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# CONQUERING GLOBAL MARKETS: A GUIDE TO INTERNATIONALIZATION FOR ENTREPRENEURS IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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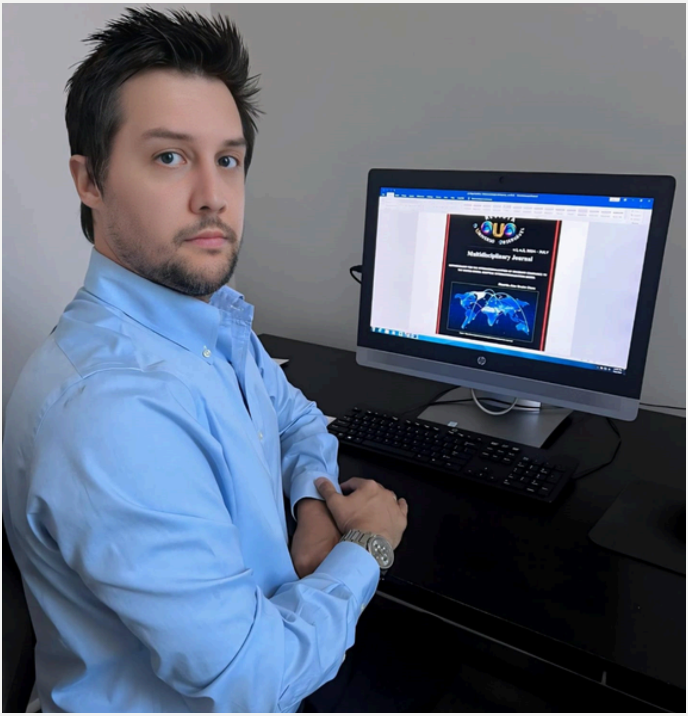

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# INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, the boundaries between domestic and international markets are increasingly blurred, creating a landscape where the ability to operate beyond domestic borders is not only advantageous but often essential for survival and growth. "Conquering Global Markets" emerges as a beacon of guidance for Brazilian entrepreneurs who envision the United States not only as a land of vast opportunities but also as a challenge filled with complex nuances.

This eBook has been meticulously crafted to demystify the process of internationalization, providing a comprehensive and practical guide that covers everything from the initial planning stages to execution and consolidation in the American market. Through a thorough analysis of internationalization models adapted to the peculiarities of Brazilian companies, we provide strategies, insights, and practical tools to navigate this ambitious endeavor successfully.

The main focus of the guide is to facilitate an understanding of the various critical aspects of internationalization, such as cultural adaptation, logistical challenges, legal regulations, and economic sustainability in a highly competitive market. Each chapter of this eBook is based on academic articles and case studies that illustrate not just theories but also real and tested practices by those who have already traversed this path.

By offering this valuable resource, our goal is to empower Brazilian entrepreneurs with the knowledge necessary to transform global challenges into tangible successes, promoting a smooth and strategically sound transition to one of the largest and most dynamic markets in the world. "Conquering Global Markets" is more than a manual; it is an indispensable companion on the journey to expand horizons and reach new heights of business success.

# 1 BRAZILIAN COMPANIES' INTERNATIONALIZATION TO THE UNITED STATES

The internationalization of Brazilian companies since the economic opening in the 1990s represents a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. This chapter explores the trajectory of these expansions, highlighting not only the strategic movements of corporations, but also the economic, political, and social variables that influenced such decisions.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Brazil has seen a significant increase in the number of its corporations seeking to expand their operations beyond national borders. The literature on the subject often debates the breadth of internationalization, which goes beyond simple export and import trade, encompassing also direct investments abroad and financial capital flows, as identified by Matos (2015).

The internationalization of Brazilian companies, according to Santos (2013) citing Iglesias and Veiga (2002), can be divided into three main phases:

First Phase (1960-1982): Characterized predominantly by investments from large corporations such as Petrobras and engineering and construction companies. These movements were largely motivated by the need for diversification in the face of the stagnation of major public works in Brazil.

