FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF THE BRAND IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET

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Abstract

The internationalization process is defined as a gradual and constant system of involvement in the *company's negotiations with countries outside its origin borders. Therefore, it is a constant process that takes place in several stages and that can considerably increase the gains obtained from the company's operations regardless of its size. In this article, the objective was to analyze the factors that contribute to the establishment of national brands in the international market. For this purpose, the methodology adopted was a literary research involving a bibliographical survey. It was concluded that for the brand's internationalization process to be successful, the company must adopt a correct international market entry strategy, because this is considered an important step that can leverage the company in the future. It was observed that the internationalization is seen as a form of continuous learning in face of the competitions that exist in the international arena, something that involves time and risk.*

Keywords: Internationalization. Brand. Company. Market

1. Introduction

The internationalization process can be defined as a growing and continuous procedure of involvement of the operations of a company with countries outside its home base. It treats an endless process that goes through several stages and can considerably expand the company's financial gains, regardless of its size. The internationalization decision has been a recurring subject in various business segments (DAL-SOTO, 2006).

In this segment, the internationalization process can also be characterized for the search of organizations to commercialize their goods, products and services, not only in the domestic market, but also to other nations. This process begins with an organization's initiative to export. At this first moment, its sales begin in small quantities, usually to nations similar to its own. After some time, they increase their sales, look for different nations, with different cultures, with the possibility of opening subsidiaries in some of them (PORTO, 2014).

Therefore, when deciding to launch itself into the international market, the company must be careful on choosing its target market. More sophisticated markets, such as the United States and Europe, are responsible for much of the global financial turnover, on the other hand, they have higher requirements and, as a consequence, are more difficult to get in. According to Stal (2010), choosing the internationalization is a strategic decision in which exportation is the first step, and may be the only one – in case the company just wants to get rid of the production surplus that the internal market does not absorb –, going beyond exportation through the different stages of the process requires a better and long-term planning.

In front of this reality, the objective of this study was to analyze how the national brands manage to establish themselves in the international market. It is understood that the process of entering the international market requires, besides a high financial investment, overcoming obstacles such as cultural differences, restrictions on the mobility of personnel, limitations for the technology transfer and national policies that restrict foreign capital, that is, the entrepreneur needs to face all these barriers in order to obtain acceptance and success in the international market.

The study was based on a literary research. First, the titles were read, then the abstracts, then the abstracts and the complete reading of all articles found to know if there was any relation to the research question, as well as books related to the theme.

2. Marketing Strategies for the Success of the Brand in the International Market

Welch and Luostarinen (1988, p.34-64) defined the process of internationalization of the companies as "(...) a process of growing involvement in international operations." This definition would become complete if it did not refer only to the international operations, but also to the operations with international levels of competitivity.

The Brazilian companies, even though they were already internationalized, became dependent on a series of economic changes and adjustments – a set of policies in the foreign exchange, financial and trade fields – in order to finally be able to operate internationally. These changes began to produce their results around 2004 with the transformation of the Brazilian economy into an emerging economy (LACERDA et al., 2010). Among the many actions developed, the one that had a fundamental impact was the transformation of Brazil into an attractive country to the entry of productive capital, that is, new international companies started to establish themselves in the country through their subsidiaries. However, the consolidation of Brazil in the international scenario also required the insertion of Brazilian companies in other countries. Thus, Brazilian companies with better economic conditions began to internationalize (LACERDA et al., 2010). The authors also note that the internationalization process is not restricted to a group of companies considered to be large-scale. Following the example of other countries, the small and medium-sized companies began to articulate themselves through consortia and productive arrangements to access international markets. In addition to the designation of the internationalization process, there are strategies for the company to achieve success in the foreign market.

Furrier (2008) suggests a series of measures to be adopted by a company before it begins the internationalization process: (1) to define goals for the brand in the countries in which it is intended to enter (brand management); (2) to assess whether the brand and the products are suitable for the entry market; (3) to ensure that the position in the domestic market is satisfactory, to the extent that the company can give due attention to the internationalization process (advantages of exporting); (4) to define a competitive strategy for entering the foreign market (export capacity); (5) to evaluate and allocate the human, financial and productive resources so that attention can be given to international operations; (6) to do a survey of the opportunities and threats of the internationalization plan (FURRIER 2008 apud MACHADO, 2013).

When organizations opt for the international market, they have to consider its advantages and disadvantages. Within this context, Maia (2003) considers as "disadvantages to internationalization the barriers arising from the differentiation of currencies, which makes international negotiations difficult; the barriers of conflicting legislation; as well as historical, cultural and structural factors". For Minervini (2008), "although internationalization brings many benefits for the company and also for the country, before entering the foreign market, it is advisable to consider the barriers imposed by the international market". Chart 1 lists some advantages and disadvantages of internationalization.

