



**ROCKIN' GLOBALS: THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF ROCK AND ROLL BANDS UNDER THE BORN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE**

**ROCKIN' GLOBALS: A INTERNACIONALIZAÇÃO DAS BANDAS DE ROCK AND ROLL NA PERSPECTIVA BORN GLOBAL**

**ROCKIN 'GLOBALS: LA INTERNACIONALIZACIÓN DE LAS BANDAS DE ROCK AND ROLL DESDE LA PERSPECTIVA GLOBAL NACIDA**

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**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** The objective of the paper was to analyze the phenomenon of internationalization of rock and roll bands from the theoretical perspective of Born Global companies (BGs).

**Methodology:** Exploratory research with a qualitative approach. Seventeen semi-structured interviews were conducted at rock festivals and studios, with bands, solo artists and producers.

**Results:** The results showed evidence of four new strategic competences, in addition to those already reported in the literature, complementing the conceptual model of internationalization of rock and roll bands.

**Limitations of the research:** The lack of literature specifically focusing on rock and roll, and the relatively small sample size; a larger number of respondents is considered for future research.

**Practical implications:** The paper shows the strategic paths via competences, by which rock and roll bands can accumulate new knowledge and outline plans to articulate their scarce and intangible resources in an entrepreneurial way, visualizing their internationalization process.

**Social implications:** The social contribution of this study is its analysis of the phenomenon of internationalization of bands from an entrepreneurial and knowledge-developing perspective for the generation of competences, in view of need to allocate limited resources.

**Theoretical implications:** Bands have strategic competencies for internationalization. These include programming skills in software and digital platforms, experiences in different languages and multicultural creativity for product development, supporting new paths for research on BGs

**Originality:** The study brings together studies on the theme, including studies of BGs and Internationalization of rock bands under the theoretical perspective of strategic competences, providing new research paths for the International Business literature.

**Keywords:** *Born Global*; Internationalization; Rock and Roll.

**RESUMO**

**Objetivo:** O objetivo do trabalho foi analisar o fenômeno de internacionalização de bandas de *rock and roll* sobre a perspectiva teórica das empresas Born Global (BGs).

**Metodologia:** Pesquisa exploratória, com abordagem qualitativa. Foram realizadas 17 entrevistas semiestruturadas em festivais de rock, estúdios, com bandas, artistas solo e produtores.

**Resultados:** Os resultados apresentaram evidências de 4 novas competências estratégicas além das já existentes na literatura, complementando assim o modelo conceitual de internacionalização de bandas do gênero *rock and roll*.

**Limitações da pesquisa:** Inexistência de uma literatura específica para *rock and roll*. A segunda limitação está ligada à amostra, considerando a ampliação do número de entrevistados para pesquisas futuras.

**Implicações práticas:** O artigo mostra os caminhos estratégicos via competências para que bandas de rock and roll possam acumular novos conhecimentos e traçar planos para articular seus recursos escassos e intangíveis de forma empreendedora, visualizando o seu processo de internacionalização.

**Implicações sociais:** A contribuição social deste estudo se estende por analisar o fenômeno de internacionalização de bandas sobre perspectiva empreendedora e desenvolvidora de conhecimentos para a geração de competências devido à necessidade de alocação de recursos limitados.

**Implicações teóricas:** As bandas apresentam competências estratégicas para internacionalização ligadas a habilidade de programação em softwares e plataformas de digitais, experiências em diferentes línguas e criatividade multicultural para desenvolvimento de produtos, subsidiando novos caminhos para as pesquisas sobre BGs.

**Originalidade:** O estudo apresenta o amalgama de referenciais entre os estudos de BGs e Internacionalização de Bandas de rock sobre a perspectiva teórica das competências estratégicas, fornecendo novos caminhos de pesquisa para a literatura de Negócios Internacionais.

**Palavras-Chave:** *Born Global*; Internacionalização; Rock and Roll

**RESUMEN**

**Objetivo:** El objetivo del trabajo fue analizar el fenómeno de la internacionalización de las bandas de rock and roll desde la perspectiva teórica de las empresas Born Global (BGs).

**Metodología:** Investigación exploratoria con enfoque cualitativo. Se realizaron 17 entrevistas semiestructuradas en festivales de rock, estudios, con bandas, solistas y productores.

**Resultados:** Los resultados evidenciaron 4 nuevas competencias estratégicas además de las ya existentes en la literatura, complementando así el modelo conceptual de internacionalización de las bandas de rock and roll.

**Limitaciones de la investigación:** Falta de literatura específica sobre rock and roll. La segunda limitación está vinculada a la muestra, considerando el aumento en el número de encuestados para futuras investigaciones.

**Implicaciones prácticas:** El artículo muestra los caminos estratégicos a través de competencias para que las bandas de rock and roll acumulen nuevos conocimientos y tracen planes para articular sus escasos e intangibles recursos de manera emprendedora, visualizando su proceso de internacionalización.

**Implicaciones sociales:** El aporte social de este estudio se extiende a analizar el fenómeno de la internacionalización de bandas desde una perspectiva emprendedora y desarrolladora de conocimiento para la generación de habilidades debido a la necesidad de destinar recursos limitados.

**Implicaciones teóricas:** Las bandas tienen habilidades estratégicas para la internacionalización ligadas a habilidades de programación en software y plataformas digitales, experiencias en diferentes idiomas y creatividad multicultural para el desarrollo de productos, apoyando nuevos caminos para la investigación en BGs.

**Originalidad:** La investigación presenta la amalgama de referencias entre los estudios de BGs y la Internacionalización de bandas de rock sobre la perspectiva teórica de las competencias estratégicas, proporcionando nuevos caminos de investigación para la literatura de Negocios Internacionales.

**Palabras clave:** Born Global; Internacionalización; Rock and Roll.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of globalization in the music industry has led to the emergence of several rock and roll bands aimed at different audiences, consumers and markets around the world (Dunn, 2004; Geels, 2007). The entrepreneurial attitude of musicians and producers has led to the expansion and development of different ways of doing business beyond their home territory, through music that is produced with the goal of winning new fans (Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005; Fiori, 1984; Kotarba, 2002).

Due to the limitations of their home markets and the technological advances that have taken place, rock bands from non-English-speaking territories have, from their inception, been founded on the premise of the entrepreneurial drive of their members, as they seek to win new audiences and international markets and spread their musical content, (Reed, Heppard, & Corbett, 2004; Sarmiento, De Carvalho, & Da Rocha, 2016).