Second Phase (1983-1992): This phase was marked by modest investments, totaling approximately USD 2.5 billion, primarily focused towards the end of the period. Internationalization during this time was timid and concentrated in a few sectors.

Third Phase (1993-present): A period marked by an intensification of direct investments abroad, particularly in Mercosur countries. The annual investment volume significantly increased from USD 1.3 billion in 1993 to USD 9.5 billion in 2004, driven by major acquisitions and the expansion of international financial operations.

## 1.1 Significant Acquisitions and the Expansion of Brazilian Multinationals

The delayed international debut of Brazilian multinationals, as discussed by Cyrino and Penido (2007), did not hinder the remarkable growth of their global activities. For instance, Vale acquired the Canadian mining company Inco for USD 18 billion in 2006, and Gerdau acquired twelve companies in 2007, including major names like Quanex and Chaparral Steel in the USA.

## 1.2 Global Vision and Consolidation of Operations

Despite global uncertainties in 2009, the Dom Cabral Foundation highlights a consolidation of Brazilian international operations with expectations of renewed investments in the following years. Brazil's standing, with fourteen companies among the top hundred in developing countries able to compete globally, reflects the growing capability of Brazilian multinationals to establish themselves in a competitive international setting (Carvalho, 2010).

This process is gradual, and as companies accumulate knowledge about these countries, they increase their local investments, progressively establishing commercial offices, stores, and factories (Caseiro, 2013). Dunning (1994) expands understanding by categorizing the motivations for internationalization into resource seeking, market seeking, efficiency seeking, and strategic asset seeking.

factors.

Companies focused on resources seek to explore the advantages of natural resources at lower costs in target countries, market-oriented strategies explore the advantages of neighboring markets from a target country, while those motivated by efficiency seek advantages in scale and production rationalization, among other.

Dunning (1994) Regarding strategic assets, companies seek competencies such as product innovation and distribution channels that give them a competitive advantage in the markets.

Since the economic liberalization in Latin America in 1990, the changed environmental conditions have pressured local companies to improve products and processes to compete globally.

The privatization of state-owned enterprises, which grew under government protection, created competitive conditions for them to compete abroad. The decision to produce abroad, instead of licensing or exporting, is strongly influenced by the nature of intangible assets, such as technological and management practices, which cannot be easily sold or licensed (Caseiro, 2013).

However, companies without distinct proprietary advantages tend to remain in the export phase or, at most, make limited foreign investments to better market their domestic production (Dunning, 1988).

### 1.3 Internationalization of Brazilian Companies to the USA

The year 2021 marked a turning point for Brazilian companies in terms of economic recovery and international expansion, particularly towards the United States market. After the adversities imposed by the global pandemic, which significantly slowed economic activities in 2020, the bilateral trade between Brazil and the USA not only recovered to pre-pandemic levels but also showed robust and encouraging growth.

Data from the American Chamber of Commerce for Brazil (Amcham) and the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex-Brasil) indicate that, from January to September 2021, Brazilian exports to the USA reached USD 22.3 billion, an increase of 47.1%, while imports grew by 29.8%, totaling USD 27.3 billion. This performance resulted in bilateral trade of USD 49.6 billion, consolidating the USA as one of Brazil's main trading partners (Caseiro, 2013).

## 1.4 Reasons for Internationalization

Finally, the reasons for internationalization, as observed by researchers such as Barcellos and Cyrino (2006), include overcoming domestic market limitations, accessing strategic resources, and achieving economies of scale. These factors not only strengthen the brand but also enable sustainable development by expanding into markets where political stability favors secure operations.

### 1 Overcoming Domestic Market Limitations

Companies may seek international markets to overcome domestic market saturation or stagnation, aiming to find new consumers and growth opportunities.

### 2 Accessing Strategic Resources

Expanding into international markets can enable companies to achieve economies of scale, reducing production costs and increasing profitability, especially in sectors with high fixed costs.

