

## THE ROLE OF DYNAMIC CAPABILITIES IN BUSINESS INTERNATIONALIZATION

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to contribute to the Dynamic Capabilities and International Business' literature. This article presents the organizational resources that allow insertion and permanence in external markets, as well as the capabilities developed by companies that are internationalized and remained in the international context. Therefore, was articulated the theoretical lens of Dynamic Capabilities and their relationship with internationalization, besides to combine the literature about organizational internationalization. Empirical research was developed through the analysis of the internationalization process and the strategic behavior of two Brazilian companies. A multiple and qualitative case study was carried out; data were collected through semi-structured interviews, documents, and analyzed through content analysis. As a result, the internationalization proved viable and based on the Dynamic Capabilities' articulation that shapes a competitive organizational architecture and in the constant managers' perception about new opportunities of international action coming from their clients. The article contributes to the two theoretical aspects by proposing a framework to concatenate them, evidencing the resources, paths, and capabilities necessary for the sustainability and expansion in international contexts, as well as the relevance of the Dynamic Capabilities in the business internationalization.

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## INTRODUCTION

The global macroeconomic context has undergone significant changes over the years, continually altering the way organizations operate and imposing new challenges and needs for business survival and sustainability. In today's business environment, continuous changes in customer demands, competitive scenarios, and government regulations are imposed on firms (Zimmermann & Birkinshaw, 2016). Thus, the competitive advantage of business deals is related to the development and deployment of intangible assets, relationships, and human capital (Teece, 2014a).

In this aspect, the perspective of Dynamic Capabilities (CDs), an approach that seeks to explain the firm's performance in globalized economies, based on knowledge and dominate intangible assets emerges (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). It is a study approach that seeks to explain how firms can achieve and sustain a competitive advantage (Peteraf, Di

Stefano, & Verona, 2013). This approach postulates that, in a rapid change regime, organizational success demands superior abilities in organizational, managerial, and technological processes. Such skills enable the identification and use of new opportunities, as well as the maintenance of competitiveness through the firm's increment, protection, and reconfiguration tangible and intangible assets (Teece et al., 1997; Teece, 2007). These capabilities orchestration empowers firms to become and remain agile in domestic and international markets, as well as evidence of how an organization develops strengths, fit them to the business environment, and shapes them in their favor (Al-Aali & Teece, 2014a).

The CDs perspective is related to the studies related to the organizational internationalization processes. Firms that work in international contexts are usually exposed to highly dynamic environments characterized by rapid changes, which makes it

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essential to develop CDs to achieve positive international performance (Augier & Teece, 2007). These capabilities allow them to operate flexibly both domestically and internationally, with structural flexibility and high learning and response capacity (Teece, 2014a). Thus, operations in international markets require CDs to enable the knowledge assimilation and the incorporation of such learning into operations and organizational strategy (Frasquet, Dawson, & Mollá, 2013).

The international expansion is structured in the firm's resources and assets base, and the managerial idiosyncrasies so that the internationalization demonstrates the productive knowledge accumulation linked to the organizational trajectory (Knudsen & Madsen, 2002). In this aspect, this process is made possible through the development of a specific firm's advantages resulting from the CDs construction and articulation (Vahlne & Johanson, 2017). Thus, "dynamic capabilities are at the heart of firm's global competitiveness" and are developed at the domestic level and extended to the international market by organizations that are internationalized (Lessard, Teece, & Leih, 2016a, 222). Internationalization, in this scenario, is seen as an organizational trajectory consequence sustained by CDs developed in domestic operations over time.

International firms are natural laboratories to observe how CDs cross the contextual boundaries, which can be an industry, strategic orientation, countries, ecosystems or regional blocs (Lessard, Teece, & Leih, 2016b). Understanding the developing process and articulating these capabilities in foreign markets operations broadens the understanding of the organizational trajectory and the CDs relevance to these businesses continuity. The firms' permanence and evolution in foreign markets over time are linked to the CDs development in the international initiatives field (Lessard et al., 2016a). Therefore, central research for those studying CDs and International Business (NIs), which is still open, lies in investigating the circumstances in which intangible assets can be deployed, combined, and redistributed profitably in other contexts (Lessard et al., 2016b).

According to Lessard et al. (2016b), it is necessary to construct studies that consider the contexts in which CDs are developed and exercised and the literature on CDs and NIs by approaching questions such as: "[...] which capacities can allow a firm to

become locally embedded in a distinctly foreign context? [...] what are the capabilities that allow a successful local firm to extend its advantages elsewhere?" (p.166). Therefore, the present study focuses on these issues, evidencing the resources and capabilities necessary for internationalization and seeking to understand the CDs development and mobilization along the organizational trajectories in the domestic and international context. Therefore, the question that guides this study is presented as what is the role of dynamic capabilities in the internationalization and maintenance of the firm's presence in international markets?

The present work addresses this objective by analyzing the internationalization process and the CDs development in firms belonging to the Information Technology (IT) industry. A multiple case study was conducted with two Brazilian firms that have been operating for more than 20 years in the market; with full performance in Brazil, several regions; which operate in international markets; and have their management entirely Brazilian. The research developed analyzed the strategic movements that have occurred throughout these firms' history, focusing on the events related to the internationalization process.

Based on this, the CDs presence, construction, and articulation in these movements were evaluated and what relation these capabilities exert in the firm's trajectory.