Chart 1 – Advantages and Disadvantages of Internationalization

Advantages	Disadvantages
Possibility of increasing the productivity of the exporting country.	The financial payback time may be longer.
Possibility of reducing the tax burden of the exporting company, due to the offsetting of the collection of national taxes.	The location causes climatic and cultural differences between countries, making it necessary, in some cases, to take greater care with exported goods, avoiding losses.
Usually, companies driven by Market trends (innovation, technologies, design) tend toward competitiveness in the domestic market.	If the company that intends to export is not qualified for the market, it is possible that the foreign trade will become a problem, given the bureaucratic and legislative issues that these activities involve.
Companies that export end up becoming stronger when there is success in the negotiations, becoming, then, a reference for companies that wish to be inserted in the foreign market.	Possible tax obstacles or transport problems can delay and hinder exports.
Increase of sales and profits.	Need for product adaptations.
Decreased dependence on the domestic market.	Need for a specialized team.
Improvement in the flow of idle capacity and less impact from seasonality.	Increased investment on marketing and logistics
Brand strengthening	The company has difficulty in knowing the modalities of product protection by intellectual property

Source: Prepared by the authors based on Maia (2003) and Minervini (2008)

In view of the above, Keller (2008) points out that it is important that brands in internationalization processes maintain, as far as possible, the strength and cohesion of their sets of brand elements, which are: name, logo, slogan, character, domain, jingle or sound signal, packaging (for products) or point of sale (for services). Thus, one of the primary factors for obtaining success in the international market is marketing construction.

The global marketing philosophy was born from the moment the companies that internationalized needed to have this differentiated look. Therefore, these multinational companies started to be considered global companies, for being present in several countries, creating products that could be consumed in different places around the world. There is a difference between being global and thinking global. By being global, companies will be installed in an important number of countries, and by acting and thinking globally, it means that the company's philosophy is to meet the needs of customers anywhere in the world. (KOTLER, 1998).

The global marketing strategy is seen as a means of exploiting the synergies that exist between the markets of different countries, as well as the comparative advantages associated with various foreign countries. To be effective in global competition, the company must optimally develop its value chain activities and coordinate its efforts in different markets. Geographical distances, along with legal, political and cultural differences in different countries have been perceived as key factors for international marketing to earn its own space in the scientific literature (FURRIER, 2008 apud MACHADO, 2013).

The goal behind global marketing is to enable the company's products or services to reach new markets, on an international level, from an advertising and trading opportunity. Global marketing represents the contact stage of global branding with local markets. It is through international marketing strategies and the definitions of the marketing mix (price, product, place and promotion) that the brand's positioning and image are consolidated among consumers in each region. For this purpose, brands need to combine standardization and adaptation strategies in order to reconcile scale economy and adaptation to local realities (MACHADO, 2013).

Through marketing the company can verify its acceptance in the international market, that is, if its brand will be well accepted in this scenario, because the global marketing strategy must also establish the guidelines for the level of adaptation and standardization of the marketing program elements, based on the premise that the cultural differences in each foreign market demand an adapted and specific marketing strategy (KHAUAJA, 2012).

According to Czinkota et al (2002), international marketing retains the same basic fundamentals as national marketing; however, it takes place "beyond national borders". Also in accordance with Czinkota et al (2002), the international marketer "is subject to new macro-environmental factor, to different constraints and often faces conflicts resulting from different laws, cultures and societies. Thus, international marketing constitutes the process of planning and implementing transactions across national borders to enable exchanges that meet the objectives of individuals and organizations. Its forms range from export-import deals to licensing, franchising, partnerships, the full ownership of subsidiaries and management contracts. (CZINKOTA et al., 2002 p.74).

In this view, international marketing strategies, according to Rocha (2002, p.102), are "a process that begins with an analysis of a product or market opportunity. In this context, the author states that the international marketing strategy is based on the vision of the four Ps: product, price, place and promotion, in a view of adapting the international marketing strategy to local markets.

Another important factor to ensure the brand stability is the internationalization strategy and the decisions on how to enter foreign markets which are important, because they entail numerous risks and involve high resources, given the financial capacity of the companies. Thus, the basis of an internationalization strategy is the choice of the way of entering the target market, which can be between the limiting cases of indirect exports and foreign direct investment (MINERVINI, 2001).