### 3 Achieving Economies of Scale

Internationalization can allow companies to gain access to strategic resources, such as raw materials, specialized labor, or advanced technologies, which may be scarce or more accessible in other countries.

### 4 Strengthening the Brand

Internationalization can strengthen a company's brand, increasing its global visibility and recognition, which can lead to higher sales and profitability.

## 1.5 Attractions of the American Market

The United States is globally recognized for its vast consumer market, being the largest in the world with annual consumption of approximately US$ 17.8 trillion. This factor alone represents a strong incentive for the internationalization of Brazilian companies, and the diversity and stability of the American economy offer a conducive environment for businesses across various sectors. According to an Apex-Brasil study titled "Country Profile – United States," despite some sectors being negatively impacted by the pandemic, others, such as those related to oil and metallic minerals, experienced expansion, highlighting the resilience and numerous opportunities the American market offers (Santos, 2013).

## 1.6 Internationalization Strategies Adopted

Strategies for entering the North American market vary among Brazilian companies, but many align with theoretical models of internationalization. For example, the Eclectic Paradigm of International Production (OLI) suggests that internationalization is driven by companies seeking competitive advantages, such as technology and specialized knowledge, and favorable locations, whether due to lower natural resource costs or incentive policies. Simultaneously, the Uppsala School promotes a more gradual and incremental approach, emphasizing the importance of overcoming psychological and cultural barriers and suggesting that companies initially expand into more familiar and culturally similar markets (Caseiro, 2013).

# 2 ADAPTIVE INTERNATIONALIZATION MODEL (AIM)

The internationalization of Brazilian companies to the United States requires an innovative methodology that adapts to the specific dynamics of this process. Therefore, the Adaptive Internationalization Model (AIM) is proposed, based on a critical review of the main theories of internationalization, such as the Uppsala Model, Network Theory, and Dunning's Eclectic Theory. This review serves as the foundation for its approach, pointing to innovations that consider the peculiarities of Brazilian companies and the North American market.

The AIM is a hybrid model that integrates three main components: predictive market analysis, dynamic cultural adaptation, and integrative network structure. Predictive market analysis uses big data tools to analyze market trends and consumer preferences, including a predictive algorithm that identifies market opportunities and assesses potential risks (Machado, 2018).

Dynamic cultural adaptation is a system that automatically adjusts marketing and product strategies based on continuous analyses of changes in American consumer behavior, providing real-time feedback for quick adaptations (Rossoni, 2006).

The integrative network structure aims to build a network of strategic partnerships with local companies and other Brazilian companies already established in the United States, facilitating knowledge exchange and offering logistical and operational support.

# 3 THE INWARD FOCUS OF INTERNATIONALIZATION

In the diverse landscape of operations and international opportunities provided by global expansion, it is essential to conduct a deep analysis of the underlying structure of this process. International activities can be categorized into two main strands: outward and inward.

Outward internationalization is primarily characterized by exports, while inward internationalization is realized through imports, as defined by Barreto and Rocha (2003).

According to Welch (1988) and Luostarinen (1993), inward internationalization involves operations that a company executes within its local market, often through the acquisition of global assets or services, as pointed out by Sacramento (2005).

Stahl (2000) explains that these internal operations aim to meet local demands, thereby allowing the development of more competitive domestic businesses.

Thus, mastering inward internationalization is crucial to strengthen a company's strategy in the global market. Furthermore, while inward operations may seem internally focused, they offer the chance to learn from and partner with foreign businesses, expanding the company's knowledge and experience base elements that are catalysts for geographical expansion, as discussed by Karlsen et al. (2003).

## 3.1 The Importance of Inward Internationalization

Experts such as Dubois, Samiee, and Walters (1993), Jones (1999), and Korhonen (1999) observe that many companies begin their internationalization journey with a focus on the inward approach, familiarizing themselves with this process before venturing into outward operations. Jones (1999) highlights that, although importing is not a mandatory step in internationalization, many companies eventually adopt it. However, the initial analysis of research on business internationalization strategies indicated a limited focus on inward operations, as noted by Karlsen et al. (2003) and Fletcher (2001).