Thus, the study contributes to the studies expansion in the strategic management scope and literature of NIs, presenting the concatenation of the two theoretical lenses and approaching internationalization through the resources and organizational capabilities optics. Also, the research also contributes to evidence the CDs articulation in the domestic and international scope and the organizational resources that allows the insertion and permanence in external markets.

To address the study, the following section presents the literature on internationalization strategies, followed by the CDs perspective, their elements, and their relation to internationalization. The third section describes the empirical approach of the research, and the fourth section contemplates the analyzes, and interpretations of the cases studied, as well as the proposed framework. Finally, was presents the final considerations, directions for future research and references consulted.

## ORGANIZATIONAL INTERNATIONALIZATION

Working in international markets is a multifaceted process developed over time, and has been widely studied in the literature since 1970 (Welch & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2014). Different lines of research form the study currents in the internationalization area, and two different approaches have been highlighted in the research: the economic approach, which is based on rational decisions and aims to maximize profits; and the behavioral approach, which focuses on the perceptions, attitudes, and cognitive constraints of management decisions (Andersen & Buvik, 2002). The present study focuses on the behavioral line and, therefore, delves deeper into this theme.

Behavioral theories encompass strategic organizational behavior. The Nordic School of the Firm Internationalization pioneered this approach in the process analysis of acting in foreign markets (Björkman & Forsgren, 2000). The internationalization model process in this line postulates the idea that experiential learning is the critical factor for the changes and the delineation the firm international trajectory, as well as the learning and previous experience, supports the locational choices to act in external markets (Kim & Aguilera, 2015).

These studies have evolved to encompass criticisms and changes in economic and regulatory environments as well as in various aspects of corporate behavior (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009; Vahlne & Johanson, 2013). A relevant topic in this area deals with the importance of internal and external relationship networks signed by firms that operate internationally (networks). In this approach, markets are portrayed as networks of business relationships, and for business to occur, these organizations need to develop in-depth knowledge about each other (Johanson & Mattson, 1988; Vahlne & Johanson, 2013). The networks created between different agents (clients, suppliers, official organizations, alliance partners, among others) present themselves as an effective way of maintaining the external market (Welch & Welch, 1996).

Networks influence aspects of international entrepreneurship, being another relevant line of research within the scope of the internationalization behavioral approach (Coviello & Munro, 1995; Pla-Barber & Escribá-Esteve, 2006). The relationships

built and the links developed by firms in foreign markets allow access to new experiences, resources, and knowledge that boost their ability to penetrate international markets. This process requires dynamic and proactive management, which is in an entrepreneurial orientation (Pla-Barber & Escribá-Esteve, 2006).

Entrepreneurial orientation is associated with innovation capability, managerial vision, and competitive position abroad, reflecting global proactivity in the search for international markets (Knight, 2001). This orientation portrays an organizational behavior related to the search for opportunities, risk-taking, and innovation, being, in general, positively associated with the firms' performance and competitiveness (Thanos, Dimitratos, & Sapouna, 2017). Enterprising firms are more likely to take risks, to seek out new technologies, to perform organizational functions in a differentiated way, and to launch bolder international ventures. Thus, they provide access to new opportunities and businesses, expanding their knowledge base, their resources, and their capabilities (Knight, 2001).

The entrepreneurial orientation and the firm participation in a network in which it interacts with actors that operate nationally or internationally, help the firm's insertion in the international market. Besides, they enable an internationalization strategy choice that may be the result of the markets search or following the client (Majkgard & Sharma, 1998). The following the client strategy has a close connection with the networks and assumes that the firm operates in a network in which its partners act internationally and pressure the other members also to act. In the early years of international insertion, its operations in foreign markets are based on the resources provided by the domestic network (Majkgard & Sharma, 1998).

The choice for this strategy is predominantly made by service firms, which traditionally start their international operations when their clients are internationalized (Grönroos, 1999). The service firms characteristics, such as intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and the close relationship between producer and consumer make them propitious to take internationalization forms different from manufacturing industries (Lommelen & Matthyssens, 2005). Also, these firms generally need to follow their overseas customers in order to prevent foreign

competitors from attending to them and, possibly, to enter the domestic market as well and jeopardize their future market share and profitability (Boehe, 2016). Therefore, the internationalization of these firms mainly reflects the opportunities arising from external contacts, social exchange, and the trust established with clients and employees.

This strategy seeks to capitalize on pre-established business relationships (Lommelen & Matthysens, 2005). The company provides similar services to the domestic market for its overseas customers in order to nourish and strengthen the existing relationship (Blomstermo et al., 2006). The service firms gain an advantage as it begins its international operation with customers with strong ties (Huijs, Jansen, & Brinkkemper, 2015). Also, the knowledge generated and the information collected about the client's international activities its can be transferred to the domestic level, allowing a better service in the clients' national operations (Boehe, 2016).

Internationalization is thus understood as a learning activity and involves the firms' internal resources and capabilities (Majkgard & Sharma, 1998). The knowledge required in this process can be enhanced through its current exchange relationships, and the experimental knowledge generated exerts a significant influence on the firm's internationalization (Eriksson, Johanson, & Majkgard, 1997). Despite this strong client connection and the role of relationships

in the service firms internationalization, this process also requires specific and internal firm movements in learning, organizing, and managing efforts for this strategy (Eriksson et al., 1997).

