



## THE BRILHUS COMPANY INTERNATIONALIZATION PROCESS: CASE STUDY

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### SUMMARY

International trade is the right course for different segments of our economy, including the export of precious stones. In doing so, their stay in increasingly demanding and prepared markets. The company BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. highlights its internationalization process in the exporting countries: United States, Europe, Asia and China. The proposal aims to verify the stages of internationalization and the different modes of entry used in several countries, in which it operates.

**Key words:** Export of stones; Internationalization Strategies; Export; Marketing compound.

### 1 PRESENTATION OF THE ORGANIZATION

The company, object of the case study, is BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. The organization was founded on May 1, 1999, its headquarters are located in a municipality in Rio Grande do Sul and a branch in Rio de Janeiro, RJ - Brazil. It is a family business and currently, Gilberto Brilhus is the managing director.

According to Gilberto, the company does not work with extraction. The acquisition of raw material is through third parties. They are prospectors who sell to an intermediary and this intermediary resells it to BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. All production is sold by issuing an invoice, which contains the number of the environmental license. There are no other requirements from government agencies for export, such as size, color and other specifications of the extracted stones.

The company has in its product mix: Amethyst, Calcite and Specials, Citrine, Crystals among others, which are exported and also sold in the Brazilian states. Of the total volume that the company transacts, about 94% is for export, and 6% absorbed by the domestic market in Brazil. Big part of the exported volume is destined for the United States, Europe, Asia and China (Hong Kong).

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With the integration of societies and world economies, globalization develops and occurs mainly due to new technologies and the expansion of communication in its most diverse senses. Globalization is present in the economy, that is, in the relations of production of goods, in trade, in services, in finance, as well as in existing technology, "... the world economy has undergone radical changes in the last decades. Distances, both geographic and cultural, have been reduced by new technologies." (LOPES; GAMA, 2005, p.26).

One of the main consequences of economic globalization is the increasing interdependence between countries, regions and continents. Indeed, more and more companies are emerging at national and international levels. With the economy more interconnected, resources from emerging countries help those in which the economy has no strength for their self-development, facilitating employment and income for their inhabitants. Currently, the global economy is being redirected, where countries are grouping into economic blocs, all in search of common interests. It is understood by integrating the economy of regions or continents, as a way to facilitate the trade relations of goods and services, between countries of the most different cultures, according to Lopes and Gama (2005, p.27) "...

For a better understanding, characteristics of the respective countries are presented that the company BRILHUS exports its goods.

The United States economy is the largest in the world, showing prominence in the various economic sectors, it works entirely within the capitalist parameters. With a strong domestic consumer market, production in the United States is also aimed at exports. The country produces a large number of agricultural products, but stands out in the production of industrialized products and technology. Much of the North American industry is concentrated in the southeast and northeast regions, although there is also a large production of manufactured goods in the state of California. The southern region of the country, on the other hand, shows strong development in the agricultural and mining sector.

The country's financial center is mainly concentrated on Wall Street on the island of Manhattan (New York), where the largest stock exchange in the world is located, the New York Stock Exchange. The currency is the US dollar (USD symbol), GDP growth in 2013: 1.9%. Having its GDP: US \$ 17.102 trillion (2013) \* highest world GDP and GDP per capita: US \$ 51.700 (2012 estimate).

In Europe, European economic policy supports sustainable economic growth through investments in the transport, energy and research sectors, while seeking to minimize the impact of economic development on the environment.

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Asia is the largest continent in the world, located almost entirely in the northern hemisphere, bordered by lands emerging from Africa (through the Suez Canal in Egypt) and Europe (through the Caucásio and Ural Mountains, despite the controversies on the border of the two continents).

In China, the official languages are English and Chinese. It is a developed city and a capitalist system. Hong Kong is one of the cities with the most free trade index in the world. Its tradition, which mixes Western culture (British influence) with Eastern culture, places it with a relevant differential in relation to the other regions of China and Asia.

Foreign trade: Exports: US \$ 8.4 billion; Re-exports: US \$ 419.4 billion; Imports: US \$ 482.6 billion; Bilateral commercial exchange; Brazilian exports: US \$ 2.09 billion; Brazilian imports (via Hong Kong): US \$ 2.01 billion; Brazilian imports from Hong Kong: US \$ 31.4 million.

