



**9th Annual Conference of the  
EuroMed Academy of Business**

**Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Digital Ecosystems**

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## **FOREWORD**

The Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business aims to provide a unique international forum to facilitate the exchange of cutting-edge information through multidisciplinary presentations on examining and building new theory and business models for success through management innovation.

It is acknowledged that the conference has established itself as one of the major conferences of its kind in the EuroMed region, in terms of size, quality of content, and standing of attendees. Many of the papers presented contribute significantly to the business knowledge base.

The conference attracts hundreds of leading scholars from leading universities and principal executives and politicians from all over the world with the participation or intervention of Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers, Company CEOs, Presidents of Chambers, and other leading figures.

This year the conference attracted over 220 people from over 50 different countries. Academics, practitioners, researchers and Doctoral students throughout the world submitted original papers for conference presentation and for publication in this Book. All papers and abstracts were double blind reviewed. The result of these efforts produced empirical, conceptual and methodological papers and abstracts involving all functional areas of business.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Many people and organizations are responsible for the successful outcome of the 9th Annual Conference of the EuroMed Academy of Business.

Special thanks go to the Conference Co-Chairs Dr. Katarzyna Śledziwska and Dr. Renata Gabryelczyk, the Conference Organising Committee, the DELab and the University of Warsaw, in Poland, for accomplishing an excellent job.

It is acknowledged that a successful conference could not be possible without the special co-operation and care of the Track Chairs and Reviewers for reviewing the many papers that were submitted to this conference. Special thanks to the Session Chairs and Paper Discussants for taking the extra time to make this conference a real success.

The last but not the least important acknowledgment goes to all those who submitted and presented their work at the conference. Their valuable research has highly contributed to the continuous success of the conference.

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## SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY. FOCUS ON INGREDIENTS MARKET.

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### ABSTRACT

Companies today operate in an environment and socio-economic complex contest.

The fast transformations in the environment and strong hyper-global competition, have led companies to hire an economic-social role within the environment.

With the enlargement of the market the concept of corporate social responsibility becomes an essential factor for the development of the enterprise.

In the light of these considerations, this article aims to show how, acting within the food business are claiming new methods of approach to the target market.

In particular, it aims to highlight the market of food ingredients, which is a highly complex market. Companies operating in this sector, are driven to create new strategies of action based on the principles of sustainability and responsibility to society.

It is necessary to highlight how this trend is wanted not only by companies but by the final consumers; which they are predisposed to buying decisions that involve ethical and moral aspects of a packet. Using a further questionnaire to validate this hypothesis.

**Keywords:** *globalization, the food market, the ingredients market, sustainability, social responsibility, food supply chain, new strategies for action.*

### INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a phenomenon of composite nature, which not only reduces the sphere of economic transactions but which embraces the systems of society, culture and politics of the whole world. Companies will need a crash course in becoming market-oriented and customer-driven. They will have to establish new strategies, structures, system, and internal cultures in order to survive.<sup>1</sup> Despite

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<sup>1</sup> KOTLER P. (1990), Globalization - Realities and Strategies, Die Unternehmung, Vol.44, No2, pp 79-99

the attention of scholars and the public opinion about it has been emphasized in recent times, this phenomenon is rooted in the past.

Anthony Giddens (1999), defines globalization as the global interconnection (the cultural levels, political and economic) that results from the elimination of barriers.

This paper has as objective to putting them in light as in the food industry, particularly in the market for food ingredients; the issue of corporate social responsibility will become more and more important. A theme that has emerged in recent years is related to responsibility: in particular we refer to the mode of making the company the more responsible in order to meet the needs of its customers, ensuring financial income to investors and promoting social development in competitive space in which it is present.

Sustainability, social responsibility and supply chain are the main drivers of the companies operating in the food sector. Taken together, these paradigms are expanding the range of action of companies useful for the construction of a more united economic system, based on the principle of sustainability.

This reality is confirmed by consumers who increasingly operate their choices not based only on the cost-benefit ratio, but promote ethical and other attitudes social type.

The consumer, therefore, makes a choice of belonging rewarding the company with which it shares the social, ecological and political choices facing the community.

## **GLOBALIZATION AND ITS INFLUENCE IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY: FOCUS ON FOOD INGREDIENTS MARKET**

In conditions of hyper competition the firm aims to make "more off the same, only faster, better and cheaper than competitors"<sup>1</sup> focusing on the environment and in particular on competition to predict, curb and react to his moves.

In this context quite complex, the food sector has shown a substantial "sealing" which highlighted its counter-cyclical qualities.

