

# Business Administration State Examinations

## Bachelor's Thesis - Evaluation by Mentor

December 2016

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<b>Thesis Title:</b> The Word-Of-Mouth Phenomena In the Social Networks Century. Are Social Networks Becoming More Persuasive Than Word-Of-Mouth Marketing In the Czech Republic?	

<b>Characters Count:</b> 68,182	<b>Turn-it-in Similarity Index:</b> 9%
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### A) OVERALL SUMMARY OF THE DIPLOMA WORK:

The author wished to research traditional word of mouth marketing vs. social media word of mouth marketing. She hoped that the results of the research could be useful to businesses located in the Czech Republic in terms of strategy. The idea is that local marketers will have a better understanding of Czech consumer behavior. In the work itself she sought to answer three questions: is there a shift from traditional WOM to a new kind of internet WOM; are reviews that appear in social media more or less reliable than physical WOM; and do social networks or WOM have a greater influence on the purchasing behavior of Czechs?

### B) OVERALL EVALUATION/REVIEW OF THE DIPLOMA WORK:

**(1) The extent to which the proposal (and thereby the aims) set out by the student has been fulfilled**

I think the most interesting finding is that more than 23% of the people surveyed don't even use social media. Therefore, using Social Media WOM has already cut down the potential market by a quarter. Of the respondents who do use social media very few ever leave a review. On the other hand, 63% of respondents regularly seek WOM advice from physical individuals.

**(2) The effectiveness of the formal structure and level of writing of the work**

The work is not on a high level of writing. One example is that the author suddenly begins to use the term "word of mouse" on page 47 without ever using it before or explaining what it is. After the research portion of the work, the paper suddenly skips directly to a conclusion – without answering her own research questions or giving any advice to businesses on how they could use her findings? What is the value of the work to businesses? How can a Czech business attract customers and tell a brand story with improved effect?

Finally, the paper is too short, the word count itself is slightly below the minimum standards.

**(3) The effort the student made to complete the thesis independently**

The author completed this thesis completely independently and didn't come to me for advice or help at all. This is not a good thing as I would have shown the author the many gaps and weaknesses of the work in advance.

**(4) Ability of the student to use and apply theory**

The author doesn't document where she is getting this theory from. For example, what is the definition of Word of Mouth marketing? From what source? In the theoretical section I find only two sources, the BBC documentary Century of the Self and the author Patton (and that is all for the first 14 pages). Starting on page 15 we see further authors used such as David Hall, Zadaraja & Yazdanifard and Dave Chaffey but it's really sporadic. Where are the marketing gurus?

The student conducted a minimal amount of secondary research mostly based upon books and a documentary. Her primary research took the form of a survey which was distributed both electronically as well as physically. She received 587 responses (318 online and 269 in print form). The information here is sketchy. For example, where were the print forms given? The author states they were distributed "among students of different universities in the Czech Republic, in the Czech national library of technology and among people in public places like restaurants." This is way too vague. Which universities and why? Where is the link to this survey so that I may check your actual responses?

**(5) Strengths and weaknesses of the work as a whole**

The grammar is a bit wonky. For example on page 1 the author writes "This research aims to marginalize and identify how the Czech people are making their purchase decisions." The term marginalize means to treat (a person, group, or concept) as insignificant or peripheral.

Overall, the paper is very weak. I don't feel like it has brought much new information to light or provided any specific value to Czech businesses. The Author discusses the 7 P's and the 4 C's buy in no way relates them to her findings or makes any concrete strategy suggestions. Basically the analysis and conclusion section just isn't there.

**C) POINTS AWARDED:**

CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS	POINTS AWARDED
AREA (4)	20	15
AREA (1) + (5)	60	38
AREA (2)	10	7
AREA (3)	10	10
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		<b>70</b>
<b>LETTER GRADE</b>		<b>C-</b>

**Final Thesis Letter Grades:**

Letter Grade	Points	Generally Accepted Meaning
A	95-100	Outstanding work
A-	90-94	
B+	87-89	Good work, distinctly above the average
B	83-86	

B-	80-82	
C+	77-79	Acceptable Work
C	73-76	
C-	70-72	
F	0-69	Work that does not meet the minimum standards for a Final Thesis