As for the stone sector in Brazil, it can be said that Rio Grande do Sul is one of the largest Brazilian producers of precious stones and one of the most important world producers of two of them, agate and amethyst. According to IBGM (Brazilian Institute of Gems and Precious Metals), Rio Grande is the second largest Brazilian exporter of rough gems (US \$ 10,175,000 in 1997) and polished (US \$ 18,622,000), second only to Minas Gerais. With respect to works made with precious stones, we ranked first (US \$ 5,863,000), well ahead of Rio de Janeiro (US \$ 2,070,000) and Minas Gerais (US \$ 1,568,000). The production of Rio Grande do Sul is large, but it is based on only three gems: amethyst, citrine and agate, all of which are quartz varieties. Amethyst is the most valuable of the three precious stones. It's a purple colored quartz, in shades ranging from very light to deep purple. Of all our large production, only 3% are suitable for cutting, the rest being sold as decorative pieces and / or for collection. The citrine is yellow to orange, exceptionally red, in which case it is worth much more. It is rarer than amethyst, but it is worth less, probably because its color is much more common among precious stones. Agate is characterized by having varied colors, arranged in parallel, straight and / or concentric bands. The most common colors are gray and bluish gray. probably because its color is much more common among precious stones. Agate is characterized by having varied colors, arranged in parallel, straight and / or concentric bands. The most common colors are gray and bluish gray. probably because its color is much more common among precious stones. Agate is characterized by having varied colors, arranged in parallel, straight and / or concentric bands. The most common colors are gray and bluish gray.

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## **1.1 Entry into the market target**

According to Kotler and Keller (2012), once a company decides to enter a certain country, it needs to define the best way to enter it. The main choices are: indirect export, direct export, licensing, joint venture and direct investments. These five market entry strategies gradually follow a greater potential involvement of commitment, risk, control and profit.

Terpstra and Sarathy (1994) interpret that a company, after deciding on which entry and operation strategies it will adopt, must decide which balance and consistency of the international marketing mix will be necessary so that there is a real and perfect fulfillment of the needs and desires of a determined market in a sustained and planned manner. They indicate that its components: products, price, distribution point and promotion, can be adapted, according to the distinct characteristics of each market and also meet the objectives of growth and expansion of the company and its business portfolio.

BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. exports 94% of its production. The most important consumers are concentrated in the United States, Europe and Asia, as they buy rough stones and also in the finished process.

Since 1995 the company works with foreign sales. Noting that the share of sales to the United States adds 40% of the products in percentage, being considered the most expressive market for the organization in revenue. And the remaining 54% is divided into countries: Europe, Asia and China. Still 6% representatives of domestic sales in Brazil. The initial process consisted of the transaction with American intermediaries. These came to Brazil, especially to a municipality in Rio Grande do Sul, where they bought to resell in the United States. Currently, sales to Americans are made by phone and e-mail, the same being for other countries. What facilitated a faster sale was the possibility of sending information about the stones, through the virtual tool website and e-mail. Chinese businessmen see Brazil, more precisely Rio Grande do Sul, negotiate the purchase directly. They still come without translators. The product is being negotiated visually, with a table referring to the value of the stone.

## **1.2 The internationalization process**

Many theories and models identify internationalization and differ in their arguments and perspectives for analysis. In this context, there are two main lines of research, the

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economic perspective, mainly focused on large companies, and the behavioral perspective, mainly focused on the internationalization process of small and medium-sized companies.. (CARNEIRO, 2007; ROCHA, 2002; FLORIANI, 2010).

The internationalization approaches based on economic decisions, explains the internationalization process based on structured rational choice criteria, seeking to maximize economic returns. The behavioral currents aim to explain the internationalization process by the influence of the perceptions of executives and entrepreneurs, who would make their decisions in a context of limited rationality and seeking to minimize risks (CARNEIRO, 2007).

For Macadar (2009), the theme of internationalization is addressed both in the literature in the area of administration and business and in economic analysis. Within the administration area, the behaviorist model predominates, which considers the internationalization process as gradual or evolutionary. Within the economic analysis, the main issue is the eclectic theory of internationalization, which addresses the concept of transaction costs to explain internationalization decisions.

### **1.3 Market entry strategy and marketing mix**

The internationalization process of companies and the decision of a company to invest in a foreign country are considerably broader in terms of strategies, behavior and economy, compared to the decision to invest in your own country. These companies consider the search for new markets, raw materials, production efficiency, knowledge and political security as the main motivation for investment (MEINERZ, 1999). Thus, the entry into new markets outside the country of origin of companies can take different forms or macro strategies. When a company decides to expand to the international market, it must first deal with the management of its marketing and value chain issues, defining ways of entry that seek to reach its international objectives (KEEGAN; GREEN, 1999,

Table 1 - Macro internationalization strategies and action strategies used by companies.