The attitude of these bands that are born global has a strong resemblance to the phenomenon studied in the international business literature called “Born Global companies” (BG). The main characteristic of this type of company is the search for international markets from their inception, seeking to export their products and services worldwide, using strategic competencies (Cavusgil & Knight, 2015; Rennie, 1993; Marsen & Servais, 1997). Bands born with the intention of being global face strategic market challenges similar to BG firms (Sousa, Rocha, & Forte, 2020). These include, for example, the need to innovate, develop and transfer knowledge, explore new markets and their limitations, face technological advances, and even develop new services and products in the music industry.

The creation of bands with the purpose of internationalization, in order to win new audiences, follows the strong emergence of BG companies that pursue different markets, through globalization and technological advances provided by platforms and media (Sarmiento & De Carvalho, 2016; Efrat, Gilboa, & Yonatany, 2017). These firms are able to minimize their transaction costs and maximize the power of information exchange in society, through strategic capabilities and competencies (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Zahra, Ireland, & Hit, 2000; Williamson, 2008).

Given this context, this paper seeks to answer the following research question: *What are the main similarities in strategic competencies between Born Global companies and rock and roll bands that have accomplished a process of internationalization?*

To answer the research question, as the general objective of the article, we analyzed the phenomenon of internationalization of rock and roll bands from the theoretical perspective of strategic competencies of BG companies. The general objective unfolds into two specific ones: (i) to investigate the similarities between strategic competencies of BGs and internationalizing rock bands; and (ii) to map the new strategic skills developed by rock and roll bands in order to reach international markets.

The justification for this research is related to the new forms of internationalization of BG companies through digital platforms, which operate their assets flexibly (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004, 2015; Sousa *et al.*, 2020). Rock and roll bands use digital platforms to carry out internationalization processes instantly, as well as leveraging networks of contacts. As a result, they do not need offices or valuable assets to achieve internationalization. Furthermore, the organizational characteristics of rock and roll bands that explore the international market are similar to those of BG companies (Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005), justifying the relevance of the research for advancing studies on BG organizations that accelerate the internationalization process through the intensive use of digital technologies and resources (Hennart, Majocchi, & Hagen, 2021; Gosling, Souza, Gosling, Lopes, & Rezende, 2019).

This study contributes to the international business literature in two ways. First, the theoretical contribution is its analysis of the phenomenon of internationalization of rock and roll bands from the perspective of a company that also develops knowledge for creating skills, due to the need for entrepreneurial musicians to allocate their often limited resources (Gosling *et al.*, 2019; Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005). Secondly, the emergence of new strategic competencies for internationalization, linked to programming skills in software and digital platforms, experiences in different languages, and multicultural creativity for product development, offers new paths for research on BG firms, which we explore throughout this paper (Hennart *et al.*, 2021; Knight & Cavusgil, 2015).

As practical and managerial contributions, we show the strategic paths through competencies, so that rock and roll bands can accumulate new knowledge and outline plans to articulate their scarce and intangible resources in an entrepreneurial way. This strategic route requires making musicians, producers, and managers of the musical business aware of the minimum skills for a company to reach global markets quickly.

To achieve the study objectives, we carried out an exploratory qualitative study, based on semi-structured interviews with rock bands, producers, and solo performers, totaling seventeen respondents. We applied the research scripts at the Lollapalooza and EmoCarnival festivals, and at professional and home studios in the São Paulo region, and through the Appear.in software. For the data analysis, we used the Atlas.ti software, which enabled the transcribed excerpts to be systematically characterized for analysis and validation of the results.

Besides this introduction, the study has the following sections and subsections: (i) a literature review on BG companies; (ii) the strategic competencies of BG companies internationalization; (iii) rock and roll internationalization and the entrepreneurial vision; (iv) methodology, including content analysis to justify the replication of the method and its analysis; (v) discussion and results, presenting the basis and validation mooring matrix of the theoretical concepts; and (vi) conclusion, addressing the main contributions of the study, its limitations and suggestions for future research.

## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The theoretical background of this paper included a literature review on the concepts of *Born Global*, *Strategic Competencies*, and *Internationalization of the Music Genre: Rock and Roll*. The main foundations of the *International Business* research line stem from studies of BG firms, and follow the *Strategic Competencies* approach. In this study, we use *Strategic Competencies* as a basic assumption for the analysis of the study object: *rock and roll bands that internationalize*.

To justify the research approach, we incorporated studies related to the internationalization of the rock and roll genre, which consider bands as the main vector for the international dissemination of the musical product. Based on this assumption, we used the *Strategic Competencies of BG companies* and the *Internationalization of Rock and Roll Bands* as scientific instruments to answer the research question and objective, besides addressing ways to analyze the phenomenon under study.

### 2.1 Born Global companies, definitions and articulations in the literature

The studies that guide the concept of Born Global (BG) are based on the assumptions of the firm's internationalization and entrepreneurial initiative in foreign countries (Pimenta, Joswig, Oliveira, & Sbragia, 2017; Zonta & Amal, 2018). The BG field of study recognizes several definitions, whose main characteristic is to explain the beginning of young, entrepreneurial companies in international markets (Cavusgil & Knight, 2015; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004; Oviatt & Mcdougall, 2005; Marsen & Servais, 1997; Rennie, 1993).

Cavusgil and Knight (2015) observe that the consulting firm McKinsey was the first to introduce the concept (1993), through an analysis of the companies' internationalization process in Australia. Since then, several authors have added to the literature, with new definitions and ways of presenting the concept of accelerated internationalization (Gabriellson *et al.*, 2008).

For Oviatt and Mcdougall (1995), these types of companies seek, since their inception, to achieve competitive advantage through sales and allocation of resources in multiple countries, as an international strategy. The authors focus especially on companies called International New Ventures, whose main basis for internationalization is the length of time the firm has been in existence, the allocation of tangible resources, and a concern to add value to its products and services (Rolow, Floriani, & Amal, 2011; Oviat & Mcdougall, 1994).

Following the same conceptual principle, Medsen and Servais (1997) define BG firms, in the context of Global Startups, as companies that are oriented towards international and global markets from their foundation, or soon after. They are based on pillars such as the founders, company organization, and business environment, which lead to prosperity and development. The authors' main contribution is that they demonstrate a difference internationalization process, compared to the gradual Uppsala model (Johanson & Vahlne, 2009), and the research paths for the future development of BG firms.

Knight and Cavusgil (2004) consider innovations and organizational capabilities as driving factors for the consolidation of a BG firm in international markets. They show that an orientation towards international entrepreneurship and marketing, as part of the organizational culture, leads companies to develop business strategies for international environments focused on technology, products and service development, a focus on quality, and good relationships with local distributors.

