

Review of Dissertation Thesis

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Subject: **Marketing of Luxury Products**

Decision on dissertation topic has been very logical step in the candidate's academic development. Her Master thesis conclusions offered following: "The main goal of this research work is to follow the whole history of transformation of marketing of luxury brands in order to clearly understand all the mistakes and benefits."¹ Master Thesis was finished during world economic crisis and further development of luxury markets approved that this product category has been more stable over the time than others; and that it worth to study the markets and the industry as such.

The aim of dissertation is to define term and concept of luxury and analyze attitudes and values of customers; on the other hand to follow typical strategies and tactics used in industry with special focus on marketing communications; in accordance with Internet, and especially social networks, to identify opportunities and threats of going online. Choice of online marketing communications in luxury is very challenging, because this particular strategy has been declared unacceptable by many representatives of the industry with regards to consumer specifics, especially feelings of being different from masses.

The dissertation is systematically organized in seven chapters; four theoretical ones start with comprehensive literature review showing candidate's deep interest and knowledge of the topic.

First chapter is an historical insight in history of luxury brands and the industry with the objective to give a complex picture of a "playground". Second chapter concentrates on analyses of luxury consumption theories, presenting main schools of

¹ Yana Shamina: Master thesis, VŠE, 2008, p.67

thought; from Veblen goods mapping development of factors which researchers studied over times. Third chapter turns attention on luxury marketing as a concept and the author tries to link different views of researchers. Fourth chapter concentrates on trends in the industry offering up to date development with specific focus on “electronisation” of marketing communications.

The research part of the dissertation starts from fifth chapter structuring theoretical framework for author’s own research. Four hypotheses are set together with instruments and research model followed by description of steps needed. Sixth chapter describes data analysis and comments on methods used for these analyses. Seventh chapter focus on results obtained in previous analyses and summarizes the findings comparing them with hypotheses set.

Conclusion as a final part of the thesis is summarizing all chapters, and what is the most important, it defines precisely all limitations of research done. I appreciate the directions drawn for luxury marketing practices and future research in the theory. The model used in research should be replicated and tested on other age groups of luxury consumers and in different cultural environments to confirm or to disprove the hypotheses.

Discussion topic for defense:

1. Leading luxury brands, p. 65 in thesis. Using 2011 positions of researched brands compare their current market situation and value with your Figure no. 13.
2. Respondents of your research represent young generation of luxury consumers, in many cases only potential ones. Based on your theoretical knowledge and practical experience, do you think that older generation would respond similarly or would you expect any differences? If yes, what kind of? And what would you recommend to luxury marketers if you anticipate differences?

Final comments:

Dissertation thesis has adequate theoretical background and methodology used seems to be appropriate for this type of research. Aim of dissertation was set and fulfilled, the text is logically organized. Literature review is comprehensive, well used and quoted. Research methods are adequate to the aim of the thesis and grant results supporting discussion on defined hypotheses. Results presented are useful in theory and practice

Conclusion:

The dissertation of candidate Yana Shamina is recommended for defense.

Prague, 24th, 2012