For Maçães and Dias (2001), for a brand to be successful, it is necessary to understand that internationalization are strategic decisions that involve the identification of the products to be placed in international markets, the markets it intends to reach and the most propriate ways of access and presence. In other words, the internationalization strategy is based on the trade-off investment versus the degree of control of the external presence. In terms of international marketing, Brazilian companies need to develop a unique global brand identity, adapt their marketing mix, invest in recognition in foreign markets and coordinate and measure the results of marketing actions (ROCHA, 2002). There is also a real need to worry about building the brand image in the foreign market, which is often unknown and has to be built up again in a positive way (KHAUAJA, 2012).

It is also observed that the manager of a company that operates in international markets is an essential element in the process of recognizing opportunities and risks existing in the country of origin and also across borders. The manager must also coordinate activities and unite capabilities across these border barriers, that is, have as a goal to capture benefits in operations throughout the world (BUZZEL, QUELCH and BARTLETT, 2002). In the same vein, Lindon et al. (2000) states that managers of organizations that internationalize should "develop skills that allow them to foresee future evolutions of the international market and take measures that will allow the company to adapt, which requires them to have great technical competence and great general culture". That way, the successful Brazilian franchise brands in the international market emerge.

3. Brazilian Franchise Brands in the International Market

The markets globalization is at the root of the increasing internationalization of franchises. It has created new opportunities for companies in international markets. The lower financial risk characteristic of its system, the advances in telecommunications technologies, which facilitate the control process, the benefits arising from the scale economies of a network and the flexibility of a small business, in addition with the knowledge about the local market provided by the franchisee, are some of the factors that drive the internationalization of franchises (SASHI and KARUPPUR, 2002).

Regardless of the type of franchise, like any organization, communication and information flow are vital factor for its survival, since "human organizations are information systems, as well as energy systems, and that every organization needs to absorb and use information" (KATZ; KAHN, 1975, p.256). Communication is, therefore, the very essence of an organization's social system, because the support received by several of its publics is directly linked to the information received – especially when it comes to the company's goals, activities and achievements. One of the great challenges in brand building is precisely in making the consumer associate, directly and immediately, a symbol or activity to the brand name.

It is very important to be able to differentiate a brand from the competition, since it identifies the origin of a product or service, that is, the perception that one has of a certain brand is what leads the company to work on its perceived image. It is important then to better understand the mechanisms of brand image for the competitiveness of this new type of organizational configuration (HOOLEY and SAUNDERS, 2001).

For Porter (1986), competitive advantage is created through attractive prices or product differentiation. Hooley and Saunders (2001), on the other hand, consider that one of the ways to obtain differentiation is the relative quality perceived by the customer in relation to the product or service offered. This is what will provide greater impact on the return on investments in the medium and long term. Another form of differentiation is the favorable reputation of a brand, which can serve as an indicator of provenance and a guarantee of what can be expected from the product or service in question.

The brand is also a competitive advantage when it is registered, since it cannot be legally copied.

Competitive advantage can also be created through communication, when tools are used efficiently to build a positive reputation. Brand positioning, used as a communication differential, establishes a strong place in consumers' minds, as cited by Ries and Trout (1999), and involves emotional aspects linked to products and services.

The importance of a strong brand is one of the guarantees for starting a successful franchise. For most successful companies, the brand represents a value greater than its capital. According to Plá (2001, p. 41), "great brands emerge only after much effort, commitment and investments, and recognition is achieved only by companies that manage to maintain their positioning". Still in these authors perspective, entrepreneurs must be prepared to face the foreign market. And to be successful, it is necessary to do a lot of market research, a careful choice of the franchisee and the ability to pass on their competitive advantages to the target market. The success cases usually happen when franchisee and franchisor enter into a partnership in this new market.

In the case of the franchisee, the advantage would be the lower risks involved in opening the business, since he is opening a franchise with an already consolidated brand, some recognition and the franchisor's experience passed on to his business. The disadvantages are the costs that every franchise generates to the franchisee. And, besides this factor, there are situations in which many Brazilian franchisors go abroad with a low degree professionalism, without much criterion in the selection of partners, just reacting to unexpected opportunities. This highlights the need to adopt a strategic behavior, establishing organizational structures and adequate business models (ROCHA, 2002).

In addition, the brand is an essential part of the franchise system because it represents a significant advantage offered to potential franchisees: the appeal the brand exerts. However, effective brand management presents a major challenge for franchisors, as far as the responsibility for developing and managing a successful brand is shared by all parties involved in the franchise agreement, with no party having complete control of the brand management process. This co-dependence suggests that the success of the branding activities must be well coordinated and integrated, with well-defined and supervised responsibilities between the parties. In the view of many franchisees, the organization should be concerned not only with activities such as pricing and positioning, among others, but also with tactical brand management activities that are capable of sustaining the brand value in the long term (PITT, NAPOLI and VAN DER MERWEE, 2003).