Rial, Rialp and Knight (2005), Acedo and Jones (2007), and Mathews and Zander (2007) address the rapid internationalization of BG firms, new ventures, and global startups, through issues such as the entrepreneur's international orientation, size of the firm, perception of risk in foreign markets, and proactiveness. These authors paved the way for new fields of study seeking to understand the successful strategic formulation of BG's rapid internationalization, driven by international guidelines of entrepreneurship and marketing.

## 2.2 Strategic competencies of Born Global companies

The strategies of BG firms follow international marketing and entrepreneurship guidelines (Cavusgil & Zou, 1994; Albaum & Peterson, 1984; Slater & Narver, 1992). International marketing orientation relies on the managerial coordination for value creation in products and services offered to different markets. This direction involves ability to attract and retain customers in different locations, besides seeking to increase profitability in foreign markets (Costa, Ferreira, Cunha & Pinto, 2020).

Cavusgil and Zou (1994) and Machado and Bischoff (2018) demonstrate an empirical link between international marketing strategy and performance, regarding product export. The results support the claim that companies can perform better in international markets through the implementation of marketing strategies.

International entrepreneurship orientation is the entrepreneur's coordination for the creation of new business models, decision autonomy, and personal motivation (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004). This orientation involves a willingness to take risks in international markets and expand opportunities to generate innovation, due to autonomy and particular interests in the management process. Furthermore, the authors present these guidelines as a background to the strategic competencies of BGs. This orientation leads companies to achieve good performance in international markets, by advancing their global strategic competencies, which include the development of exclusive products, a focus on quality, technology, and leveraging foreign distributors.

To articulate BG firm's main strategic business competencies with the study object - rock bands that internationalize – we present the main four competencies:

- (i) *Technological competence* – Zahra, Ireland and Hitt (2000) show a strong relationship between international diversity and mode of entry to the market, and the speed of technological learning in these companies. Technological competence, in this case, has a positive effect on the company's performance, measured by the return on investment and sales growth, and in the effect of feedback on technological learning, which shows improvement during the internationalization process.

(ii) *Competence for developing unique and exclusive products* - for Smith (1956), in terms of strategy, product differentiation contributes to ensuring greater control over product demand, by disseminating the idea of the difference between the company's product and those of competing vendors. Thus, differentiation occurs as a result of a vendor's attempt to establish market positions and/or to isolate its business from the competition by developing unique and exclusive products for its customers.

(iii) *Quality-focused competence* - assessing focus on quality, Aaker and Jacobson (1994) state that: (1) product quality influences business performance in the long term; (2) stock market participants perceive that product quality influences long-term performance; and (3) product quality measures contain some information; i.e., the measurement error (noise) does not dominate the underlying performance signal.

(iv) *Competence for leveraging foreign distributors* - leveraging in a low-resource environment contrasts with the view that multinational companies gain advantage by having superior resources (Mathews, 2006). The role of this competence in finding distributors is essential for their insertion in an international production chain. In addition, besides being a learning method, it works as a multiplier of opportunities, by creating networks in foreign markets that benefit both pioneering and consolidated companies and newly arrived firms in these countries.

### 2.3 Internationalization and rock and roll bands

Since the end of World War II, rock and roll has directly influenced the social and cultural development of several generations, both contemporary and future, directly or indirectly (Frith, 1981). Initially seen as a teenager genre, rock and roll affects the roles and identities of people with different lifestyle perspectives and political and ethical views, or simply as people who, throughout their lives, have come to use the musical style as a source of meaning for their joys and sorrows (Kotarba, 2000).

Kotarba (2002) defines rock and roll as a popular music style created for and marketed at young people, or to those who consume music according to youth values. It is known for its amplified guitars and African-American-inspired dance rhythms (Kotarba, 1994). Sociological interest in rock and roll has increased as the industry has expanded, whether through concert sales, globalization, CDs, MP3 technology, the Internet, or other media and functions (Kotarba, 2002). To achieve this massive scale of consumption, the rock industry has a complex production chain, with many different subdivisions, including composers, song writers, artists, recording studios, music publishers, labels, copyrights, stylists, public relations, management, distributors, concert organizers, and tour organizers, among other functions (Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005; Rodrigues & Casotti, 2019).

Considering the role of the musician, we can see the start of the music chain as the process of creation of a band, or the consolidation of a solo performer, such that the product is profit-making. For Laaksonen, Karjalainen and Ainamo (2009), the primary revenue stream of a music company comes from its music recordings (royalties), merchandise, and live performances. The main competence of these companies is product development, which, in this case, is creating and playing music. Management, booking of live shows, manufacturing and distribution of products (physical and digital) are outsourced to specialized companies worldwide. Many bands also have endorsement contracts with instrument and equipment manufacturers.

Some examples are based on the entrepreneurial attributes of musicians (Reed *et al.*, 2004). According to the authors, rock and roll networks have made a significant contribution to the increase in theme creation related to the business area. In the specific case of musicians, the process of niche specialization for artists involves the development of entrepreneurial solutions, including, for example, funding their accommodation expenses, costs of travel, instruments, studio time, production, distribution and marketing the album, among other factors that need to be considered, whether by small artists and more successful ones. Therefore, music entrepreneurship, in this sense, can be associated with the structures of small businesses, as the artists' projects depend on the commitment and circumstances of their environment, and like any other business, they can grow or fail.

The relevance of networks in this environment is essential for the success of a project. Johannisson and Huse (2000) describe three types of networks: information networks, exchange networks, and influence networks. The first can provide business insights, opportunities, and industry and market data. Exchange networks provide the necessary resources, while the third can work to provide legitimacy, access, and barriers against competitors. For rock and roll artists, their exchange and influence networks are more important. These can be more difficult to establish, as the promotion of networks and costs are generally high. We can also view networks in terms of their degree of formality (Reed *et al.*, 2004).

Entrepreneurs can obtain assistance through their formal networks, including banks, lawyers and accountants and other professionals, but also through their informal networks, such as family, friends, companies, business contacts, etc. (Birley, 1985).

Geographical factors have also led to the spread of rock and roll around the world. The consensus among researchers in the field takes into account the scenario that followed World War II, involving the struggle for civil rights in the United States, and later, the anti-war movement. This youth “subculture” movement, the so-called “hippie” movement, preached freedom of expression on college campuses, and a wide variety of social and community groups emerged in the 1960s. It spread across the world, including to Great Britain, before merging with other local youth subcultures (Weinstein 2000).

Gundle (2006) describes the case of Adriano Celentano, often referred to as the “Italian Elvis Presley” and one of Italy’s most important rock figures. The author shows the different facets of Celentano, who started his career by imitating the American style, but gradually moved to cultural forms more related to the Italian environment; hence, he adapted to different social and cultural contexts, through originally basing his music on the American rock style.