The client-following strategy, the networks, and the international entrepreneurship perspectives are configured as exponents in the firm's competitiveness that operate in the external market. The firm aggressive and proactive posture, coupled with the relationship networks constituted with different agents, allows access to and development of differentiated capabilities and resources that are difficult to replicate on the part of competitors (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009; Vahne & Johanson, 2017). These research strands are linked to the CDs perspective, where the firm's ability to actively develop and articulate its tangible and intangible resources to respond to environmental changes allied to an appropriate strategy is the basis for superior performance (Teece, 2014b).

In this study, internationalization is understood from the networks side and its influence in the internationalization strategy adoption to follow the client, leading to the capabilities development, resources, and experiences necessary to delineate the international insertion process along this path. Figure 1 demonstrates the linkage of these theoretical perspectives and is linked to the research carried out, in which the CDs theoretical lens is tied to internationalization strategies.

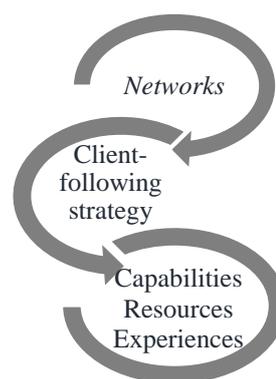


Figure 1. Internationalization in the study perspective  
Source: Author's elaboration

In the strategy formulation and performance in a global environment, factors such as entrepreneurial vision, international managerial experience, and alertness to opportunities should also be considered and reflect a current position about external challenges (Crick, 2009). The success in the firms' internationalization starts to be established from

their resources and capabilities portfolio and, mainly, their ability to adjust and reconfigure them according to global changes. In this context, the internationalization process requires analysis through the firm's resources and capabilities (Prange & Verdier, 2011; Vahne & Johanson, 2017). Thus, in order to comprehend and delineate more profoundly

the link between the process and the internationalization firms theories and the CDs perspective, the concepts and fundamental elements that relate these two approaches are presented in the next section.

#### DYNAMIC CAPABILITIES AND INTERNATIONALIZATION

The CDs perspective is within the framework of strategic management studies and focuses on structuring and analyzing the possibilities to building and maintaining organizational competitiveness in changing and complex environments (Helfat et al., 2009; Teece, 2014a).

There are a variety of interpretations, and conceptions about the theme, concepts, and essential elements are changeable among the different researchers (Di Stefano, Peteraf, & Verona, 2010). However, the CDs definitions converge in the sense of identifying them as organizational processes that allow changing the firm resource base (Helfat et al., 2009). The fundamental concept of this approach presents CDs as "[...] the firm's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competences to address rapidly changing environments" (Teece et al., 1997, 516).

The CDs rationale lies in strategic elements in three categories: processes, positions, and paths (Teece et al., 1997). The processes are translated in the way of performing the activities and routines; the positions show the technologies, the intellectual property, the customer base and relationship with suppliers and agents that the firm possesses; and the paths show the organizational trajectory dependence, the returns of its businesses and what alternative strategies are available. In this sense, processes shape the company's current positions and their evolutionary paths in order to delineate the heart of organizational CDs.

CDs can be disaggregated into three broad pillars that span their various classes (Teece, 2007). The first is the ability to sense and shape opportunities and threats (sense), in which activities such as creation are developed; learning; search; probing technological possibilities, customer needs and the structural evolution of markets and competitors. The second is the apprehension of these opportunities (seize), through the development of new processes, products, and services. Finally, there is the reconfiguration of business tangible and intangible assets (reconfiguring or transforming), which allows the organizational activities evaluation and the

routines reformulation, activities realignment, and business units adaptation.

In the organizational internationalization, the CDs construction and articulation are relevant and present some specificities. In this context, the competitiveness and mutability of environments are more significant, as are exposure to global competition, different innovation sources, and production dispersion (Teece, 2014a). In the internationalization process, there is a need for an entrepreneurial orientation to manage international enterprises, knowledge and organizational learning about the countries in order to deal with the increasing the international environment complexity and dynamism (Frasquet et al. 2013; Vahne & Johanson, 2017). Thus, the CDs structure provides subsidies to assist organizations in this international action process.

The CDs, articulated in operations in foreign markets, encompass the recognition of the specific countries' characteristics in which it operates and the adaptation, integration, and internal and external assets reconfiguration to take opportunities advantage in the global market (Griffith & Harvey, 2001). International activities management requires elements such as flexibility, agility, entrepreneurship, intelligent investment choices, and continuous learning, which are central to the CDs perspective (Pitelis & Teece, 2010). Therefore, managerial skills, together with CDs, support international operations management.

Internationalization requires CDs to compensate for the host country's disadvantages strangeness and to remain competitive vis-à-vis local rivals and foreign competitors. Hence, this movement provides new opportunities for extracting returns from the firm's current resources and building new capabilities (Luo, 2001). In this way, the changes process understanding and organizational resources reconfiguration for organizational development is fundamental to understanding the competitive advantage sources that enable successful internationalization (Vahne & Johanson, 2017).