This scenario has changed, as Holmlund (2007) points out, with the inward area beginning to receive more attention, highlighting the need to consider both import and export operations as integral parts of an internationalization strategy. This growing recognition of the importance of inward internationalization reflects a more strategic vision.

Welch and Luostarinen (1988) argue that limiting internationalization to the outward concept is insufficient. The connection between inward and outward concepts is essential, as studies show how importing can precede and influence subsequent export operations (Björkman; Kock, 1997; Dubois; Samiee; Walters, 1993).

## 3.2 The Freight Forwarder as a Facilitating Stakeholder in Inward Internationalization

Exploring previously discussed concepts and considering the challenges of internationalization, as highlighted by Madsen (1998), this process is driven by strategic motivations to establish a presence in high-potential global markets.

The success of this expansion heavily depends on understanding market dynamics and the ability to assess perspectives and risks (Kovacs; Moraes; Oliveira, 2009). In this context, the freight forwarder emerges as a crucial actor, playing a central role as a facilitator in this internationalization process.

According to Kaspar (2006), logistical efficiency, which involves the precise execution of tasks within appropriate deadlines, is vital for the success of companies in international trade.

With the intensification of global negotiations, international logistics stands out as a strategic tool for achieving competitive advantages, a view reinforced by Ozsomer (1993), who also emphasizes the importance of a good relationship with the international freight forwarder as a means of overcoming operational barriers.

Therefore, the freight forwarder is essential in managing global logistics, coordinating the movement of goods between countries (Keedi, 2003). Daley and Murphy (1997) affirm that freight forwarders possess specialized knowledge in international trade, facilitating operations involving the global movement of goods.

### 3.3 The Transformative Role of Freight Forwarders

This expertise is particularly valuable in the face of the complexities of internationalization, which include currency volatility, political-economic issues, embargoes, sanctions, and other trade barriers. The ability of freight forwarders to offer effective solutions and deeply understand international relations is crucial for overcoming these obstacles and significantly driving internationalization.

Freight forwarders not only handle price research and route determination but also manage freight contracts, receive cargo at entry points, and ensure transportation to the final destination, including managing essential documentation such as the bill of lading and customs processes (Vieira, 2003; Bradley, 1994). Holweg and Markides (2006) add that they are also responsible for transportation insurance and provide continuous updates on the progress of operations.

History shows that as early as the 17th century, the need for specialized agents to manage the complexities of long-distance trade emerged, a role that evolved into the modern freight forwarder. Their service extends beyond transportation to include active participation in resolving international trade challenges (Burkovskis, 2008).

The knowledge that these agents possess is fundamental to establishing international relations, creating an interdependence among the involved actors, who share knowledge, services, and products, thus facilitating international trade (Dalenberg, Daley, and Murphy, 1992).

# 4 SMALL BUSINESSES AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

Small businesses are recognized as fundamental pillars of the American economy, contributing significantly to innovation, job creation, and economic dynamism. According to the Small Business Administration (SBA, 2019), small businesses represent nearly all companies in the U.S. and employ almost half of the private sector workforce. This importance highlights the need to understand the dynamics that influence their operation and sustainability. It is noteworthy that the definition of small businesses can vary, but it generally includes factors such as the number of employees and annual revenue, criteria used by the SBA to classify these entities. Regardless of the definition, small businesses face distinct challenges that differ significantly from those encountered by large corporations (Audretsch, 2002).

Economic sustainability is one of these critical challenges, especially relevant in the modern business context. According to Dyllick and Hockerts (2002), economic sustainability involves operations that not only ensure the company's survival and profit but also take care of the environmental and social impact of their activities. Jenkins (2006) argues that small businesses often can implement changes more quickly than large organizations due to their flexibility and closeness to customers.

