

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in Management (MIM)
Student:	Andrei Guleckii
Title of thesis:	Capture of competitive advantages by Russian and international audit companies: the case of Russian market

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.	5	4	3	2
Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts	5	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 for the set objectives.	5	4	3	2
Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selected 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.	5	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	4	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.	5	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.	5	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 goal of research was formulated as identification of sources of competitive advantages of both international and Russian companies. The results are focused more on Russian mid-size companies rather than generally on Russian audit market. Research objectives are adequate and well formulated, however there is lack of explanation why other are eliminated.

The logic of the dissertation is reasonable and follows the structure of case study method. The general framework of the research is explained well enough. Part 1 of the paper presents literature review and provides theoretical background for further research even though some sources are not thoroughly analysed. Part 2 provides justification for method which looks relevant to the selected problem. In part 3 companies are identified and results are presented.

The appropriateness of the case study method is proven. At the same time, it is not clear enough why specific criteria of cases' choice are taken that probably should validate the conclusion. Moreover, it seems that secondary data is underestimated by the author, it could be used more extensively.

The framework which is derived from the research is explained and supported by the evidence gathered. Practical outcomes are identified and they correlate with research goal.