Thus, the three CDs pillars, as proposed by Teece (2007), can be extended to international operations. In identifying opportunities, it is necessary to include the global scale latent demand recognition; the seize opportunities includes coordination, control and influence of these opportunities and other assets to establish different ways of acting in international

perspectives; and finally, in the reconfiguration dimension, there are changes in business models, organizational culture, product reformulation and service lines, and facilities renovation at the domestic and global levels (Al-Aali & Teece, 2014).

Some empirical studies have analyzed the construction and CDs articulation in the organizational internationalization context. Different studies link the CDs with the management and increase of knowledge and organizational learning for firms to operate in international markets (Fan, Cui, Li, & Zhu, 2016; Pehrsson et al., 2015, Villar, Alegre, & Pla-Barber, 2014). Others take the CDs as the ability to establish partnerships in the international market (Chang, Chen, & Huang, 2015) or as the exploratory capacity to create company-wide value in the internationalization process (Lew, Sinkovics, & Kuivalainen, 2013).

Several researches have used the theoretical CDs lens to analyze the development and performance of new international ventures and Born Globals (Evers; Andersson, & Hannibal, 2012; Jantunen et al., 2005; Khalid & Larimo, 2012; Khavul, Peterson, Mergens, 2010, Monferrer, Blesa, Ripollés, 2015, Turcan & Juho, 2016, Weerawardena et al., 2007, 2015), as well as international franchises (El Akremi, Perrigot & Piot-Lepetit, 2015); global factories (Eriksson, Nummela, & Saarenketo, 2014); multinationals (Chakrabarty & Wang, 2012; Da Costa & Porto, 2014; Floriani; Borini, & Fleury, 2009; Parente, Baack, & Hahn, 2011; Vahlne & Ivarsson, 2014; Vahlne & Jonsson, 2017; Werlang, Dalbosco, Floriani, & Rossetto, 2014); small and medium-sized enterprises (Pinho & Prange, 2016, Swoboda & Olejnik, 2016, Tallott & Hilliard, 2016); exporting firms (Moreira & Forte, 2006, Rodriguez, Wise, & Martinez, 2013). Other studies have shown that firms engage in international joint ventures to develop CDs needed to operate internationally (Fang & Zou, 2009) or develop CDs to work in the global educational network in the context higher education services (Butler & Soonties, 2015).

The general panorama of these studies shows the CDs articulation directly related to the beginning of the international insertion, but they do not evaluate the role of these capabilities in the firm's permanence in the international markets. Also, they do not show the relevance of the CDs construction along the firm's trajectory in the domestic market to enable the adoption of an international expansion strategy.

Thus, the present study addresses such questions, evidencing in the empirical scope the relationship between CDs and internationalization, along the organizational trajectories.

#### METHOD

The study used a qualitative, descriptive, and exploratory approach. A multi-case study was conducted in two Brazilian firms in the IT sector. The cases choice started from the sector mapping, having as criteria for the selected participants to be firms belonging to the Brazilian Software and Services Industry; of national origin; have undergone significant strategic changes (changes in business models, resources and assets realignment, and insertion in international markets); consolidated nationally and with international action.

The first case is Grupo Alfa, characterized as an information platform, offering IT consulting services, SAP services, outsourcing, software factory, and application management services, founded in 1990 and serving medium and large firms. With six units in Brazil, a Research and Development Unit in RS and an office in the USA. The second case is the Beta Group, made up of firms that implement and integrate IT services and solutions in the Latin American market, having service bases in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Curitiba, Londrina, Belo Horizonte, and Porto Alegre, with commercial offices in Chile, Argentina, and the United States.

Data collection was done through fifteen semi-structured interviews with twelve interviewees, eight in the Alfa Group and seven in the Beta Group, in the year 2016. The interviewees were senior managers and managers (area directors and managers) belonging to different sectors that were part of the organization's history or had a broad knowledge of the path they have taken. The firms and interviewees identification was preserved. The interviewees were recorded and transcribed to compose the analyzes. The transcripts generated 233 pages, 130 pages of the firm Alfa interviewees, and 103 pages of the firm Beta interviewees. The total interview time was 14 hours, with 7 hours and 50 minutes in the Alpha company and 6 hours and 10 minutes in the Beta company. In addition to the interview data, internal documents provided by firms and external documents were also used to complement the research carried out. The internal documents were constituted by books and institutional reports detailing the organizational histories and their

strategic movements. The external firm's documents studied compiled for analysis included reports published in national and regional newspapers; magazines (for example, Destaque Gaúcho and 100 Brands of Rio Grande do Sul); book (Knebel, 2010); and publications in digital media.

The materials disclosed the operations, activities, strategic changes, and awards received by the analyzed cases. The concatenation of the internal and external documents with the interviews carried out allowed to converge the information about the firms' peculiarities, their internal conjunctures, their business environments, and the organizational trajectories.

The results were analyzed through content analysis and were categorized as follows: (1) strategic movements related to the internationalization process in the firms studied; and (2) the developed CDs, decomposed into three pillars (sense, seize, and transforming), according to Teece's (2007) perspective. Figure 2 presents the categories of analysis that supported the research performed and the details of its composition. Mapping was carried out to understand the history of each firm, identifying the strategic changes that took place, and especially those related to the internationalization process. From this, the CDs development and articulation in those change moments pertinent to the international insertion were analyzed.

