

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Aleksey Fedorov
Title of thesis:	The Role of Postmodern Marketing in the Launch of a New Product (Case of Windows Phone 7 in Russia and the USA)

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.	5	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.	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 are for the set objectives.	5	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.	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 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = poor.

Additional comments:

This master thesis represents a thoroughly and accurately conducted study supported by deep review of underlying theoretical foundations. The structure of the thesis is well defined and supports the achievement of the research objectives. The justification of the topic choice is correctly formulated by the author in the introduction to the paper. Indeed, application of postmodern marketing approach towards new product launch strategy is an interesting and rather unexplored question not only in scientific research but also in even the most advanced managerial practices, thus the originality of the topic is obvious. However, though the tasks and the aim of the study – to develop a set of recommendations for the usage of postmodern marketing in the product launch based on the case analysis of the Windows Phone 7 launch on the Russian and American market – are stated accurately and are aligned to the thesis' topic, it was not clear from the topic formulation whether the subject of the study represents a typical product that will benefit from postmodern marketing approach, thus the recommendations made by the author can be applied to any new product launch without adaptations, or is it studied mainly as a piece of consumer electronics and mobile phones industry, thus the research model and recommendations are made for this particular industry. As for the extent of topic coverage, despite the ambiguity in the research aim formulation, the topic is covered by the author and the launch of Windows Phone 7 from the postmodern marketing approach view is fully explored.

The paper is well-structured and allows for following the logic of the study. The paper consists of three chapters. One theoretical chapter with literature review and previous theoretical findings together with two

empirical chapters on the research methodology and case study findings lead to a clear contribution to unfolding some of the previously unexplored issues.

The author has reviewed relevant literature in postmodern marketing, consumer behavior and case study using high-quality references. This theory overview allowed the student to identify some specifications and problems that exist nowadays. The solutions to approach the research question were clearly stated and justified. The conclusions are derived from analysis, combination, and synthesis of the literature, and the well performed qualitative case study. The objectives stated in the paper are fully covered by the represented analysis.

In the second chapter of the paper the method applicable to the current paper was described. It is single case study with in-depth semi-structured interviews based on the realism paradigm that stresses that only observable phenomena should be considered in research, thus the research tools and methods allow for achieving a certain degree of objectivity.

The revision of the work showed the individual approach of the student to the stated problem. The student developed an original research framework. However, the exploration of the research framework has more practical origins and implications as opposed to theoretical ones. It means that postmodern marketing approach is used more as a lens for analyzing results of Microsoft launch strategy for a particular product rather than a concept under investigation that was advanced from theoretical point of view. But, in general, even with certain practical focus, the research model is relevant for the goal initially set and demonstrates good skills of the author in analyzing statistical, empirical and factual information.

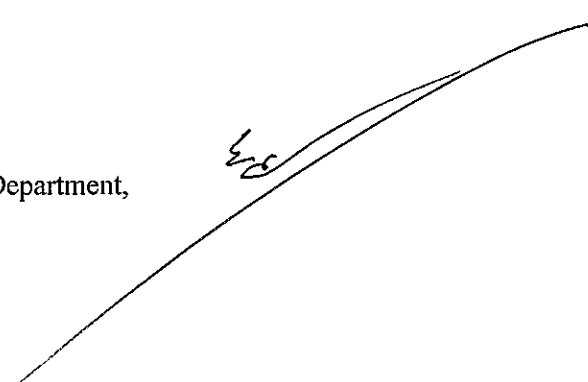
The study has useful implications from the managerial point of view for those companies that plan to use postmodern marketing techniques for the launch of the product. These recommendations are based on the student's analysis and supported by the application of postmodern marketing concepts suggested by Edelman (2010) and Gordon (2000) (p.77). The fact that the whole paper is based on good factual foundation essentially guarantees the reliance of the recommendations made.

The work in general has a very professional appearance and gives a lot of examples of well-performed graphical solutions, especially for visual representation of identification of postmodern marketing approach elements in new product launch strategy and recommendations for companies aiming at applying postmodern marketing tools.

Master thesis of Aleksey Fedorov meets the requirements of Master in International Business program, and deserves an "excellent" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

June, 17, 2011

Head of Marketing Department,
Professor
Sergei P. Kouchtch

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sergei P. Kouchtch', is written over a long, thin, slightly curved line that spans across the bottom right portion of the page.