

# REVIEW

**on: the dissertation on the topic:** „Innovative gamification models and tools used in corporate CRM strategy“,

**presented by doctoral student:** Apostol Ustiyarov Mushmov, PhD student in self-study, applying for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management, scientific specialty "Business Administration"

**with supervisor:** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kiril Radev

**reviewer:** Prof. Dr. Boyan Lyubomirov Durankev, Higher School of Insurance and Finance, professional field 3.8 "Economics", scientific specialty "Planning" 05.02.17 and scientific specialty "Marketing" 05.02.26

By Order № 3-PK-88 of the Rector of NBU from 6.01.2022 I was appointed a member of the scientific jury; at the first meeting of the scientific jury I was assigned to write an opinion.

In fulfillment of my duties, I present the following findings and conclusions, and I am relieved that I was a participant in the preliminary discussion of the dissertation project of the Department Council.

The dissertation has a total volume of 208 pages. The academic sources used are unnumbered (but there are over 150) in Bulgarian, English and Russian languages (pp. 153-168).

The structure is composed as follows: introduction, four chapters, list of cited literature. The construction of the dissertation is logical and cascading.

## **1 Significance of the researched problem in scientific and scientific-applied relation**

The title of the dissertation - "Innovative gamification models and tools used in corporate CRM strategy" fully corresponds to the content. At the same time, I find this title extremely modern, up-to-date, original and innovative.

The object of study is gamified systems for motivation and engagement of employees in large companies and their models and tools. communication, participation in various individual or group activities, etc. In particular, the object of the study are specific gamified systems in selected industries of internationally operating companies - large telecom and a company in the financial sector of internationally operating companies.

The subject of the study is very, very extensive, namely:

- The very creation of gamified systems for employee motivation (from idea to

realization) after a thorough multidisciplinary qualitative justification;

- The effectiveness of gamified systems and their specific tools (matches, chat) to increase the motivation, commitment and loyalty of employees;
- Analysis of the presence and role of different typological groups in the context of the gamified environment, their specific attitudes and job satisfaction, as well as the existence of a gamified motivation system;
- The effectiveness of different gamification tools in relation to different typologies of participants;
- The influence of gamified motivation systems for achieving specific goals set by the surveyed companies before the implementation of the system (e.g. familiarity and recognition by employees of the company's values; encouraging innovative and creative thinking in employees and attracting them to more active participation in the innovation process in the company);
- The effectiveness of fuels and lubricants to achieve the internal CRM goals of companies.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant importance of the researched problem in scientific and scientific-applied terms.

## **2 Justification of the goals and tasks in the dissertation**

The aim of the dissertation is multi-layered. The main goal of the research includes three directions of research: Development of a conceptual model of the content of a software platform for motivating employees with gamification elements; Study of the influence of a software platform for motivating employees with gamification elements on different attitudes of employees (and in particular of individual gamification tools) on the different typological groups involved in the system; Derivation of recommendations for development (upgrade) of the traditional systems for motivation and commitment of the employees in the direction of achieving the internal CRM goals of the company.

On this basis, both the research tasks and the limitations (frameworks) of the research itself are correctly formulated. Both the goals and the tasks are in logical harmony.

## **3 Correspondence between the chosen methodology and research methodology and the set goal and tasks of the dissertation**

It is through the application of a systematic approach that the main hypothesis in the dissertation is formulated: It is that gamified systems for motivation and engagement of

employees lead to improvement of several company indicators related to people management and/or permanently affect certain typological groups, which achieves a fuller realization of the internal CRM goals of the companies. Additionally, working hypotheses are derived, which specify the main hypothesis.

I fully approve of the use of both interdisciplinary analysis and synthesis and a systematic approach as a basis for the study itself. It is through them that it is possible to cover the whole range of complex relationships in organizations, all operating equally on a profit basis.

In addition, there is a study of objects, problem situations, relevant situations, justification of classifications, systematizations and emerging issues. The approach for comparison and juxtaposition of objects and tools, abstraction (extraction of common features), concretization (search of abstract models and images in new objects) is widely used. There are many summaries, judgments and formalizations. The methods of induction and deduction are used for the transition from the concrete to the general and back to the private in the creative realization in creating the system, many analogies and modeling to utilize the theoretical accumulations in the end result.

I accept the chosen methodology and research methodology as the right choice.

#### **4 Evaluation of scientific and applied contributions**

I synthesize the required contributions for the reason that in doctoral dissertations they are found in three main areas:

1. An in-depth study of the specialized scientific literature has been conducted, assessing and summarizing the theoretical statements related to the specifics of innovative gamification models and tools used in the corporate strategy for customer and staff relations management. The author reaches not only a detailed critical analysis of academic standards in the individual interrelated terms and processes, but also seeks the influence of each on the others. Interdisciplinary approaches for analysis, research and definition of the studied phenomena are applied, as the broadest methodology for deriving indicators, components and characteristics in the management of relationships, including the use of innovative gamification models.
2. Adequate information and methodological basis of the research, as well as its corresponding adapted methodology, has been selected through independent evaluation of various methodological and methodological research tools.

Author's methodology and research tools have been developed, combining quantitative and qualitative methods for analysis, evaluation and forecasting of innovative gamification models and tools used in the corporate strategy for customer and staff relationship management.

3. Independent research has been conducted in several areas related to the application of innovative gamification models and tools used in the corporate strategy for customer and staff relations management. The author arrives at a proof of the main hypothesis. Qualitative and quantitative analyzes, summaries and recommendations have been made, which would help other companies in developing similar types of customer relationship management systems. A socio-economic effect has been achieved through the implemented innovation in the organizations related to the object of research.

Through this synthesis of contributions, I allow myself to essentially confirm the contributions sought by the doctoral student.

## **5 Evaluation of dissertation publications**

The number of publications is more than the normatively approved - 7 copies, made in the period 2016-2021. All are personal work of the doctoral student (two are co-authored), through which he presents and checks different parts of the dissertation research.

## **6 Cited by other authors, reviews in the scientific press**

I do not find citations of Apostol Mushmov by other authors, which is a common practice among young authors.

## **7 Opinions, recommendations, notes and questions**

I do not hide that I am very impressed by the breadth of the theory and practice of customer and staff relationship management and in particular - the innovative gamification models and tools used in these relationships, and the depth of reasoning, as well as the authoritative presenting and defending one's own opinion on various issues.

I have no specific remarks that would completely change my positive opinion about the dissertation.

## **Conclusion**

The dissertation meets the high requirements for combining theory, practical research

and the resulting conclusions. It contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, which represent an original contribution and meet the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for the implementation of ZRASRB at the New Bulgarian University. The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Apostol Ustiyarov Mushmov has a high degree of academic knowledge and professional skills, demonstrating qualities and abilities for independent research.

Due to the above, I give my positive assessment of the academic research presented by the above peer-reviewed dissertation, abstract, results achieved, and contributions sought, and I consider that the dissertation is of sufficient quality and useful to obtain educational and scientific degree "Doctor" by professional field 3.7. Administration and management, scientific specialty "Business Administration" by Apostol Ustiyarov Mushmov.

February 7, 2022

Reviewer:

(Prof. Dr. Boyan Lyubomirov Durankev)