There is also a preference for countries with a similar culture to Brazil (KHAUAJA, 2012). The main difficulties pointed out by internationalized Brazilian franchises are lack of knowledge of foreign markets, cultural differences, operational and legal difficulties and mainly the selection of suitable local franchisees. Another important factor is the lack of interest in expanding abroad when there is still a vast domestic market to conquer (KHAUAJA, 2012).

An investigation of the motivations for the internationalization of Brazilian franchises revealed the predominance of behavioral motivations, such as strengthening the company's image, knowledge about the international market and expansionist objectives. Economic factors also appeared: market niches abroad, the size of the market, the income of the population in the target country, scale economies, low operating costs in the international market, the support of governmental or sectorial agencies, the existence of Brazilian consumers in the foreign country, competitive advantage over international competitors and geographical proximity to the destination country (MARQUES et al., 2005).

The franchise system will export not only the product, but mainly the brand. The consumer understands that the company that takes care of the brand works to better serve the costumer and his needs; hence the importance of exporting the brand so that a company becomes internationally known. Pamplona (1999) defines well the importance of the brand for franchising: "the brand is a variable of utmost importance for the franchising system, it is the great driver of marketing strategies adopted by companies". Through a good projection of their brands, companies can develop by adopting the franchising system. Therefore, it is important that the franchisor, when intending to enter a foreign market, be aware of the legislation and trademark registration, as Vazquez (2007) points out. As soon as the company intends to operate in foreign trade, it is important that the exporter seeks a specialized consulting service (trademark registration) so that it can be guided on how to act, protecting itself from the inconveniences that may arise from the unfair practice (VAZQUEZ, 2007).

The franchisee can develop his activity having the backing of a brand recognized nationally and internationally. It is essential that he trusts the experience of the company that owns the brand in being a franchisor. This confidence allows the business to attract customers who are already familiar to the products and services and recognize the brand because of this. For Silveira (2010, p.45), "the brand is much more than a logo, it means all forms of manifestations that impact the consumer market. It includes the tangible and intangible assets owned by the franchisor".

Troiano (2009) completes yet, the importance of the brand to the consumer, because for him, "the best way to conquer your consumers and make them loyal to your brand is to start understanding who they are, what their needs and dreams are", that is, entering their lives. The brand will always be well remembered by its customers as long as the company has this vision expressed in its product and service.

Analyzing the existing factors, one realizes that domestic marketing and especially international marketing act in progressive changes that need to be absorbed and understood quickly by professional in the field. About these aspects, according to Minervini (2001), "international marketing assumes the responsibility of elaborating the internationalization process that the company will adopt, essentially when it uses the franchising system for internationalization", which is more complex; however, the company will enter with a system that is already standardized into a market that was unknown until then.

Operating in the international market exposes the company to contact with the most diverse types of customers, in general, with higher levels of demand and disputed by a large number of competitors, which favors learning processes and increases the capacity to adjust to changes in consumption patterns. In this way, different from what is indicated by the conventional interpretation, which considers the realization of exports as an indicator of competitive performance, foreign sales can be an important factor to stimulate competitiveness (MURPHY, 2006, p.46). Thus, it is essential that the brand be well and positively propagated in the international market to achieve success and stability.

4. Conclusion

It is concluded that for the brand internationalization process to be successful, the company must adopt a correct international market entry strategy, because this is considered an important step that can leverage the company in the future. It was observed that internationalization is seen as a form of continuous learning in the face of the competitions that exist in the international arena, something that involves time and risk. It is a way of introducing new actions, thus increasing the company's involvement with the foreign market. And with experience, costs are reduced, there is a reduction in uncertainties and profitability is greater.

It was observed that the main barriers to internationalization for national franchised brands are organizational, such as the difficulties of operating abroad and the lack of knowledge about foreign markets, showing that companies do not consider themselves prepared to operate outside their national borders. Also important are barriers related to investment capacity, such as the time required to recover expenses.

It was also noted that for the adequacy of the brand in the entry market, it is necessary to ensure the internationalization process, define a competitive strategy for entering the foreign market and plan the opportunities and threats of internationalization, which are considered indispensable strategies for companies that aim to conquer the foreign market. Another essential factor for success is the marketing strategy, which prevents the company from becoming outdated in the market where it operates, as well as through analysis, evaluation, adaptation and activation, which are tools that improve the interaction of marketing with the environment to which it belongs.

It is noteworthy that, with the advent of globalization, there was an ease in the consumption and sale of products, reducing the commercial boundaries between countries. Therefore, a very important aspect that must be considered when approaching any country is the culture, so if the products and companies adapt to cultural diversities, they can meet and create a market that did not exist before.

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