Death metal bands are an example of the rapid internationalization of bands in Scandinavia and the United States in the 1980s and 1990s. Morbid Angel, Obituary, and Deicide quickly internationalized due to the technological dissemination of cassette tapes and videos in the Tampa region of Florida. Over time, in the early 1990s, death metal gained international popularity and new scenarios began to emerge, the most prominent being Stockholm and Gothenburg (Dunn, 2004). Bands like Ghost and Amon Amarth became quickly recognized in the region, largely because their lyrics were in English and due to the ease of holding shows, thanks to the geographical proximity.

In South Africa, rock music appeared in an environment of economic and social restrictions, during the apartheid regime. The import of the rock genre and music into White South Africa followed known patterns, observable in other European and post-colonial countries. By the end of 1958, Tommy Steele’s 14-day tour in Southern Africa was a local watershed. This tour started in mid-March, in Cape Town, and took in the cities of Port Elizabeth, Durban, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Salisbury, and Bulawayo. Tours and concerts were a milestone in the internationalization of rock and roll in Africa (Hamm, 1985).

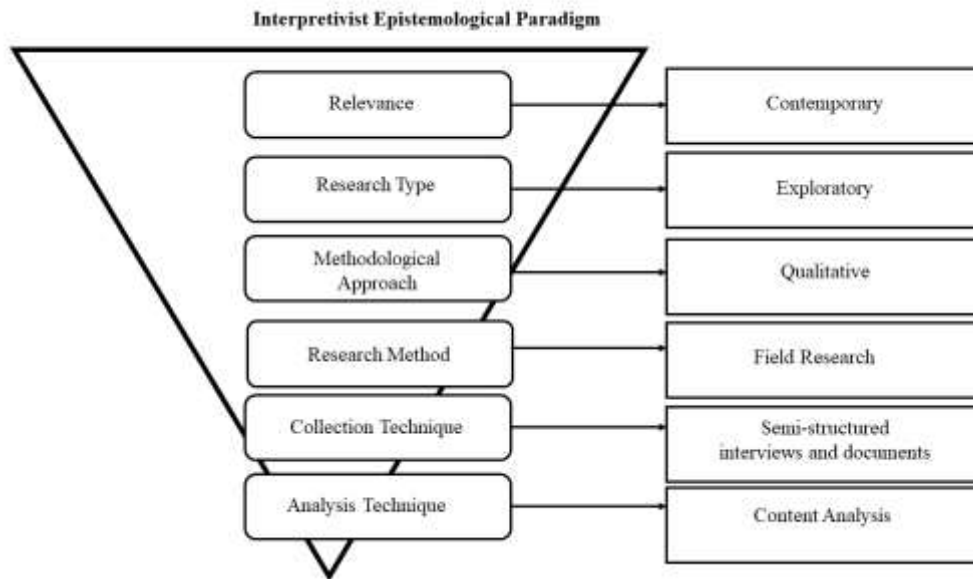
Xu, Park, and Park (2017) studied the dissemination of music works through digital platforms such as YouTube, Facebook and other social networks around the world. In Japan, Ogura (2003) stated that culture flourished in a context of cold war, under a strong North American influence.

In Oceania, the so-called “Kiwi Rock” became the popular music of New Zealand, through an adaptation of rock and roll to the local style, spreading local ideas through festivals and events in the region (Schuker & Pickering, 1994). In Australia, Sturma (1991) showed that politically motivated factors caused the genre to spread in the country.

In Latin America, we can exemplify the internationalization of rock music through the Brazilian case. Similar to the Australian and Japanese cases, in Brazil, rock also gained strength in the post-war period, with the “Jovem Guarda” movement that brought artists such as Roberto Carlos and the Tropicália group, whose main exponents were Caetano Veloso and Gilberto Gil. Another important aspect was the holding of festivals. The Montreux Jazz Festival, the best-known music festival in Switzerland, brought bands like Clube da Esquina, and artists as Milton Nascimento, Ivan Lins, and Djavan (Perrone & Dunn, 2001).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

To carry out this study, we designed a methodological approach using qualitative research for the data collection and analysis. Figure 1 shows the methodological path, adapted from by Grieco (2012) and Bianchi (2015).



**Figure 1.** Study's Methodological Path  
Source: adapted from Grieco (2012) and Bianchi (2015)

As we are investigating a contemporary phenomenon, we considered it more appropriate to carry out an exploratory qualitative study, in order to understand the internalization of rock and roll bands from the perspective of the concept of BG companies (Oviatt & Mcdougall, 2004; Cavusgil & Knight, 2004). Therefore, we conducted field research involving interviews with seventeen people, all of whom had some relation to rock and roll bands, whether as musicians, composers, or producers, aiming to spread their musical work internationally. Table 1 shows the details of the interviews and the respondents' profiles:

**Table 1**  
Interviews' details and profile of respondents

Interviewee	Date	Duration	Place of Origin/Work	Place of the Interview	Name of band or studio	Role	Gender	Age
1	April	16':15"	São Paulo	Lollapalooza	Solo Performer	Multi-instrumentalist	M	32
2	April	15':35"	Florianópolis	Lollapalooza	Band Milhas	Multi-instrumentalist	M	24
3	April	20':15"	Curitiba	Lollapalooza	Band Who Needs a Heal	Singer and Composer	F	23
4	April.	16':30"	São Bernardo	Lollapalooza	Band Gilberts	Guitarist	M	22
5	April	14':13"	São Bernardo	Lollapalooza	Bands Gilberts and Nofitas	Bassist and Composer	M	22
6	April	17':60"	São Bernardo	Lollapalooza	Band Carbonara	Guitarist and Bassist	M	21
7	April	20':10"	São Paulo	Lollapalooza	Band Nofitas	Guitarist and Composer	M	23
8	March	50':36"	São Paulo	Home studio	Band Compressor Rock	Producer, Multi-instrument	M	26
9	May	39':40"	Praia Grande	Studio Oryion	Band Compressor Rock	Singer and Composer	M	31
10	May	25':30"	Praia Grande	Studio Oryion	Band Compressor Rock	Guitarist and Composer	M	34
11	May	45':20"	Praia Grande	Home studio	Band DropSite	Drummer, Singer, Composer	M	32
12	June	20':30"	São Paulo	Studio Sound City	Band Tropical Trupe I	Bassist	M	22
13	Aug.	20':15"	Florianópolis	Emo Carnival	Solo Performer - Smile Bolts	Producer, Multi-instrument	M	41

(To be continued)



(Conclusion)

Interviewee	Date	Duration	Place of Origin/Work	Place of the Interview	Name of band or studio	Role	Gender	Age
14	Aug.	15':10"	São Paulo	Emo Carnival	NEWD	Bassist, Singer, Composer	M	24
15	Aug.	21':20"	Santos	Emo Carnival	Décimo Primeiro	Guitarist and Composer	M	26
16	Aug.	45':15"	Rio de Janeiro	Appear In	Sound Bullet	Guitarist and Composer	M	-
17	Aug.	31':12"	Santos	Home studio	Midnight band	Guitarist	M	71

Source: Elaborated from the primary research data.