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MACRO-ESTRATÉGIAS	ESTRATÉGIAS DE AÇÃO		
		Benefícios	Limitações
Internacionalizar sem investimentos direto no exterior - <i>Trade</i>  Internacionalizar com investimentos direto no exterior - <i>Direct investment</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Licenciamento</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Baixo investimento</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receita baixa.</li> <li>• Baixo comprometimento entre o licenciador e o licenciado no uso das tecnologias</li> <li>• Licenciado pode vir a se tornar um concorrente</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exportação</li> <li>- Direta</li> <li>- Indireta</li> <li>- Cooperativa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conhecimento instantâneo sobre o mercado estrangeiro</li> <li>• Baixo investimento</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nenhum controle sobre como seus produtos são vendidos</li> <li>• Baixo apoio as vendas</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Franchising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansão do negócio no exterior a um investimento baixo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receita baixa</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contrato de Produção</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redução de custos</li> <li>• Baixo investimento</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ameaça de estar preparando um novo concorrente</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint-ventures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alto potencial de retorno</li> <li>• Maior participações nas decisões da empresa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Falta de controle pleno nas ações da joint-venture</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subsidiárias de Propriedade Total da Matriz.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Controle total nas ações da nova empresa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maior investimento</li> <li>• Riscos maiores</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alianças Estratégicas Inter-fronteiras</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redução de custos</li> <li>• Sinergias</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflitos de interesse e culturas diferentes</li> </ul>

Source: Elaborated from Meinerz (1999); Keegan and Green (1999); Kotabe and Helsen (2000); Keegan (1999).

The organization started the internationalization process in 1995 with the current corporate name, to potential markets United States, Europe, Asia and China (Hong Kong). It is noteworthy that among the existing companies, there is little similarity of products, as the company BRILHUS works with differentiated products.

As it is a company, which already followed the business segment by the father, the children already had the experience of how to carry out negotiations in the foreign market and which countries are the most attractive to invest in and trade. Then, he applied this know-how in his business.

The company does not use the method of expatriation of Brazilian families to other countries. According to director Gilberto, the family got to know the market, making a

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personal visit to each country, and being helped by some influential contacts, in order to present their products.

In Brazil, the company decided on a branch in Rio de Janeiro, due to its strategic location. Noting that Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul stand out with the greatest sales potential.

According to data from IBMG (2012), which represent precious or semi-precious stones, rough or sawn. It was identified that in Rio Grande do Sul the companies that sell stones, their turnover was quite satisfactory. Demonstrating that 70% of the companies have 91% to 100% of their revenue from exports.

Nowadays, its products are recognized for their quality. Besides the fact that the looks of the world are for Brazilian stones. This facilitates the disclosure process. Palacios and Souza (2004) report that the quality of the product directly influences the competitive advantage that the organization needs to assume before its competitors. Bearing in mind that, in order to appropriate product quality, there must be a degree of differentiation and innovation in the marketed products. Realizing that in international countries, differentiated products are well received, as it is an opportunity to win new customers.

In addition to the BRILHUS organization offering products using the company's website, there are also many phone sales. The sale negotiation is direct, made through the company and the buyer, that is, there are no intermediaries. Today, 6% of production is directed to the domestic market.

### **1.4 Adaptation of 4P's of marketing**

Virtually all the literature in the area, influenced by the Marketing Mix paradigm, agrees that its 4ps are fundamental variables in the elaboration of marketing actions. The 4ps are: Product, Price, Promotion and Place, serve in this way, not only to conceptually integrate the discipline, that is, to allow marketers to interact with each other. Although they also help to measure the results obtained through marketing actions (CONSTANTINIDES, 2006, VAN WATERSCOOT and VAN DEN BULTE, 1992).

Product decisions cover several subjects, such as the development of new products, the composition of the brand, packaging, labeling and strategic management of products throughout their life cycle. (CZINKOTA et al, 2001).

As price decisions emerge, this can be disclosed through price lists to customers and consumers, be fair and provide stimulating discounts on the purchase of products or services

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offered, with adequate subsidies and payment periods (terms) and credit terms effectively attractive (COBRA, 1992).

And the distribution needs to take the right product to the right place through the right distribution channels, with a coverage that will not miss a product in any important market, finding factories, warehouses, distributors and having an inventory register to fill the needs. consumption through adequate transport resources (COBRA, 1992, CHURCHILL; PETER, 2005).

Regarding promotion decisions, for Churchill and Peter (2005) the element of promotion or communication refers to how marketers inform, convince and remind customers about products and services.

