

Network outsidership and internationalization: new trends and emerging issues

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Significant trends in the business environment are now heavily influencing the company's internationalization, such as the growth of uncertainty generated by the current pandemic or the impact of digitalization (Ghuri, Strange & Cooke, 2021; Sharma, Leung, Kingshott, Davcik & Cardinali, 2021). These and other business environment trends make it more important than ever to understand how companies internationalize, what liabilities they face, and how they approach international markets.

Over the years, the literature has highlighted the relevance of adopting a network perspective in internationalization (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009; Vahlne & Johanson, 2017). According to this perspective, relationships and networks play a vital role in the company's internationalization and provide firms with privileged access to resources and opportunities (Bai & Johanson, 2018; Hilmersson, Johanson, Lundberg & Papaioannou, 2021). Being part of a foreign network and developing an insidership, represents a pivotal condition for operating effectively in international contexts. Research has even suggested that it is the liability of network outsidership, rather than foreignness that is essential for internationalization (Bai, Johanson, Oliveira, Ratajczak-Mrozek & Francioni, 2021; Johanson & Vahlne, 2009). The contemporary digital era, with new properties such as the user-centric network and network effect of internet (Brouthers, Geisser, & Rothlauf, 2016), adds complexity to the concept of liability of outsidership (Chen et al., 2019). Then, overcoming the liability of outsidership is essential, both for large companies (Vahlne, Schweizer & Johanson, 2012) and for small and medium-sized enterprises (Guercini & Runfola, 2010; Hilmersson & Jansson, 2012), no matter they are advanced or emerging market companies (Bai, Johanson, Oliveira & Ratajczak-Mrozek, 2021; Li & Fleury, 2020), or engage in conventional offline or online networks (Fraccastoro, Gabrielsson, & Chetty, 2021). The IMP approach makes an essential contribution in this regard (Håkansson and Gadde, 2018). Understanding which actors to interact with, how to relate with them, which resources to mobilize, what activities are involved allows to overcome the liability of outsidership and operate effectively in international markets.

This special track aims to understand what new dimensions characterize international networks and how companies act in the network to overcome the liabilities of outsidership and foreignness. Hence, we invite papers addressing the following topics according to a market as network approach:

- Theoretical approaches to International business and the IMP approach;
- Liabilities in international business and network outsidership;
- Network outsidership and internationalization of small-medium sized enterprises (SMEs);
- Networking and multinational enterprises (MNEs) internationalization;
- Emerging-market companies, networks, and internationalization;
- Digitalization and network entry in foreign markets;
- Internet, network, and internationalization;
- Network interaction in foreign markets;
- Identifying and exploiting opportunities in foreign market networks;
- Coordinating networks in several international markets;
- Entering dynamic or stable foreign market networks,
- Online and offline networks in international markets;
- Global trends and network interaction for internationalization

We invite conceptual, literature reviews, and empirical papers addressing these and other issues linked to the special track topics.

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