We collected some useful excerpts from the reports, in order to understand the phenomenon of internationalization of rock and roll bands, and we used the concepts of global technological competence, focus on quality, development of unique products, and leverage of foreign distributors, as outlined by Knight and Cavusgil (2004).

Interviews were the main data collection instrument. We prepared a semi-structured script with 29 questions, subdivided according to the concepts of strategic competencies of BGs, Rock Bands and Internationalization. These topics were used in the content analysis, and to segment the information and perform a semantic analysis of interviewees' reports. We adopted semi-structured interviews, giving the respondents freedom to describe their perceptions on the investigated phenomenon; the semi-structured interview script also helped remove potential bias from the technical aspects emphasized by the literature review (Wengraf, 2001; Harrel & Bradley, 2009).

Some of the interviews were conducted at the alternative music festivals Lollapalooza and Emo-Carnival. We also conducted interviews at the music studios SoundCity and Oryon-Estúdio, and a home studio, seeking to understand the technical resources required by the bands to reach international markets. The interviews conducted at the Lollapalooza and Emo-Carnival festivals were videotaped and edited, with the interviewees' permission, for publication on the digital platform YouTube. These recordings can be accessed at the link shown in the footnote<sup>1</sup>. The interviews were recorded using the app Appear.in, due to the distance between musicians and researchers. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of the interviews (place of performance, date and place of interview, band name, gender, and age). The interviews conducted at the music studios enabled better interaction with the producers and bands. The musicians and producers presented their musical creations and reported the goals of their internationalization strategies. The interviews were conducted and transcribed in the period March to August 2019, resulting in 119 pages of transcribed text.

The main criteria for selecting the interviewees related to four main issues: (i) the search for international audiences that consume or have some affinity with the music produced (Dunn, 2004); (ii) the ability of musicians, producers, and bands to view music production as a business model (Geels, 2007); (iii) relationship and evidence of pre-reports between the concepts on strategies and competencies presented by Cavusgil and Knight (2004; 2015); and (iv) the use of existing and potential resources to reach different audiences in international markets (Huygens, Bosch, Volberda, & Baden-Fuller, 2001).

We decided on content analysis as the data analysis technique, in order to understand the descriptive reports collected during the interviews, making inferences about their narratives (Kassarjian, 1977; Bardin, 1977). After transcribing and analyzing the interviews, we created a mooring matrix to find reports concomitant to the processes of internationalization of rock and roll bands and concepts derived from the theory on BG companies.

For the content analysis, we used some techniques based on Bardin's (1977) three steps: (i) pre-analysis; (ii) material exploration; and (iii) data processing, inference, and interpretation. In stage (i), we analyzed the material transcribed from the in-depth interviews, separating it to identify potential categories for systematization. In step (ii), we divided the content of the interviews systematically, using the Atlas.ti software to categorize the material and establish the main concepts addressed in the interviews (Hwang, 2008). Step (iii) involved building a mooring matrix of concepts and reports from the interviews, enabling a correlation between the concepts from the theoretical framework and those of the field reports. We present the mooring matrix in the "Results and Discussion" section.

<sup>1</sup>Fragments from interviews at the YouTube channel "Pesquisadores do Rock Global". Interviews Appear.in, Lollapalooza and Emo-Carnival 2019 – Bands' Internationalization. Access link:

<<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChAT7nyadM8AJ5QGQHQHotSg>>. Accessed at 09/12/2019

The software program Atlas.ti enables the organization, systematization, and categorization of qualitative data in academic research. The main role of the software during content analysis was the organization of the transcribed and identified material in the pre-analysis stage. Thus, we were able to create the following categorizations for this paper:

**Table 2**  
Categorization

Block	Category (Inductive)	Subcategory (Deductive)
Born Global	Strategic Competencies of BG companies	Technological Competence
		Focus on Quality
		Development of unique and exclusive products/services
		Leveraging Foreign Distributors
Internationalization of Rock Bands	Forms of internationalization of the bands	Digital Social Networks
		Technological Advances in Music Production
		Creation and Adaptation of styles in different countries
		Society, Politics, and Economy
		Formal/Informal Networks

Source: Elaborated from the primary research data.

The pre-analysis stage focused on the creation of inductive categories: strategic competencies of BG companies and forms of internationalization of the bands. Table 2 shows the inductive categories that resulted in the deductive subcategories, improved with the software, which also helped to separate excerpts from the transcripts into categories. Before separating the excerpts, we performed a keyword search on the concepts addressed in the subsections on BG companies and internationalization of Rock Bands, for the categorization.

The categories and subcategories analyzed by Atlas.ti enabled the organization of the content of the transcripts for analysis, and the triangulation of concepts and reports in the mooring matrix presented in Table 3.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mooring matrix was developed to interpret the analysis results and triangulate their content. Flick (2004) defines the triangulation process of qualitative research as a strategy for validating material collected in the field. The purposes of the proposed mooring matrix were to provide a conceptual logic of the field results, and to check the validity of the reports against the theories presented in the literature review.

**Table 3**  
Mooring Matrix

Concepts and Subcategories		Portions from the transcriptions
<b>Strategic Competencies of the BG</b>	<b>Rock and Roll Internacionalization</b>	<b>Field reports</b>
Technological Competence (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Social and Digital Networks (Xu <i>et al.</i> , 2017)	Interviewee 13: "Currently, Instagram and YouTube do not allow control over the people that watch the videos; there are people in Europe who watch my channel on YouTube. I have music in SoundCloud that a lot of people from Italy were accessing for some reason. I saw it in Google Analytics and it gave me an idea".
		Interviewee 1: "With aggregators and digital networks, you can reach an audience that you had no idea you could reach, especially with limited resources. You can spread an original work with very little money".