Sustainability strategies can vary widely but generally include reducing the ecological footprint, improving energy efficiency, and promoting ethical labor practices. Porter and van der Linde (1995) suggest that such strategies not only reduce costs but also create value by innovating in products and processes. The literature on economic sustainability highlights the importance of considering both external pressures and internal motivations.

Hart (1995) introduces the concept of "resource-based strategy," which views sustainability as an opportunity to leverage resources in a way that benefits both the company and society. In the American context, government regulations and policies play a crucial role in shaping companies' sustainability practices. Initiatives such as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 encouraged investments in green technologies and sustainable practices among small businesses (Berman and Bui, 2011). Beyond regulations, there is a growing consumer expectation for companies to adopt sustainable practices. A Nielsen study (2015) revealed that 66% of global consumers are willing to pay more for sustainable products, a trend that is even more pronounced among younger consumers.

## 4.1 Economic Sustainability Strategies for Small Businesses in the USA

Adopting economic sustainability strategies is crucial for small businesses seeking not only market survival but also a sustainable competitive advantage. This chapter explores various strategies that have proven effective in the real world, contributing to the sustainable growth of small businesses in the United States. One of the primary focus areas for small businesses when implementing sustainable practices is energy efficiency. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA, 2020), energy efficiency initiatives can significantly reduce operational costs. Installing LED lighting, more efficient heating and cooling systems, and better insulation can lower energy expenses while contributing to environmental sustainability.

Waste reduction follows similar principles, where small businesses can adopt recycling and reuse practices. Reducing the amount of waste not only decreases disposal costs but also enhances the company's image among environmentally conscious consumers (Grant, 2012). Furthermore, investing in renewable energy sources is another vital strategy for small businesses.

Solar and wind energy are increasingly accessible options due to falling prices and the availability of federal and state tax incentives. Utilizing renewable energy not only reduces reliance on fossil fuels but also aligns the company with values of environmental responsibility (Klein and Coffey, 2016).

It is also worth noting that sustainable purchasing practices involve choosing suppliers who also adopt environmentally responsible practices, including the selection of products that are produced sustainably, often certified by recognized organizations. These practices not only ensure the sustainability of the supply chain but also strengthen the market position of companies by meeting consumer expectations (Hutchins and Sutherland, 2008).

In addition to sustainable operational practices, small businesses can stand out by developing sustainable products. This can include products that are durable, repairable, or made from recycled materials (Chen, 2010). This approach not only attracts environmentally conscious consumers but also creates products that can compete in quality and price, maintaining sustainability as an added value (Chen, 2010).

Engagement with the local community and transparency in operations can amplify the sustainability efforts of small businesses. Participating in community initiatives and maintaining transparent business practices strengthen consumer trust and can lead to robust community support, which is vital for long-term sustainability (Porter and Kramer, 2011).

Therefore, it is essential for small businesses to stay updated and comply with environmental regulations, as proactively adapting to changes in legislation can avoid penalties and take advantage of subsidies and government support for sustainable practices (Reed, 2014).

### 4.2 Strategies for Accessing Capital for Small Businesses in the USA

In the current economic landscape, access to capital is a fundamental pillar for the growth and sustainability of small businesses. It is noteworthy that the U.S. President's 2025 Budget proposes a significant increase in financial support for these businesses, with a particular emphasis on expanding access to affordable loans and facilitating venture capital investments. As outlined in the budget, over $58 billion in loans are planned, primarily targeting underserved communities and minority-led businesses (UNITED STATES, 2025).