CATEGORIES	SUB CATEGORIES	OBSERVABLE ASPECTS	REFERENCES
<b>Strategic Movements</b>	<b>Internationalization</b>	Subsidiaries opening; commercial offices opening; projects and activities carried out at the international level.	-
<b>Dynamic Capabilities</b>	<b>Sense and shape opportunities</b>	Investments in R&D; generation of external research base; knowledge acquisition; development of knowledge creation routines; monitoring the competitors, customers, and suppliers activities; processes development to identify target markets.	A-Alli & Teece (2014); Teece (2007); Teece (2014a, 2014b)
	<b>Seize opportunities</b>	Product, processes, and services development; creation, adjustment, and improvement of business models; new technologies acquisition; strategic decisions; transformation routines; knowledge assimilation.	
	<b>Manage threats and transform</b>	Decentralization and collaborative management; governance; specialization; flexibility and responsiveness; knowledge management (exploration, sharing, coding); collaboration networks; abandonment of resources.	
<b>Internationalization</b>	<b>Strategies and processes</b>	Reasons for internationalization and entry modes; control levels and risks assumed; adjustments to activities related to operations in external markets; difficulties and successes; benefits.	Boehe (2016); Eriksson, Johanson, & Majkgard (1997); Johanson & Vahlne (2009); Knight (2001); Majkgard & Sharma (1998).

Figure 2. Categories of analysis  
Source: Author's elaboration

**RESULTS**

In this section, it is present the international performance panorama of each case, the general analysis of the findings and proposes a framework

that integrates the perspectives analyzed in the study. Figure 3 shows the events related to the international movements performed by the firms studied and analyzed from the CDs' perspective.

<b>Firm Alfa</b>	<b>Firm Beta</b>
- International projects in Portugal, Peru, Colombia and Mexico	- International project in Uruguay - Subsidiaries in Chile and Colombia - Commercial offices in the United States, Spain and Argentina

Figure 3. International Movements by Firms  
Source: Author's elaboration

In the company Alfa, the internationalization process was configured as an evolution of its business and started from the base of those served in the domestic market. The international initiatives developed since its first movement in 2001 have always been carried out through its clients. Some elements allowed a market positioning construction and a recognition by the clients that Alfa had the necessary attributes to accompany their NIs. In this regard, the company's track record over time, its consolidation in the domestic market and the CDs development and maintenance. Respondents reported that the firm's reputation in Brazil is strong, mainly by foreign multinationals operating in the country and which are serviced by Alpha. As a result, these multinationals will take them to other world parts to extend their services in global contracts.

projects have become more facilitated in its execution, since the strategic resources and CDs managed by the firm were extended to these new markets, also reducing the strangeness with these locations.

The firm's characteristics and its ability to be flexible and develop a high work level, let them manage the international project and also be perceived by customers as a promising partner for the development of their business. In the first international project, carried out in Portugal, at Caixa Geral de Depósitos, the client met the software factory model that Alfa develops in Brazil and requested a project to implement the same configuration internationally. The firm's capabilities, when aligned with the foreign markets needs, facilitate its international expansion (Teece, 2014a). In the process experienced by the Alfa, international

Another element of this scenario is the way the company began its internationalization, which reflects a characteristic of the business type. Traditionally, service firms begin their journey abroad to follow the customers they are serving in domestic markets (Blomstermo et al., 2006; Grönroos, 1999). This aspect was reported in the interviews as a characteristic of the firm's internationalization process, which is always configured through its clients and the opportunities that arise from these relationships. Alfa is expanding and growing along with them, identifying new opportunities, and getting to know new markets through this relationship. This internationalization strategy aims to build value relations with its already established clients, seeking to provide more or less the same services to overseas clients and, thus, to grow and strengthen the relationship with them (Blomstermo et al., 2006). Besides, for firms that operate in international markets, it is necessary that their CDs be amplified and leveraged against those firms with an exclusively domestic focus (Teece, 2014a). Figure 4 shows the CDs analysis developed in the Alfa internationalization process from the three CDs pillars proposed by Teece (2007).

<b>Sense Oportunities</b>	<b>Seize Oportunities</b>	<b>Reconfiguration</b>
- From the needs of the clients and their international expansion.	- Coaching; - Knowledge articulation; - Strategic decision-making.	- Continuous monitoring of customer needs in international markets; - Knowledge and assets integration present in the domestic market to address the international environment demands.

Figure 4. CDs articulation in the Alfa internationalization  
Source: Author's elaboration

The Alfa internationalization process should be analyzed as a consequence of the organizational trajectory. Also, it is necessary to consider the development of proper strategies and the firm positioning before the market, which makes it recognized as a firm of excellence in its business lines. The data collected allowed to verify the CDs presence within the company, such as their orientation to the market; the establishment of trust relationships and partnership with clients that allow the identification, mapping, and evaluation new opportunities and the markets evolution in different action contexts. Besides, the ability to reconfigure their activities; to develop technologies and workforce; of integrating and articulating knowledge, assets and resources between the domestic and international scope are evidenced as essential CDs in the international action. Thus, these elements continually raise the Alpha firm competitiveness level, being paramount for the firm's permanence in global projects management.

At Beta, the internationalization process also developed due to the need to follow the client's expansion served in Brazil. Besides, the competitor's pressure, not only at the national level, has influenced the adoption of this strategy. As of 2005, customers started asking Beta to become a global player in order to serve them in global contracts, and if Beta did not make such an international expansion, it would risk losing big contracts. Thus, the Brazilian firms' growth and their development at the international level emerged as an opportunity for Beta to start the first strategic internationalization movement. In this scenario, the firm opened in 2005 its first subsidiary, installed in Chile and later in Colombia, the United States, Spain, and Argentina.