(To be continued)

(Continuation)

Concepts and Subcategories		Portions from the transcriptions
Strategic Competencies of the BG	Rock and Roll Internacionalization	Field reports
Technological Competence (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Technological Advances in Music Production (Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005)	Interviewee 5: "At home studios, we can do something more "streaming", and then pass it on [...] with the Gilbert's we recorded everything from the studio at our guitarist's house, and the quality was just as good as in a professional studio, because we don't have the pressure to get it right first time [...] once the music is ready, all we need to do is advertise it with a link to Spotify and Deeper".
		Interviewee 7: "There are many things that we don't record in our home studio, although we have the recording table and materials, sometimes it's is not our area of expertise. We finish the music and send it to a friend in France; there, he does the mastering and can add something to the recording tracks, and on the same day or in a few weeks, he sends it back to see how it turned out [...] He can open the recording tracks if he wants to, and mess about with the music and with what he wants to edit. Then the quality is much better than if we did the mastering ourselves".
Technological Competence (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Technological Advances in Music Production (Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005)	Interviewee 11: "We did the first recording with a friend of ours, Fernando. He did it right, but he was really busy. He charged a symbolic price, and it was cheap. We're now looking for another producer, a different guy. His price is higher. But he sat with us and said that he'll start from scratch with everything we have, and according to what we want [...] Nowadays, it's much easier because anyone can do it. Including us. We want to set up a little area where we can make some demos. Nowadays, having a demo helps you progress a lot more than having nothing and going to people, producers, and saying: "I wanted to do this. But if you have nothing to show them, it's difficult. It helps a lot to have a production space at home and rely on other people for creation".
Development of unique and exclusive Products/Services (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Creation and adaptation of styles in different countries (Schukker & Pickering, 1994; Perrone & Dunn, 2001)	Interviewee 16: "This song that you heard, "When it goes wrong", was one of the first ones we wrote. At the time, we didn't really know what we wanted to do. We've always liked composing in English, but our references are mixed [...] We like to do both, mas we noticed that there isn't much of a market out there. The sound we make has a lot of appeal out there [...] We faced some prejudice, and thought that a Brazilian band would not be able to succeed abroad, but today things are different [...] This specific song broke many barriers for us in entering other countries. We were able to record this song because of the converse Rubber Tracks contest. We were selected as one of the bands to record in 12 studios around the world, and, luckily, we recorded at a studio in Rio. They took sound engineers from all parts of the world, and mixed it up".
		Interviewee 11: "What people want more is a selected audience, but this audience you have here and you have abroad. If you've reached the funk audience, you will be able to communicate with that kind of person. You need to know who you're writing the music for".
		Interviewee 13: Language makes a big difference. All my compositions that had this result were in English. English has become the world language of music in every country. I think that if all my compositions were in English, they would have the same repercussion as my English compositions had".

(To be continued)

(Continuation)

Concepts and Subcategories		Portions from the transcriptions
<b>Strategic Competencies of the BG</b>	<b>Rock and Roll Internacionalization</b>	<b>Field reports</b>
Development of unique and exclusive Products/Services (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Politics, Society, and Economy (Fiori, 1984)	Interviewee 11: "To pass on a message that people want to hear. Nowadays, if you mention Bolsonaro (the Brazilian president), everybody will talk about your sound, speak well or ill, but it will be on people's lips. There's a band that plays with us called "Bolsonado". We have songs that focus on the politics and creation of Brazil. In the past and on the book "Vidas Secas" (Dry Lives). People listen and identify with the lyrics".
Focus on Quality (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Technological Advances in Music Production (Jönsson & Lagerdahl, 2005)	Interviewee 8: "Cubase and Protools, in my opinion, are the best tools for recording at home and in studios. Some people record with Garage band, but when we record at home it's just Cubase [...] we record the drums in any studio or do it on the program Drum hits when it's to make a demo. It's very quick if the musician knows what he has to play. You go and record. And you leave with the track and I edit everything else at home, mainly guitars, bass, piano, and keyboard [...] these programs simulate sound tables, and sometimes you don't even need an instrument".
Focus on Quality (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Formal and Informal Networks (Dunn, 2004)	Interviewee 8: "I don't produce, I master and mix here at home. There's no way to do this, and it needs a lot of equipment [...] here I only record the guitars and bases because the microphone captures a lot of external sound and blowing noises. We go to the studio and Vlad (the studio producer) does the track for us. I've already edited a song in garage band on the cell phone, when traveling, because I didn't have my computer, and the quality was really good, just as though it had been recorded in a professional studio. Because I don't have the equipment, but I know people who have, and with WhatsApp internet you can record everything and do it in real time".
Leveraging Foreign Distributors (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Social and Digital Networks (Xu et al. 2017)	Interviewee 14: "I always follow my favorite bands through the social networks, and everything else, for example, when I see: "Blink posts a photo and that guy Rancid goes and likes it", it's really cool! You see that the bands are close and support themselves. It's a thing that exists in our underground scene, but we still need more strength for this scene to grow together". Interviewee 8: "At the beginning of Compressor, we started putting sponsored posts on Facebook to advertise the work. When we started talking to the bars in the region, people already knew who we were [...] You have the option to segment the public you want to reach; at the time, there was a group of people that used to listen to our sound in the US, and Facebook data suggested as a way to expand our audience, but we didn't invest in that".
Leveraging Foreign Distributors (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Formal and Informal Networks (Birley, 1885)	Interviewee 16: "The contest of the company EDP is called EDP Live Bands; it has a global scope and three editions: one in Brazil, one in Portugal, and one in Spain. They invite bands from various countries and make a selection; in the end, they take these bands to play at the professional festival 'Nós Alive' [...] this gave us good opportunities to play outside Brazil, especially in Portugal. They are very open to Brazilian music".
Leveraging Foreign Distributors (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Formal and Informal Networks (Dunn, 2004)	Interviewee 14: "Social networks and other places to host help bands to publicize themselves to other bands, not only in the local media, but in the states, the whole country, and even internationally. [...] I think that being part of the communication and sharing these things is really helping the band grow. One of my bands had pages on Spotify, with people from Argentina listening to us. The person shared through Spotify, in Instagram stories, and it appeared in the information section of our band's page".

(To be continued)

(Conclusion)

Concepts and Subcategories		Portions from the transcriptions
<b>Strategic Competencies of the BG</b>	<b>Rock and Roll Internacionalization</b>	<b>Field reports</b>
Leveraging Foreign Distributors (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004)	Formal and Informal Networks (Dunn, 2004)	Interviewee 11: <i>"We've already played with Nizero Dead Fish, we opened for the Nizero show. We have a connection with Japan [...] Our songs are on Spotify, but we need to develop that part better. Spotify is a very good tool and advertises without you wanting to. For example, if you have a friend who lives here, and he has a foreign friend and tells him "hey, listen to this band" [...] There were more than a thousand people from the US and Japan who listened, and we had never publicized; imagine if we had worked on it. It would have been quite different".</i>

Source: Elaborated from the primary research data.

The strategic competencies reported in the literature, on the theoretical perspective of internationalization of bands, mentioned, in a series of reports, how rock and roll bands developed competencies for internationalization. In the mooring matrix (Table 3), the subcategories relate to the incidence of reports on the topic. This enabled triangulation of the analysis.

