

Business Administration State Examinations

Bachelor's Thesis Evaluation by Defense Opponent

January 2017

Student Name: Thi Ngoc Anh Do	Student Number: 510943
Opponent Name: Gabriele Meissner	Date: January 6, 2017
Specialization: General Management	
Thesis Title: Analysis and Creation Of a Marketing Communication Plan For U.S. Cosmetics Company MAC To Enter the Vietnamese Market	

A) OVERALL SUMMARY OF THE DIPLOMA WORK:

A very interesting thesis which offers a deep insight into the Vietnamese cosmetics market and in Vietnam business in general. The student collected extensive data and analyzed the business environment expertly. She developed a highly creative concept for a possible market launch for MAC appropriate for the Vietnamese market. Unfortunately, the thesis lacks some coherence in presenting and visualizing the data. The market launch concept is not evaluated concerning costs and ROI. There are some irritating references in the text (Our, n.d. or 2016.2016). Overall this is a very good thesis which misses some formal requirements and the evaluation of the market launch considering costs and political environment is not discussed specifically.

B) OVERALL EVALUATION/REVIEW OF THE DIPLOMA WORK:

Note: The evaluation (review) should consist of between 400-700 words (i.e. minimum 1 A4 page). It should cover ALL of the AREAS below:

(1) Effectiveness of approach/research methods used by student in work

The student did extensive secondary and even some primary research. She thus gained a very concise overview on the Vietnamese business environment and the cosmetics industry specifically. She analyzed not only the business environment but also consumer perception and expectations. The sources used were official Vietnamese statistical data, but also from other independent sources as World Bank or CIA. The student is well aware of the obstacles for business development in the country, namely corruption, political control and bureaucracy. She even managed to do some primary research with an online survey concerning consumer behavior and expectation. In general, the chosen approach was effective and produced valuable results.

(2) Use and effectiveness of literature appropriate for the theme studied

The student used extensive literature and valuable sources to analyze the Vietnamese business environment and cosmetics market. The data collection is in fact quite impressive, but unfortunately it is presented in a not very concise form. The descriptions for the diagrams are in Vietnamese which is not very helpful even though there is an explanation in the text. The thesis is based on few but solid academic literature, the data collection uses available statistical sources and independent online sources (World Bank, CIA etc.). In general, the student used appropriate sources to analyze the chosen market and business environment.

(3) Usefulness of the work for the student and the study program

The work is definitely useful not only for the student researching her home country but also for the study program as it involves deep marketing research based on different methods. The student put in a lot of energy also in getting in touch with people in Vietnam who were willing to answer some marketing research questions. So overall the thesis is based not only on secondary but also on primary research. Even though the sample size for the primary research is somewhat small it still offers some results concerning consumer behavior. And it proves that the student is able to apply the different research methods. The main flaws are missed formal requirements.

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

The student is well able to use and apply theory. She gets a bit carried away with the creative market launch proposition as she forgets to evaluate costs vs. ROI which is essential in marketing communication. An estimate of annual sales and the year for breakeven / making profits would be necessary.

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

Strengths:

- Extensive collection of relevant data
- Interesting research question on the Vietnamese cosmetics market
- Critical evaluation of all market conditions, esp. acknowledgement of political factors
- Very creative concept for market launch for MAC
- Primary and secondary research

Weaknesses:

- Somewhat unstructured presentation of data
- Vietnamese language descriptions in diagrams
- The – very creative – marketing launch concept lacks cost/ROI evaluation
- References in the text somewhat irritating (i.e. Our 2016 instead of Our History, 2016)
- While naming the political obstacles like corruption, bureaucracy etc. the impact on a possible launch of MAC are not specified (i.e. impact of corruption on cost calculation / setting up business and being forced to bribe officials and at the same time get in conflict with US legislation)

C) SPECIFIC POINTS/QUESTIONS TO BE RESPONDED TO (DEFENSE QUESTIONS/MANDATORY):

1. How would a US company like MAC deal with corruption when starting to invest in Vietnam?
2. Considering the low annual income of most people in Vietnam when do you think MAC could be profitable after the launch?
3. Which language should MAC – or any other company – use when entering the Vietnamese market?
4. How can you sell luxury goods to people at the “Bottom of the Pyramid” (people with an annual income of not more than 2000\$)? (make-up foundation costs a month’s salary?)
5. How can you improve service quality in general? What is at the root of the problem in Vietnam?

D) POINTS AWARDED:

Criteria	Maximum Points	Points Awarded
Effectiveness of approach/research methods	25	23
Use and effectiveness of appropriate literature	40	36
Usefulness of the work	10	8
Ability of the student to use and apply theory	25	20
Total Points		87
Grade		2

OPPONENT RECOMMENDED GRADE:

Grade	Points	Explanation
1	90-100	Excellent, demonstrates full and complete understanding of the theme or topic.
2	80-89	Very Good, demonstrates effective understanding of the theme. Average to above average level.
3	70-79	Good, demonstrates adequate understanding of the theme appropriate for a Bachelor’s level student, with some shortcomings. Below average to average level.
4	0-69	Insufficient, significant shortcomings in understanding or knowledge base, below the expected competence level for a bachelor’s degree.

IACBE measures (mandatory):

Additionally, please provide the below information for IACBE accreditation tracking purposes. Simply place an ‘x’ in the box that applies in each category.

	N/A	Inadequate	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
The student is able to demonstrate knowledge of the						x

ethical obligations of business and apply them to business decisions.						
The student is able to apply appropriate management theory to intercultural business scenarios.						x
The student is able to use appropriate decision support tools.					x	
The student is able to describe the global and economic environment of business.					x	
The student is able to demonstrate effective analytical and critical-thinking skills in an organizational context.					x	