Opening commercial offices and providing services in external variety contexts has enabled Beta to defend itself against the global threats of large multinational firms. This situation is corroborated by the literature (Boehe, 2016), which argues that service firms follow their clients abroad to prevent foreign competitors from expanding their activities and also entering the domestic context, starting to serve their clients and impairing their market participation. With this, Beta ensured its continuity in customers, in addition to increasing the volume of the contracts. In this context, the firm issue having an adequate structure and being competitive nationally, with the association of its image to Microsoft, allowed to have a higher acceptance in international scope.

Although internationalization is predominantly to accompany customers, the open unit in Chile was an independent company movement and not associated with customers. This market was chosen by the founding member because of its proximity to the country culture, with the work logic developed and his knowledge about that market functioning. Currently, 95% of the revenue from this unit is local; that is, they are not derived from global contracts. In order to serve this market, the firm has set up a structure composed of Chilean professionals to work in the commercial area, since the costs structure, work forms, tax collection, firm culture, and the competitive positioning way are very different in comparison to Brazil. However, the firm also sent Brazilian professionals who have the Beta culture and a longer company time to work with local employees, so that they become local replicators of the firm's work model.

The internationalization strategy to follow clients in foreign markets is predominantly adopted by service firms to capitalize on established relationships (Lommelen & Matthyssens, 2005). After establishing the presence in the foreign market, the motivation seems to change for the local foreign clients' service, and a market approach is adopted. This strategy leads the firm to become part of an international exchange network, which assists in the experimental knowledge accumulation and decision-making procedures (Majkgard & Sharma, 1998). In the panorama experienced by Beta, this approach, as well as the Uppsala Model, is verified as the firm has been building its internationalization through relationship and experiential learning to explore and seize the opportunities.

The international expansion process after the initial period and in the quest to expand the performance beyond the customer base already served also demanded some strategies on the part of the firm to conquer new clients and become recognized as in Brazil. The interviewees reported that the mapping of the region's customers is first carried out, through annuals and surveys on the internet, together with the market definition that one wishes to work: customer profile; billing size; the employee's number; public or private market. Also, searches are conducted to verify in which region these target customers are distributed. As a strategy, the company starts working on clients in segments where it already has success stories, such as similar

businesses, in order to generate the earnings perception and results for that potential client.

The benefits of this work also brought positive impacts to the firm's performance nationwide. The knowledge acquired through this expansion made it possible to expand service to international firms located in Brazil. A significant portion of large Brazilian firms is managed by foreigners, who come from other cultures and who have difficulties in dealing with the Brazilian situation. Thus, Beta, having experienced different cultures and knowing how these people think and their work logics, could serve as a service provider to connect these managers with the Brazilian reality.

It is observed that the Beta internationalization process presents characteristics similar to those perceived in the company Alfa. The motivation to enter international markets was through the need and request of its customers. Customers perceive

Beta as a partner prepared to assist in support of their businesses nationally and internationally. This perception comes from the trajectory traversed by the firm, mainly in the new business models formatting, in the search to be always ahead of the market, to expand geographically and in the constant internal restructuring to adapt to new technological contexts. Beta's CDs to manage, disseminate, integrate knowledge between the domestic and international market; coordinate a global base of distinct resources and reconfigure its assets, provide a competitive position that is hard to imitate by competitors. The firm's internationalization reflects the firm's ability to sustain a distinctive organizational architecture, which encompasses the three CDs pillars, as shown in Figure 5.

It enables not only to accompany customers to external markets but also to remain in those locations and to widen their scope exploring new markets.

Sense Opportunities	Seize Opportunities	Reconfiguration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need to follow the expansion of customers to international markets;</li> <li>- Increased competition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Subsidiaries and commercial offices opening;</li> <li>- The development of new processes and products;</li> <li>- Routines transformation;</li> <li>- Strategic decision-making.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore new knowledge;</li> <li>- Global asset base efficient coordination;</li> <li>- Ability to respond to new requirements;</li> <li>- Realignment of assets and resources.</li> </ul>

Figure 5. CDs articulation in the Beta internationalization  
Source: Author's elaboration

The firm's internationalization process analyzed, although with the specificities of each one, presents a vital link with the behavioral approaches of insertion in external markets. As postulated by the Uppsala and Networks Model, the firms studied started this process from the development of customer relationships and experiential learning built on these activities.

These movements have allowed them to identify and seize opportunities and improve relationships with their clients. The CDs orchestration, highlighting elements such as flexibility; knowledge articulation; assets reconfiguration and business models aligned with external requirements, have allowed these firms to be perceived by their clients as strategic partners to accompany them in international expansion. These capabilities also aided in the internal organization to meet these different markets demands.

In Figure 6, the framework is exposed, which relates the approaches developed in this study. Thus, the firms' organizational trajectory and their strategic movements over time are linked to the development and CDs articulation. The CDs continuously orchestrated by the firms enable the realization of strategic movements, place them in a strategic and prominent position before their customers and, over time, allow international expansion and permanence in these markets.