It was found that the concept of social and digital networks is now an important tool in the spectrum of a band's technological knowledge. Bands use these platforms to reach audiences they would not be able to in a conventional or "word of mouth" network. Furthermore, these tools also create an analytical intelligence, so that the band can segment its audience by digital and technological platforms. This is confirmed by the studies of Knight and Cavusgil (2004), who state that technological aspects enable the dissemination of products to different market structures. The dissemination potential of digital and social networks indicated by Xu *et al.* (2017), regarding the success of the K-pop musical genre in the world, was confirmed by the bands' internationalization strategies.

Another aspect linked to technological competence that proved relevant in the research was the technological advances in music production. For most of the interviewees, technological competence has developed from the possibilities and knowledge of producing and promoting songs and shows through platforms and software available in the markets. Most musicians and bands reported that the possibility of recording their own music, with limited resources, was essential to leveraging international audiences and markets quickly. This factor shows that there is no need for a production chain, based on several actors, for a band to be known internationally. Thus, interviewees reported that home studios, mastering, and remote editing through partnerships are essential for a company to have technological mobility and reach international markets.

The subcategories of creation and adaptation of styles in different countries, and the development of unique and exclusive products/services, were a constant theme in the interviews. The reports showed that (i) interacting with international studios, (ii) participating in international festivals and events, and (iii) choosing a certain audience and understanding the language of those to whom the music is directed are critical for product and service development. This knowledge allows for better development of live shows, online shows, music creation, and adaptation of different music styles.

The category politics, society, and economy, presented in studies on the internationalization of American rock in the Italian market (Fiori, 1984), were strongly linked to the competence of developing unique and exclusive products/services. Most of the interviewees highlighted the topic "regional and world politics" as a way of attracting the interest of their audiences or the audiences they wanted to reach, as a way of establishing themselves in domestic markets and attracting the interest of people from the country the music is about, but living or consuming the content abroad.

The subcategories of strategic competence related to a focus on quality and technological advances support the use of software that musicians, bands, and producers use, mainly due to the ease, agility, and autonomy that the programs offer. Quality is associated with factors such as (i) practical and easy software, (ii) ability to redo and repeat the recording in a home studio, and (iii) lower costs of rehearsals, as the programs allow the band to repeat the piece until it is considered suitable. This corroborates the statements by Knight and Cavusgil (2004), about low cost testing and validation of products to introduce in international markets.

Focus on quality is also directly linked to the formal and informal networks presented by Dunn (2004), and Jönsson and Lagerdahl (2005). The networks that the musicians establish for producing and creating music through the internet and digital platforms allow for improvements in quality, enabling them, through partnerships, to find specialized people in areas such as mixing, mastering, instruments, band promotion, and a host of other specialist areas. This contributes to the development of better-crafted music in terms of details and improvement of recording tracks. Hence, music becomes international, from its production process through to its insertion in the market and musical platforms (Gosling *et al.*, 2019).

Xu *et al.* (2017) emphasize the creation of social networks for the dissemination of music internationally. Reports show that this is a way of leveraging foreign distributors due to partnerships, particularly to capture venues for shows and win groups of followers for the band's recognition in the scenario in which it performs.

Leveraging foreign distributors also relates to formal and informal networks (Birley, 1985). In relation to formal networks, the respondents mentioned that through contests held by companies, bands could participate in international festivals and find ways to produce their material internationally and with a better quality. As for informal networks, dissemination occurred through partnerships with foreign and regional bands, and digital platforms such as Spotify and Instagram.

In addition to these categories that were reported and correlated, one of the great findings from the interviews was the emergence of new competencies: (1) Programming skills in software and recording platforms; (2) Language skills; (3) Digital Skill; and (4) Multicultural Creativity to develop products and services. These skills come from the knowledge that bands, musicians, and producers created and reported, to facilitate the band's internationalization process.

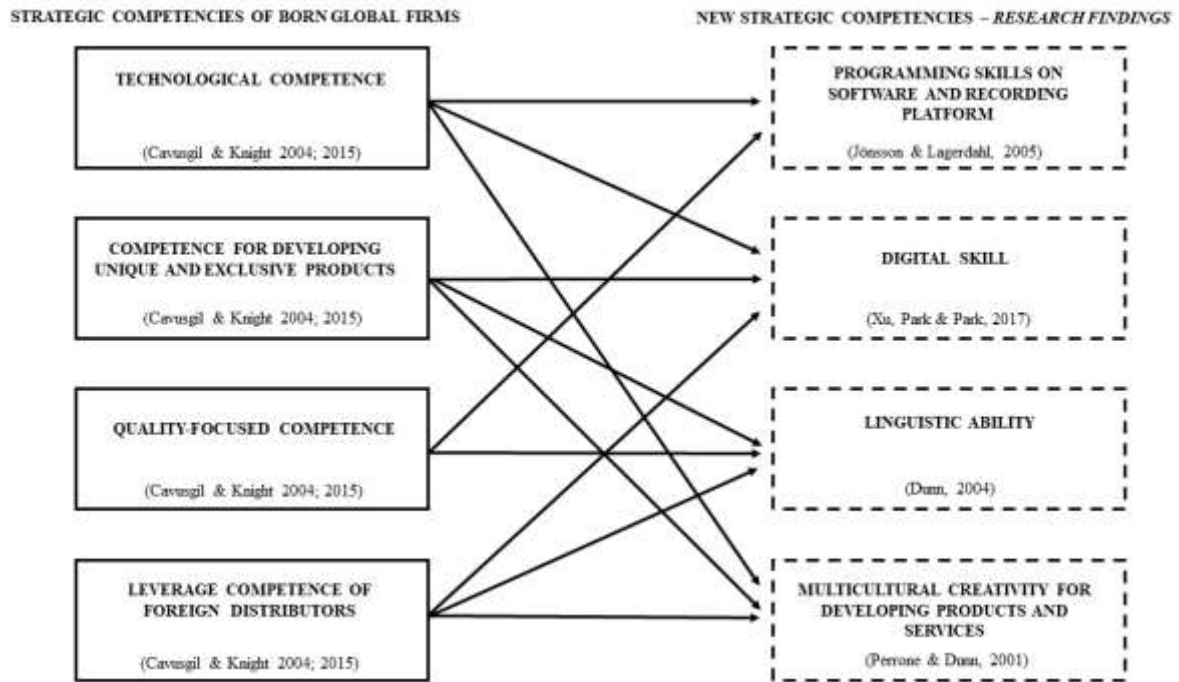
The competence (1) **Programming Skill in software and platforms** came out of technological competencies and focus on quality, as a way to help musicians in their entrepreneurial autonomy. All the respondents highlighted the possibility of producing high quality demos and music at home, and these factors guide entrepreneurs to explore new markets.

