

Thesis produces impression as a creative, practice-oriented work, aimed at achieving practical concrete results. The current research can be seen as actual and managerially applicable because it provides a comprehensive analysis of factors for optimization Gillette brand portfolio. The practical aim of the current research of Gillette portfolio is to find weaknesses of the current brand portfolio architecture in the Gillette Company and to improve them by the theoretical models application. So the practical recommendations on the issue and their realization were developed to the full extent.

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

Master thesis has neat appearance and makes a positive overall impression. All the figures and tables of the work have sources and references.

General Conclusion: The Master thesis of Yuliya Denisova meets for master thesis of the Master of International Business program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.



Scientific Advisor

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