On the other hand, these strategic movements and built relationships influence the CDs development and feedback on the maintenance and enhancement of these capabilities. Thus, there is a relationship between these approaches that allow an appropriate performance, with the maintenance and growth of the organization in domestic and international scope.

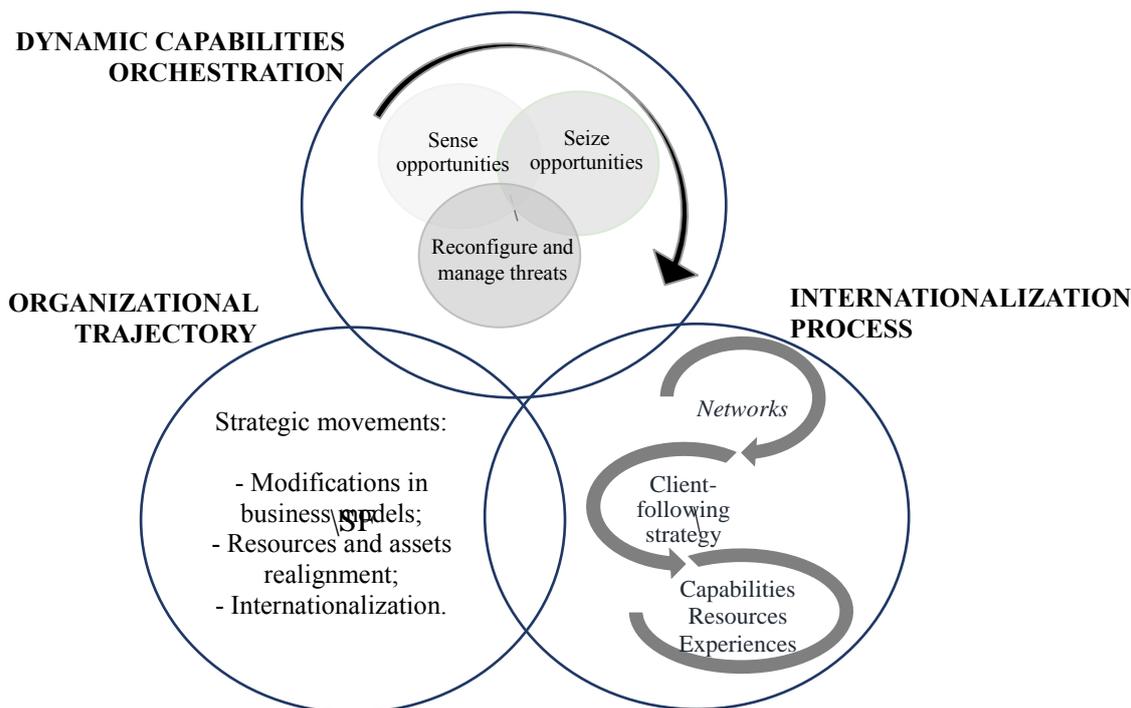


Figure 6. The framework of the relationship between CDs, Organizational Trajectory and Internationalization  
Source: Author's elaboration

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to understand the CDs role in the organizational internationalization process, as well as which elements and capabilities are developed by firms that are internationalized and remain competitive in foreign markets. The researches, predominantly, evaluate the internationalization through the insertion and the beginning of the process. However, there is a need to evaluate the perennality of these activities and their influences on integral firm growth. The present research collaborated for this analysis, finding that the articulation CDs and the appropriate strategies adopted by the studied cases allowed the firms to adapt to the international markets and to orchestrate their assets and resources to address the new demands. The association between internationalization and the CDs perspective was presented as a suitable field for study since the orchestration of these capabilities strengthens the firms and helps in sustaining activities in international markets.

The study contributes to the CDs and NIs literature in the indications of the organizational resources necessary for the insertion and international performance and the ways of developing and articulating CDs in the domestic and international

context. The understanding of internationalization within the resources and capabilities perspective contributes to the expansion of analyzes that link the two research strands. The study evidenced that the CDs developed by the organizations were expanded upon entry into international markets, and these capabilities influenced the expansion of the developed NIs. Internationalization assists in the CDs increment over time, as well as the orchestration of CDs, makes it possible to enter, stay, and expand activities in external markets, reflecting on organizational competitiveness.

The research highlighted the urgency of the construction and CDs management for success in the firm's international activities. CDs linked to the exploration and knowledge articulation; strategic decision-making, and organizational flexibility to modify and realign routines, allowed firms to incorporate locally into different contexts. Also, the organizational resources linked to the employees, their training, and the technological structures allocated were shown to be relevant to help expand the firms' advantages in the international markets.

In terms of implications for organizational research, in the strategic management scope, the study presented evidence of the CDs articulation in the organization's practices. It has become possible

to visualize various means and mechanisms by which CDs manifest themselves and influence the firm's development and growth for international markets. Regarding the managerial implications, it can be seen that the CDs construction, strategies, and perceptions of the need for change are still performed, to some extent, unconsciously and not planned in firms. The study contributed to demonstrate that by understanding the CDs elements, their role in competitiveness and the way in which the firm develops over time, it becomes possible to convert the construction and articulation of these capabilities more deliberately in firms, as well as transforming them into a more cultural process and rooted in the organizational structure.