The competence (2) **Language Skills** competence relates to the fact that most of respondents need a language in which that can communicate and produce music for different countries. This was indicated both by the interviewees' own experience, and by bands that internationalized in the Scandinavian region (Dunn, 2004). According to the reports and the literature, language skills are characterized by certain factors: ability to compose and produce in a foreign language, capacity to interact in a language with the international music production chain (studios, producers, and shareholders, in general), ability to communicate with international audiences interested in the work, and capacity to expand niches and experiences. This competence stems mainly from the competencies for leveraging foreign distributors, a focus on quality, and the development of unique and exclusive products (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004).

(3) **Digital Skill** is directly linked to the musicians' ability to use the social and digital networks that exist in the market as tools. Most musicians are self-employed entrepreneurs, and use these tools in different ways and for different purposes. The characteristics of this competence are mainly connected to the ability to properly use social and digital networks, be present on different platforms, to understand the data and graphics available on these platforms, having the ability to relate to different external audiences through digital media, and being able to products and entertainment for different platforms in the market. This competence mainly stems from technological competencies, the development of unique and exclusive products, and leveraging distributors (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004), and was indirectly proven by Xu *et al.* (2017) on the support of digital platforms and internationalization of musical style and bands.

The last competence to come out of the analyses and interviews was (4) **Multicultural Creativity for product development**. This relates to the musicians' ability to develop products based on existing resources and on the cultural, social, and economic scenarios in which they work. This competence is built through a knowledge and understanding of the local and international cultural and socioeconomic scenarios, the ability to take advantage of social and cultural situations and turn them into tangible products/services, the ability to develop new ways of delivering entertainment, and the ability to relate to foreign audiences by addressing local or non-local cultural issues. Multicultural creativity for product development stems from the skills for leveraging foreign distributors, developing unique products, and technological capacities.

The result of the research show that for a rock and roll band to internationalize, it needs eight strategic skills that make the internationalization process successful. Figure 2 shows a conceptual model of the competencies found for bands' internationalization, as well as their preliminary consequences according to the interviews and literature review. This figure also shows the accumulation of strategic skills necessary for the internationalization of rock and roll bands.



**Figure 2.** Conceptual Model – Strategic Competencies for the Internationalization of bands  
 Source: Elaborated from the primary research data.

The conceptual model covers the strategic competencies of BG firms found in the literature (rectangles with continuous lines) and the competencies mapped during the field research that emerged from the interviews, which, in turn, were based on the literature on the internationalization of rock and roll bands (rectangles with dotted lines). The arrows indicate the relationship between the competencies present in the speech of each respondent during the field investigation. We observed that the competencies mentioned by Cavusgil and Knight (2004; 2015) for a background of the competencies found, which have induced the creation of new skills that can be exploited not only by BG companies, but also by technology-based companies with digital features that have few resources, a high level of intangible assets, and organizational agility (Hennart *et al.*, 2021). This conceptual model can be used by other researchers as propositions and hypotheses, with the purpose of strengthening knowledge in each of the competencies in the areas of Strategy, Innovation, and International Business, advancing the studies on competencies, capacities, and business resources.

The findings reflect the unique characteristics of the music industry; however, the competencies are also strategic from a business point of view. These strategic competencies are present in studies on digital companies (Hennart *et al.*, 2021; Gosling *et al.*, 2019), and are part of future research agendas on BG companies (Sousa *et al.*, 2020; Cavusgil & Knight, 2015). The competencies largely reflect the phenomenon of BG firms and extend to future trails blazed by famous researchers, who organize the field by taking into account a digital context.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This article outlines some of the competencies identified for the internationalization of rock and roll bands, based on the theory of Internationalization of BG companies and rock and roll international entrepreneurship. These two theories led to the presentation of a competence-building model that can be used by entrepreneurs in the music industry, as well as researchers wishing to study the phenomenon of band internationalization, not only rock and roll bands, but also other genres.

The strategic competencies mentioned by Knight and Cavusgil (2004) were checked and found in the band internationalization, based on the research reports. The general objective of the study was achieved, as it was found that the bands also developed the strategic competencies proposed by these authors. The specific objective related to similarity was also achieved as, in addition to those skills, they also led to new ones, which are specifically linked to studies that explore the internationalization of rock and roll bands.

The second specific objective was to map new competencies, which was done through the instrumentalization of rock and roll internationalization theories. These competencies are: (1) Programming skills in software and recording platforms; (2) Language skills; (3) Digital Skill; and (4) Multicultural Creativity to develop products and services.

The main practical contribution of the study lay in showing how the internationalization of rock and roll bands works. By achieving these new skills, managers in the music area can follow the path of internationalization based on the strategic competencies presented in the paper. The theoretical contribution regards especially the mapping of new strategic skills that a band can develop, which can be used in future studies on internationalization of BG companies and startups in the music industry (Cavusgil & Knight, 2004; Carneiro & Dib, 2007; Piveta, Scherer, Carpes, Trindade, Rizzatti & Santos, 2018).

Furthermore, the strategic competencies addressed in the study (Figure 2) support new study paths, propositions, and potential hypotheses that give rise to research suggestions established by Sousa *et al.* (2020), Cavusgil and Knight (2015), and Hennart *et al.* (2021). Due to the nature of digital exploration in the international market of rock and roll bands, strategic competencies can be studied from backgrounds such as this research, for the creation and articulation of new capacities and skills, addressing sectorial contexts of technology and digitization.

The four new competencies found in the study can be used by the internationalization theories of BG companies, relating to resource allocation issues. This is because rock and roll bands also have scarce resources and need to work with intangible attributes to reach foreign markets. Thus, the band internationalization process is as lean as that of companies with few resources, and could be further studied by the theory of "Lean Internationalization" (Autio & Zander, 2016).

This paper has two limitations. The first was the difficulty of finding a specific literature on rock and roll. The topic has been widely explored by several scientific areas, but until now, there have been no meta-analyses or even literature reviews on the topic of BG entrepreneurship. We therefore decided to use two existing lines of research: entrepreneurship in the music area, and rock and roll internationalization. The second limitation relates to the sample. Most of those interviewed had bands that were seeking to internationalize, and only three interviewees already had a strong fan base abroad. Therefore, the evidence was focused more on knowledge creation for the development of strategic competencies.

A suggestion for future research is the application of the developed conceptual model (Figure 2) to conduct case studies and qualitative research with bands with a wide fan base abroad. This study also creates an opportunity for researchers to use quantitative methods to validate the conceptual model.

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