




FROM BRAZIL TO THE WORLD: THE STRATEGIST BEHIND THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF IMMIGRANT BUSINESSES: CASE STUDIES FROM DX GROUP AND ITS PARTNERS

DO BRASIL PARA O MUNDO: O ESTRATÉGISTA POR TRÁS DA INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO DAS EMPRESAS DE IMIGRANTES: ESTUDOS DE CASO DO DX GROUP E SEUS PARCEIROS

DE BRASIL AL MUNDO: EL ESTRATEGISTA DETRÁS DE LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN DE LAS EMPRESAS DE INMIGRANTES: ESTUDIOS DE CASO DEL GRUPO DX Y SUS SOCIOS

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ABSTRACT

The internationalization of immigrant-led businesses represents a complex and evolving phenomenon at the intersection of global entrepreneurship and strategic management. This paper investigates how Brazilian immigrant entrepreneurs, supported by specialized consultancies like DX Group, are successfully expanding their ventures into international markets despite facing structural and institutional challenges. Using case studies of companies assisted by DX Group, the research highlights how strategic intermediation—through tailored market entry strategies, regulatory compliance, cultural adaptation, and network-based support—enables these businesses to overcome the liability of foreignness and other barriers to international growth. The DX Group's approach draws on established theoretical frameworks such as the Uppsala model and the resource-based view to develop context-sensitive strategies that align with the capabilities and goals of each client. The paper presents detailed examples of market entry into the United States and the European Union, illustrating how hybrid entry modes and local partnerships can enhance both initial success and long-term sustainability. Ultimately, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the role of intermediary organizations in facilitating the global expansion of immigrant-owned businesses, offering insights for academics, practitioners, and policymakers interested in inclusive internationalization processes.

Keywords: Immigrant entrepreneurship. Internationalization strategy. Brazilian SMEs. Strategic intermediation. Transnational networks. Liability of foreignness. Market entry modes.

RESUMO

A internacionalização das empresas lideradas por imigrantes representa um fenômeno complexo e em evolução na interseção entre empreendedorismo global e gestão estratégica. Este artigo investiga como os empreendedores imigrantes brasileiros, apoiados por consultorias especializadas como o DX Group, estão expandindo com sucesso seus empreendimentos para os mercados internacionais, apesar de enfrentarem desafios estruturais e institucionais. Usando estudos de caso de empresas assistidas pelo DX Group, a pesquisa destaca como a intermediação estratégica — por



meio de estratégias personalizadas de entrada no mercado, conformidade regulatória, adaptação cultural e suporte baseado em rede — permite que essas empresas superem a desvantagem de serem estrangeiras e outras barreiras ao crescimento internacional. A abordagem do DX Group se baseia em estruturas teóricas estabelecidas, como o modelo de Uppsala e a visão baseada em recursos, para desenvolver estratégias sensíveis ao contexto que se alinham com as capacidades e objetivos de cada cliente. O artigo apresenta exemplos detalhados de entrada no mercado dos Estados Unidos e da União Europeia, ilustrando como modos híbridos de entrada e parcerias locais podem aumentar tanto o sucesso inicial quanto a sustentabilidade a longo prazo. Em última análise, o estudo contribui para uma compreensão mais profunda do papel das organizações intermediárias na facilitação da expansão global de empresas pertencentes a imigrantes, oferecendo insights para acadêmicos, profissionais e formuladores de políticas interessados em processos de internacionalização inclusivos.

Palavras-chave: Empreendedorismo imigrante. Estratégia de internacionalização. PMEs brasileiras. Intermediação estratégica. Redes transnacionais. Responsabilidade da estrangeiridade. Modos de entrada no mercado.

