

Institut ekonomických studií

Fakulta sociálních věd, Universita Karlova Praha Referee report on the Bachelor/Master Thesis submitted to State Exam

Student Name:	Ondřej Šindelka
Thesis Supervisor Name:	Ing. Zdeněk Hrubý, CSc.
Thesis Title:	Podoba a mechanismy internetového trhu s digitálním zbožím pro mezní náklady blížíící se nule

Overall Evaluation:

The thesis focuses on the "digital goods" industry, merging two topics which are relatively new and difficult to analyse, but quickly gaining in importance: intellectual property rights and network goods and services. In chapters 2-4, the thesis describes the basic issues, concepts and models that have occurred in the literature on these topics. In the rest of the thesis, the author develops a simple model designed to give an indication whether it would make sense for a given firm to introduce third-degree price discrimination between several segments of the market or not, and applies the model to actual data, partly American and partly Czech. The second part of chapter 6 describes recent trends and strategies that can be observed in the market the thesis focuses on.

The two strong points of the thesis are the well-informed survey of the literature in chapters 2-4 and the author's effort to develop his own model. The value of this effort is certainly not depreciated by the fact that some of the data he then feeds into his model are somewhat dubious (fictitious, built on very strong assumptions, drawn from a small-scale survey, etc.). What must be stressed is that the author has exhibited an ability to model the situation under study, and to do so in a sensible way. One possibility to develop this model would be to assume that the demand function has a more complicated shape (the linear form assumed in the thesis is not very realistic).

The main problem of the thesis appears to me to be not the contents, but the formal aspects. First of all, given that its topic and approach is relevant not only to the Czech context, it is a pity that the thesis is not written in English. Second, in some places more careful explanation would be useful. E.g., the author should spend some time explaining the origin of the data used in the model and explaining why it makes sense to use this data for this purpose (p. 60: in what sense the "average recommended prices" are recommended, to whom, why, how come these prices can be viewed as the no-discrimination price, etc.; p. 64: some more details on how the survey was run). Another example: the author should explain more clearly how he estimated the value (90,4 Kč, p. 64) of the maximum prices students would be willing to pay for a CD.

The thesis would also make a better impression if the author worked more carefully with the notation (e.g., the symbols a and b are used at the end of page 43, but their meanings are explained only a page later), was referring to the literature in the standard way (p. 18: simply "Rayna a Struikova (2007)", rather than "Rayna a Struikova (Rayna a Struikova (2007))"; not using footnotes just to give a reference) and eliminated numerous incomplete sentences (e.g., see the incomprehensible note 61) and typos.

The thesis deals with an area of economic research that is difficult and, at the same time, highly relevant. Czech businesses as well as government will certainly need experts in this area. It is therefore very commendable that the author selected this field for his thesis. Moreover, the author deals with the topic in an informed and creative way. Formal deficiencies of the thesis are not of a fundamental extent.

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SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for the explanation of categories and scale, please, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
Quality of Research	30
Clarity and Readability	3
Content/Quality of Ideas	40
Organization & Development	8
Manuscript Form	3
TOTAL POINTS	84
LETTER GRADE	1

Evaluated on: 12 June, 2008