Brazilian companies, in an internationalization process, interact with partners, customers, distributors and competitors who have different cultural attitudes. Global marketers discover that people from other regions of the world have different attitudes, values and needs, which requires adaptations in the marketing mix. Certain product categories with specific characteristics cannot be launched globally without any type of adaptation. Sometimes companies adjust their products to a specific market; in other cases, they develop a product exclusively to serve the foreign market, in some cases different product lines are designed by buyers, with the exporter only being responsible for production (GRASSI, 2004).

According to the information provided by director Gilberto, of the company BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA, exports are carried out in accordance with the legislation of the buyer country, respecting local rules and laws. The communication is made through the website and / or telephone, the final negotiation is via e-mail to keep a record, the conversation depends on the country of origin, for the use of translators. Concluding in the interview, that trading in dollars, interferes in the company's income, which has its cash always fluctuating according to the market. More and less profits in some transactions. The product offered is quite similar to all countries, noting that it is of quality, noting that it also has differentiated stones. The stones are shipped via the Port of Rio Grande.

## **2 DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

The present case study presents BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. the following question:

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- How did the internationalization process of BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. Take place, that is, how was the strategic process of entering international markets?
- What is the market entry strategy used by the company?
- How does the sales strategy to the purchasing countries occur, using the 4ps of Marketing as a parameter?

### 3 SYNOPSIS

Organization characterization:

- The company BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA., Was founded on May 1, 1990. Its headquarters are located in a municipality in Rio Grande do Sul and a branch in Rio de Janeiro, RJ - Brazil, defining itself as a company familiar. The company is aimed at the stone market, both for trade and export. In his view, growth prospects, noting that the value of the dollar in the country, the main export currency, is attractive. Being the reference company in the branch of precious stones in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.
- The internationalization of BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. .:

The organization's internationalization process took place in 1995. The first export invoice went to the United States. The sale of stones in other countries, such as: Europe, Asia and China. Having clients of great importance at national and international level.

- Market entry strategy:

It is noticed that the reported company differs from the others by having different products in its mix. Another pertinent fact presented is that the organization uses contacts and relationship networks as a market entry strategy. Taking place before the negotiation, a survey focusing on the economy, culture and local characteristics of the country. The company sells precious stones to the domestic market, with direct or indirect sales. And foreign sales are made directly to the country of purchase, sometimes with intermediaries in the negotiations. Also, the company always seeks to be present at stone trade fairs. Presenting that in Brazil its subsidiary is in the state of Rio de Janeiro, due to its strategic location.

- Adaptation of the 4ps of Marketing:

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The products presented by the organization may undergo changes in their sale, in the case of personalized products. These variations in product development depend on the order to be placed. The communication of the sale of stones is made through the website or telephone. Noting that the final negotiation is via email to keep the order record. The conversation is dependent on the country of origin. Dollar trading interferes with the organization's income, which has its cash always fluctuating according to the market. More and less profits in some transactions. The stones are shipped via the Port of Rio Grande.

### **4 ANSWERS TO DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**a) What led BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. to decide for the internationalization process?**

The internationalization process of the BRILHUS company occurred after the knowledge about opportunities in the foreign market. Noting that when entering the international market, the company has as its main reason the maximization of profit (LOPES; GAMA, 2005).

According to Johanson and Vahlne (1990), when the domestic market begins to become saturated, preventing the increase of profits, new places are sought for expansion, usually geographical expansion. In this perspective, the internationalization process is not seen as a sequence of planned and deliberate steps, but as a sequence of steps of an incremental nature, aiming to benefit from successive learning through stages of increasing commitment to foreign markets. In this way, the internationalization of companies is seen as a learning process where the company gradually invests resources and acquires knowledge about a particular international market in an incremental way. Noting the importance of understanding some local characteristics of the country to be negotiated.

In a world in constant change, internationalization is a growing process that leads companies to start their activities in the foreign market, where they involve low cost, risk, commitment and studies focused on the markets, where organizations intend to insert themselves (LAGOSKI, 2006) . It is observed that in the middle of previous years, some authors already had in their positioning the axis that would lead companies in taking the export method, due to the sharp increase in competition and the threats to their survival in the Brazilian market. Sousa (1997) reinforces this idea by emphasizing that internationalization is

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not considered a universal solution. Fernández and Nieto (2005) consider this to be the most complex strategy that a company can adopt.

The internationalization process becomes more and more favorable and determinant to the growth of this medium, one of the causes being the access to virtual technology and the facilitating means that make possible the relationship with the company's country of origin, with other countries. Thus, new market opportunities and expansion are sought, with the aim of finding expansion of the product and / or service offered in internationalization. Emphasizing that it must assume a different posture and have the maturity to be at the expected level of competitiveness, in order to have a positive result in terms of global negotiations (GONÇALVES, 2009).