RESUMEN

La internacionalización de las empresas dirigidas por inmigrantes representa un fenómeno complejo y en constante evolución en la intersección entre el emprendimiento global y la gestión estratégica. Este artículo investiga cómo los emprendedores inmigrantes brasileños, con el apoyo de consultoras especializadas como DX Group, están logrando expandir con éxito sus negocios a los mercados internacionales a pesar de enfrentarse a retos estructurales e institucionales. A partir de estudios de casos de empresas asistidas por DX Group, la investigación destaca cómo la intermediación estratégica —a través de estrategias de entrada en el mercado personalizadas, el cumplimiento normativo, la adaptación cultural y el apoyo basado en redes— permite a estas empresas superar la desventaja de ser extranjeras y otras barreras para el crecimiento internacional. El enfoque de DX Group se basa en marcos teóricos establecidos, como el modelo de Uppsala y la visión basada en los recursos, para desarrollar estrategias sensibles al contexto que se alinean con las capacidades y los objetivos de cada cliente. El artículo presenta ejemplos detallados de entrada en el mercado de Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea, ilustrando cómo los modos de entrada híbridos y las asociaciones locales pueden mejorar tanto el éxito inicial como la sostenibilidad a largo plazo. En última instancia, el estudio contribuye a una comprensión más profunda del papel de las organizaciones intermediarias en la facilitación de la expansión global de las empresas propiedad de inmigrantes, ofreciendo información útil para académicos, profesionales y responsables políticos interesados en los procesos de internacionalización inclusivos.

Palabras clave: Emprendimiento inmigrante. Estrategia de internacionalización. Pymes brasileñas. Intermediación estratégica. Redes transnacionales. Responsabilidad de la extranjería. Modos de entrada en el mercado.



INTRODUCTION

The internationalization of immigrant-led businesses has emerged as a dynamic and complex process that transcends traditional boundaries of entrepreneurship. This phenomenon is particularly visible in the Brazilian context, where a new generation of strategic thinkers has begun to shape the trajectory of global expansion for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Among the notable examples, the DX Group stands out as a pivotal player in orchestrating the internationalization of immigrant businesses by integrating strategic planning, operational efficiency, and cultural intelligence. Grounded in robust theoretical frameworks and practical experience, the work of DX Group exemplifies how immigrant entrepreneurs can overcome institutional voids, resource constraints, and market unfamiliarity to thrive in international markets.

Academic literature has long emphasized the challenges faced by immigrant entrepreneurs seeking to expand beyond their host or home countries. These challenges include liability of foreignness, limited access to financial capital, and institutional barriers (Zaheer, 1995; Yamakawa, Peng & Deeds, 2008). However, recent studies suggest that the embeddedness of immigrant entrepreneurs in transnational networks can be leveraged as a competitive advantage (Drori, Honig & Wright, 2009). The strategic role played by consultancies and accelerators like DX Group is critical in this transformation. Rather than merely advising on bureaucratic or legal procedures, DX Group positions itself as a co-architect of long-term expansion strategies, tailoring its approach to the cultural, financial, and regulatory nuances of each target market.

Drawing from real cases of internationalization led by DX Group and its global partners, the firm's impact is evident in several successful expansions. One such example is the entry of a Brazilian-born technology company into the U.S. market, where DX Group guided the client through a comprehensive rebranding process, adaptation of the business model to comply with American legal standards, and the establishment of strategic partnerships with local distributors and service providers. This process involved the application of Uppsala's internationalization model (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009), which emphasizes incremental learning and network development as key components of successful market entry. By adapting this theoretical model to the client's specific capabilities and goals, DX Group ensured a low-risk, high-impact market penetration.



In another case, DX Group supported a Brazilian cosmetics brand aiming to establish a presence in the European Union. Rather than relying solely on traditional exports, the strategy focused on hybrid entry modes, such as joint ventures and licensing agreements. This choice was underpinned by a careful analysis of regulatory requirements under EU law, consumer preferences, and operational logistics. The firm also incorporated elements of the resource-based view (Barney, 1991) to identify and leverage the brand's unique assets, such as its natural ingredients and sustainable production practices, as a source of competitive advantage in the European market.