Additionally, a new direct loan program, 7(a), is proposed to fill gaps in access to smaller-value financing, crucial for many startups and small businesses seeking to expand their operations. The 16% increase in the authorized lending limit for the Small Business Investment Company (SBIC) program to $7 billion also reflects a robust effort to enhance venture capital financing, thereby boosting the innovation and growth capacity of these businesses (UNITED STATES, 2025). These measures are essential for creating a business environment where small businesses not only survive but thrive, overcoming economic challenges and establishing solid foundations for the future. By offering more accessible capital and targeted financial support, the government demonstrates its commitment to strengthening the economic fabric that small businesses represent in the United States.In today's business environment, innovation and technology emerge as fundamental pillars for the economic sustainability of small businesses in the United States. Innovation enables these businesses to not only develop new products but also reinvent their processes and business models, adapting to market changes and sustainability demands.

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Tidd and Bessant (2018) emphasize that the ability to innovate is directly linked to competitiveness and long-term survival in the global market. The integration of emerging technologies, such as the Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), and blockchain, offers substantial opportunities to optimize operations. These technologies allow for better monitoring and management of resource usage, which is crucial for sustainable practices.

Kaplan and Haenlein (2020) highlight that such technologies not only enhance operational efficiency but also promote transparency, a value increasingly demanded by consumers and business partners. Digitalization is another crucial vector for sustainability, enabling small businesses to significantly reduce the consumption of natural resources.

Processes such as document digitalization and the adoption of online management systems minimize paper use and reduce costs associated with managing physical documents. As indicated by Chaffey and Ellis-Chadwick (2019), these practices not only contribute to environmental preservation but also result in leaner and more economical operations. According to Charter and Keiller (2014), small businesses in the USA are innovating in product development by incorporating sustainability from the design phase. Examples include using recycled or biodegradable materials and designing products that consume less energy.

The authors argue that sustainable products often capture market attention, attracting environmentally conscious consumers and opening new business opportunities. Lacy and Rutqvist (2016) explain that models based on the circular economy can transform waste into resources, a practice that is both economically and environmentally advantageous.

By adopting strategies that maximize the reuse and recycling of materials, companies not only mitigate environmental impact but also reduce operational costs. Another means by which small businesses can drive innovation, according to Chesbrough (2017), is through forming partnerships with research institutions, other companies, and tech startups. These partnerships allow access to new technologies and knowledge that would be inaccessible in isolation. Government incentives play a significant role in supporting small businesses in implementing sustainable practices. The United States offers a range of tax incentives and subsidies that can help finance everything from the adoption of renewable energy to the implementation of more efficient processes. Nidumolu et al. (2009) point out that understanding and leveraging these incentives is essential for making sustainable innovation economically viable.

Finally, the effective implementation of these technologies and innovative practices requires a cultural shift within companies. Leadership must be committed not only to the adoption of technologies but also to promoting a culture that values sustainability. This commitment should be clearly communicated throughout all levels of the organization. Thus, innovation in sustainability is more than a necessity—it is a strategic opportunity. Small businesses that recognize and act on this opportunity not only contribute to a healthier environment but also establish a solid foundation for long-term growth and stability.

# CONCLUSION

In conclusion, "Conquering Global Markets" has sought to equip Brazilian entrepreneurs with the critical insights and strategies necessary for successfully entering and thriving in the United States market. Throughout this guide, we have explored various dimensions of internationalization, from understanding the legal and cultural landscapes to leveraging strategic assets and overcoming logistical challenges.

The journey of internationalization is neither simple nor straightforward, but with the right tools and knowledge, it can lead to significant opportunities for growth and expansion. As demonstrated through the detailed discussions and case studies presented, the key to successful internationalization lies in meticulous planning, profound market analysis, and the ability to adapt continuously to dynamic global markets.

As Brazilian companies look forward to expanding their horizons, it is imperative that they not only prepare for the complexities of the U.S. market but also embrace the potential transformations this venture may bring. The robust growth in trade between Brazil and the United States in recent years highlights the vast potential for Brazilian businesses willing to venture abroad.

By adhering to the strategies outlined in this eBook, Brazilian entrepreneurs can navigate the challenges of internationalization more effectively and position themselves as competitive players on the global stage. Let "Conquering Global Markets" be your guide as you step into the vast, promising arena of international business, ready to turn global challenges into opportunities for enduring success.

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