Behrends (2002) points out that when organizations choose to conduct international negotiations, they control some of the variables, namely: product, price, promotion and point of sale. Noting that some variables they end up being deficient of control, these being: competitors, political regimes, economic policy, financial policy, among others.

The company, after taking a decision to expand its product to a new culture, met all the criteria to be established and the norms of a new market, where according to Mayer and Bighetti (2005, p.17) "this must depend on the will, investment, perseverance and all the planning to be carried out in the short and long term ". Planning is understood to mean all the objectives, ideas and needs that are wanted and must be fulfilled in a given field or branch of work, for which it is necessary that some steps be followed to help its adaptation and maintenance in the follow-up. First of all, we know that "... it would not only be to encourage or encourage companies to take the first step towards the international market, but mainly, to guarantee the necessary support for the consolidation of companies in the international market." (MAYER, BIGHETTI, 2005, p.18).

### **b) What is the market entry strategy used by the company?**

Several strategies are presented that can be used to enter new foreign markets. The BRILHUS company in its internationalization strategies uses the network of international partners, this Theory of Networks by Johanson and Mattson (1988), concluding that the business networks are extremely fundamental for the understanding of the internationalization process, being these, relationship results that the organization establishes with customers, distributors, suppliers and even competitors.

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According to Nickels and Wood (1997), exportation in the company takes place directly or indirectly, the direct one being that the organization sells its products to a customer or distributor in another country. And indirectly, the company sells the product to a customer in Brazil (own country), then, he exports the product abroad.

Osland et al (2001) emphasizes that the factors that cause the company presented in the study to use the entry strategy are divided into two levels: factors inherent to the target market and factors of organizations (which is the need for local knowledge and competitiveness in the industry). Pipkin (2003) also shows that in an entry strategy of internationalization, it is also noted his managerial capacity and human resources available for negotiation, strategies for relationships, strategic positioning and the segmentation of the market to act.

### **c) How does the sales strategy to the purchasing countries occur, using the 4ps of Marketing as a parameter?**

The product strategy is characterized by the level of adaptation of the product, in the case of stones, most of which are personalized. Therefore, according to Helsen (2000), the company can create an invention strategy, creating a different product, reaching the expectations of the market to be sold.

According to Helsen (2000), in the strategies for promoting products, there are some obstacles in communication, such as language, cultural barriers, local attitudes towards advertising and the media structure of the country to be commercialized. Noting a series of regulations in foreign markets for advertising.

For Shoham (1999), the fair is the main promotional tool for exporters, in the case of stones, or other products.

Concluding, then, with the distribution strategy, Cateora and Graham (2001) point out that the distribution process includes physical handling and distribution of goods. Noting that the factors that affect the choice of distribution channels are defined in: service costs, availability in the target market and the extent of control that each manufacturer can exercise over the activities of intermediaries.

## **5 METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES**

## **The Brilhus Company Internationalization Process: Case Study**

This work aims to study the internationalization process of the company BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS LTDA. Students should research on Internationalization and the Marketing Compound, mainly authors like Helsén (2000); Nickels and Wood (1997); Pipkin (2003); Carneiro (2007); Cateora and Graham (2001); Churchill and Peter (2005); Czinkota and Dickson (2001); Lopes and Gama (2005); Kotler and Keller (2012). Consultations can also be carried out on scientific articles, monographs and dissertations focusing on the theme presented.

### **6 USE OF THE CASE IN LESSON AND DYNAMICS OF THE LESSON**

The presented case study, it is suggested to be used in the disciplines of marketing, international marketing, which deal with export themes, market growth abroad and ways of acting in the international market.

Also noting, this material can be used for presentations of seminars, institutional meetings and lectures, which aims to internationalize companies.

In this study, a specific target audience is not defined, and this material can be presented and explored in any course, since the internationalization theme is a global theme, thus making it useful to any segment or profession.

Following this, it is suggested that the teacher make a brief report of the objective of the work, presenting students with the structure of the case BRILHUS COMÉRCIO E EXPORTAÇÃO DE PEDRAS PRECIOSAS LTDA. No more than 20 minutes are required for this moment.

Then, to prepare students for the development of the case, it is suggested that they use their virtual tools, then browse for an estimated time of 20 minutes on the website of the company BRILHUS.

After that, the teacher divides the students into a group of three people.

After dividing the students into groups, the teacher applies some questions from the case, where the answer is in groups. The estimated time to ask the questions is 50 minutes.

Concluding thus, with a presentation using the power point for the other students, with the answers of each question. In a short period for each group of 20 minutes.

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