

STANDPOINT

Concerning the acquisition of an educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the doctoral program "Finance, monetary circulation, credit and insurance" (finance)

Prepared by: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sergey Rumyanov Radukanov, Department of "Economic Theory and International Economic Relations", Faculty of Economics, *St. Cyril and St. Methodius* University of Veliko Tarnovo, Veliko Tarnovo

Reason for presenting the standpoint: participation in the composition of scientific juries, approved by Order No 1196 of 19.12.2023 of the Rector of the "D. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov and decisions of the Faculty of Finance, Minutes No 4 / 19.12.2023.

Author of the dissertation: Georgi Stoilov Anev — full-time doctoral student, field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics, doctoral program "Finance, money circulation, credit and insurance" (finance).

Dissertation topic: Challenges to e-commerce pricing in our country in conditions of a pandemic

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Stefan Simeonov

This standpoint has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations on the Development of the Academic Staff in the "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov.

I. General presentation of the dissertation work

The presented dissertation is 206 pages long and includes: introduction (3 pages), expose (three chapters - 179 pages), conclusion (6 pages), appendices (1 issue - 5 pages), and a list of used and cited literary sources.

The introduction and conclusion are prepared in accordance with generally accepted requirements. The three chapters are well balanced and form a complete, logically connected complex. The individual chapters are divided into three paragraphs each. The expose is illustrated with 23 tables and 49 figures.

The dissertation has a clearly defined object, subject, goal and tasks of the scientific research and dissertation thesis. *The object of the dissertation* is pricing in e-commerce in Bulgaria in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and *the subject* is the pricing models for products and services in the e-commerce sector. *The aim* of the dissertation is to evaluate the applicable models for pricing products and services used by Bulgarian companies in the field of e-commerce and to look for opportunities to optimize the pricing process considering the new economic realities. The doctoral student defends *the thesis* that the application of adaptive pricing models, considering the specifics of electronic commerce and consumer behavior, can lead to maximizing sales in the conditions of dynamic economic processes, born from external shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, while at the same time the specifics of e-commerce form characteristic business models that also require a special look at pricing.

The author knows the problem area very well both theoretically and practically. A sufficient amount of specialized literature was studied - a bibliography of 148 titles (81 in Cyrillic and 66 in Latin) is attached to the dissertation work. Modern methodology and relevant statistical tools are used. Useful conclusions, assessments, recommendations and summaries have been made.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation

The topic of the dissertation is interesting and relevant. The development of electronic commerce in Bulgaria contributes not only to the development of the national economy, but also to the increase of its expert potential.

The structure and the expose are at the required scientific level. At the beginning, a critical analysis of the nature, functions, factors, elements and structure of the price and the main stages and methods of pricing in the company is carried out, with particular attention being paid to separately and on the price policy and strategy of the company as part of the overall price and financial management of the company (chapter one). The following is an analysis of the emergence, essence and types of electronic commerce, and on this basis, the place, role and interaction between companies in the electronic market is also examined, with an emphasis on the analysis of applicable business models and approaches to generate revenue in e-commerce (Chapter Two). Finally, the dissertation presents an analysis of the impact of the pandemic on the economy and consumer behavior, as well as on e-

commerce through a comparative analysis of world trends and trends in Bulgaria (results of the author's survey). In the third chapter, possibilities for applying the author's model for dynamic pricing through the use of Big data and artificial intelligence are also tested. The style is suitable for this type of scientific work and easy to read and understand.

The author has followed the rules of scientific ethics - originality of the scientific product, correct citation and reference, truthfulness of the presented information.

The author's summary of the dissertation (in a volume of 53 pages) accurately and sufficiently reflects the content of the dissertation work.

The doctoral student presents 5 publications (4 articles and 1 scientific report), thereby exceeding the national requirements. All publications correspond to the issues of the dissertation.

III. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation

In my opinion, the main scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the dissertation can be related to those presented by the doctoral student:

- ✓ systematization of the theoretical aspects in the field of pricing and the development of modern e-commerce, on the basis of which the doctoral student presents his own view on the importance of the price policy and the price strategy in the overall process of price management in the company (contribution 1), on the essence and scope of the term e-commerce (contribution 3) and on the specifics of the pricing process and the applicable business models and approaches for generating revenue from companies in the field of e-commerce (contribution 2).
- ✓ the specific problems and challenges facing e-commerce in the conditions of a pandemic in our country (problems with supplies, drop in consumer demand, shortage of qualified personnel and management of inventory), contrasting with the problems of online retailers in the US and Europe (disruptions in supply chains and the ability to meet increased product demand) (contribution 4). Here we can also refer to the author's findings that the changed business environment also caused a number of changes in the strategic vision for the business, mostly related to the digitalization of the business, including by improving the used software products and online

marketing campaigns, incl. and processes to improve customer experience and satisfaction, as well as the growing importance of artificial intelligence in business, especially in the field of improving personalization, forecasting, marketing and sales, incl. and by improving the effectiveness of pricing methods (contribution 5).

- ✓ the developed author's model for dynamic pricing through the use of big data and artificial intelligence, based on a recurrent neural network - Long Short-Term Memory and implemented through specialized software for intelligent and automated price determination for each product, at which the trader will have the highest profit. The fact that the model has been tested with real data and tested in an international online auto parts store operating in 15 countries shows its relevance and applicability in practice (contribution 6). The observed differences in consumer behavior in the analyzed markets allows companies to develop and implement specific pricing policies that allow maximization of their profit (contribution 7)

IV. Dissertation questions

I have no questions for the PhD student.

V. Summary evaluation of the dissertation and conclusion

The dissertation on the topic "Challenges to pricing in e-commerce in our country in conditions of a pandemic" is a serious study with clearly expressed scientific and scientific-applied contributions. The work meets the requirements of Art. 6, para. H of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 27 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the provisions of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff in "D. A. Tsenov" Academy of Economics - Svishtov.

Having this in mind, I give a positive assessment of the dissertation of Mr. Georgi Stoilov Anev for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the doctoral program "Finance, money circulation, credit and insurance" (finance).

08.01.2024

Prepared by:

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. S. Radukanov)