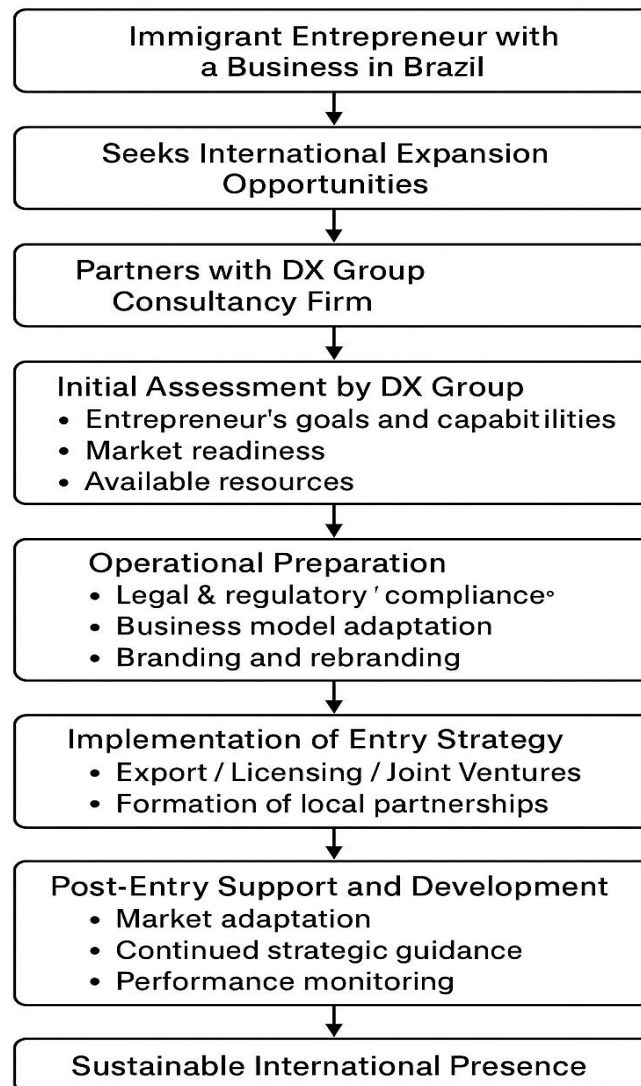
The success of these cases illustrates not only the effectiveness of DX Group's methodology but also the growing importance of strategic intermediation in the context of immigrant entrepreneurship. Immigrant founders often possess deep cultural knowledge and personal motivation but lack structured guidance to navigate the complexities of international expansion. DX Group fills this gap by offering a multidisciplinary approach that combines market intelligence, financial planning, legal compliance, and branding—all essential components of a successful internationalization strategy.

Moreover, the firm's partnerships with local experts and institutions in target markets amplify its capacity to offer context-specific insights. This aligns with the findings of Coviello and Munro (1997), who underscore the importance of network relationships in facilitating the rapid internationalization of firms. By leveraging these networks, DX Group not only accelerates the entry process but also enhances post-entry survival and growth—critical stages for immigrant-led businesses operating in competitive international environments.

The flowchart illustrates the strategic internationalization process of immigrant-led businesses from Brazil, supported by the consultancy firm DX Group. The journey begins with the entrepreneur seeking global expansion opportunities and partnering with DX Group. The consultancy conducts an initial assessment of the entrepreneur's goals, capabilities, and available resources. Based on this, a tailored strategy is developed, including market selection and entry planning. The operational preparation phase involves legal compliance, business model adaptation, and branding or rebranding. The implementation phase follows, using entry modes such as exports, licensing, or joint ventures with local partners. Finally, DX Group provides post-entry support, including

market adaptation, continuous strategic guidance, and performance monitoring, to ensure a sustainable international presence.

Figure 1. Strategic Internationalization Framework for Immigrant-Led Businesses Supported by DX Group.



Source: Created by author.

In conclusion, the internationalization of immigrant-led businesses from Brazil, as facilitated by DX Group, exemplifies a robust and adaptive approach that bridges theory and practice in global entrepreneurship. By aligning client-specific capabilities with well-established models such as the Uppsala internationalization process and the resource-based view, DX Group demonstrates how strategic intermediation can mitigate traditional barriers like the liability of foreignness and institutional voids. The firm's comprehensive and context-sensitive methodology—encompassing regulatory alignment, cultural adaptation, and network mobilization—emerges as a best-practice



framework for scaling immigrant ventures internationally. These findings not only reinforce the significance of intermediary organizations in accelerating and sustaining global expansion but also offer practical insights for policymakers and consultants committed to fostering inclusive and resilient internationalization pathways. As global markets continue to evolve, the DX Group's model provides a replicable and scalable roadmap for immigrant entrepreneurs aspiring to transform local business initiatives into globally competitive enterprises.



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