Despite the contributions presented, there are some limitations to the study. Quantitative studies, coupled with the qualitative approach, may support other ways of visualizing CDs and their relation to

internationalization. Other firms with different sizes and structures can also bring distinctive contributions to counter the findings of the relationship between approaches. Also, the longitudinal studies would provide a more dense observation of the construction and CDs orchestration, bringing a range of elements to evaluate their relationship with competitiveness and internationalization, as well as expanding the analysis for linking these capabilities with financial performance measures and international performance. Therefore, the theoretical lenses related to this research can help in the new studies development that contributes to these literature and organizational practices. It is hoped to have contributed to raise new research possibilities and reflections for the researchers in the strategic management area and to allow the evolution of this emergent and promising research field.

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## O PAPEL DAS CAPACIDADES DINÂMICAS NA INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO DE EMPRESAS

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## DETALHES DO ARTIGO

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## RESUMO

O objetivo desta pesquisa é contribuir para a literatura de Capacidades Dinâmicas e Negócios Internacionais evidenciando quais os recursos organizacionais permitem a inserção e permanência em mercados externos, bem como as capacidades que são desenvolvidas por empresas que se internacionalizam e se mantêm no contexto internacional. Para tanto, buscou-se articular a lente teórica das capacidades dinâmicas e sua relação com a atuação em mercado internacionais, e aliar a literatura que aborda a internacionalização organizacional. Desenvolveu-se a pesquisa empírica por meio da análise do processo de internacionalização e do comportamento estratégico de duas empresas brasileiras. Realizou-se um estudo de caso múltiplo e qualitativo, os dados foram coletados por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas e documentos, sendo analisados mediante a análise de conteúdo. Os resultados sustentam que a internacionalização se mostrou viável e alicerçada na articulação das capacidades dinâmicas que moldam uma arquitetura organizacional competitiva e na constante percepção dos gestores de novas oportunidades de atuação internacional provenientes de seus clientes. O artigo contribui para as duas vertentes teóricas propondo um framework para concatená-las, evidenciando os recursos, caminhos e capacidades necessárias para a perenidade e expansão em contextos internacionais, assim como a relevância das Capacidades Dinâmicas na internacionalização organizacional.

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## PÊNDICE - Roteiro de entrevistas

**Identificar como se desenvolveu o processo e as estratégias de internacionalização das empresas estudadas.**

- Solicitar ao entrevistado que conte como ocorreu a internacionalização da empresa e como se desenvolve as atividades interacionais;
- Questionar quais foram os motivos para a internacionalização da empresa, bem como o impacto, vantagens e dificuldades percebidas;
- Questionar quais adaptações foram necessárias para a internacionalização;
- Questionar a respeito dos modos de entrada utilizados;
- Questionar a respeito dos critérios para seleção dos mercados-alvo;
- Questionar quais as estratégias de marketing foram necessárias para atender os mercados externos;
- Questionar a respeito dos aspectos macroambientais do mercado internacional (culturais, políticos, sociais, macroeconômicos);
- Questionar a respeito dos concorrentes e do perfil dos clientes no mercado internacional;
- Questionar a respeito do impacto das estratégias de internacionalização para o desempenho da empresa.

**Verificar a relação das CDs com os movimentos estratégicos apontados.**

Para cada movimento estratégico questionar:

- Questionar o que motivou esse movimento, de onde partiu a iniciativa;
- Questionar se foram realizadas reuniões com clientes, fornecedores e terceiros vinculados a essa atividade;
- Questionar se houve algum tipo de mapeamento das necessidades de clientes e mercados, como foi efetuado reconhecimento das mudanças percebidas;
- Questionar como o conhecimento gerado nessa atividade e em outros movimentos efetuados pela empresa é gerado e disseminado entre os funcionários e nas unidades dispersas globalmente;
- Questionar como a empresa estava estruturada para esse fato, divisão de tarefas e responsabilidades;
- Questionar a respeito de investimentos em P&D e se há uma base externa de pesquisa que contemple clientes, fornecedores e complementares.
  
- Questionar como a empresa se organizou/mobilizou para esse movimento, quais mudanças foram necessárias;
- Questionar como se deu o processo de gestão e as atividades funcionais;
- Questionar a necessidade de desenvolver novos produtos, serviços e processos;
- Questionar a necessidade de desenvolver e/ou adquirir novas tecnologias;
- Questionar se houve alterações no modelo de negócio da empresa e se houve flexibilidade para tais alterações;
- Questionar sobre a tomada de decisões estratégicas;
- Questionar sobre alterações nas rotinas, como foram assimilados e disseminados os novos conhecimentos requeridos.
  
- Questionar se, após a implementação desse movimento, fez-se necessário algum ajuste no que tange:
  - \* desenvolver processos de codificação e disseminação de conhecimento para alterar conjuntos de rotinas;
  - \* explorar os novos conhecimentos desenvolvidos e os resultados alcançados por meio da sua articulação
  - \* desenvolver e manter cadeias de valor (questionar como se estabeleceu)
  - \* estabelecer *networks* com parceiros externos (questionar como ocorre/ocorreu esses relacionamentos)
  - \* como foram tomadas as decisões (centralização) e flexibilidade para as mudanças;
  - \* como se deu o gerenciamento da propriedade intelectual e da transferência de tecnologias.
- Questionar se a empresa já abandonou alguma combinação de recursos e rotinas e os motivos que conduziram a essa mudança.

Fonte: Elaborado pelos autores