However, it must be stressed that in recent years from the end of 2007, the world market of agricultural commodities and food prices have been characterized by a strong surge and a subsequent fall in prices. Such oscillations have accentuated the situation of uncertainty and competitiveness of the industry.

The economic importance of the food industry in Europe is remarkable. In fact, it is the first manufacturing industry in terms of turnover.

The following graph shows the change in the sales of some countries in the European Union; demonstrating that the structure of the food sector in these countries is significantly different.

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<sup>1</sup> V.J.K. Johansson, "Global Marketing", McGraw-Hill International, 2006, p.55

Member State	2015 Q1 / 2014 Q4 (% change)	2015 Q1 / 2014 Q1 (% change)	Q1 2015/Q1 2014 (% change)
EU	-0.6	0.8	-0.6
Austria	1.0	-0.4	0.7
Belgium	-2.1	-1.9	-2.5
Bulgaria	0.4	5.3	6.2
Czech Republic	-0.4	2.4	1.1
Denmark	-1.5	1.1	-0.7
Estonia	-2.0	-3.6	-2.5
Finland	-2.9	-0.3	-2.0
France	-0.1	0.3	-0.2
Germany	-1.7	0.0	-3.5
Greece	1.5	0.5	0.5
Hungary	1.0	5.1	7.2
Ireland	2.3	0.2	5.4
Italy	0.7	2.0	1.8
Latvia	-0.1	-0.6	-5.3
Lithuania	2.1	-2.7	-7.9
Netherlands	-0.3	3.4	2.7
Poland	0.3	0.2	-2.9
Portugal	0.7	0.2	-1.8
Romania	2.1	1.2	4.1
Spain	-1.8	3.8	0.9
Sweden	-1.7	-3.1	-6.4

**Picture 1** - Change in food and beverage sales by country<sup>1</sup>

Despite a fall in consumption in the food industry due to the prolonged recession, the value of the food ingredients market was valued at \$ 66.4 billion in 2014 and is expected to grow at an annual rate of 5.5% from 2015 to 2020.

Article one of the objectives is to highlight the issue of responsibility in the food ingredients market (B2B market). Companies operating in this sector contribute to their welfare due social responsibility enterprise; their economic growth is directly related to the development of social relations with the environment.

The key factors driving growth of the global food ingredient industry include escalating global population, changing demographics and growing demand for packaged food and beverages and the corporate social responsibility.

## **CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE FIRM-ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIP**

In the global context created, businesses operating in the field of food ingredients must better manage their interactions with the environment. The interaction between business and the environment can be defined as a relationship of Exchange, mutual influence with changes and developments over time.

The company presents itself as a system immersed in multiple environments identified in:

- micro-environment, divided into transactional and competitive environment, characterized by the set of variables that affect the operations of the company

<sup>1</sup> Source: European Food and Drink Industry, Economic Bulletin, 2015

- macro-environment composed set of external variables over which the enterprise has no chance to act as political, legislative, social, cultural and economic.

In recent years the relationship between the environment, social and ecological aspects considered, and the enterprise has become an increasingly important theme in which the company is treated as an active player interested in proper environmental management.<sup>1</sup>

The growing importance of this issue led to the person in charge of involvement in environmental protection and a redefinition of its management structure.

There are several contributions left by scholars in which he emphasizes the need to monitor continuously the environmental characteristics and implement dynamic management systems in relation to these changes. Among the many scholars who have analyzed this relationship, include: Gino Zappa which, within its scientific production, assigns a considerable role to the concept of environment and its dependency on the part of the enterprise; not only is one of the first scholars of his time he reevaluates the static nature of the environment and its influences on entrepreneurial actions.<sup>2</sup>

At the same time, Pietro Onida argues, following the thought zappiano, that "this mutability of the environment is reflected in any sort of enterprise" highlighting the social influences of corporate activity in the environment.<sup>3</sup>

Other significant contribution is that of Pasquale Saraceno which recognizes the possibility for the company to change its external environment through a series of actions to make compatible the environmental situation with the act of the company.<sup>4</sup>

Thanks to the literature, you can then define how corporate responsibility is a useful tool to assess and monitor the interactions between the environment and business.

It is useful to stress that this tool has an effect both on the internal management of the company that arise with ethical and social behaviors and actions, both outward with the need to enhance the corporate image and obtain the consent of consumers and to all external stakeholders.

Businesses and individuals that are moving in the direction of environmental protection show that there are many organizational choices needed to develop a unique commitment throughout the company.

## **THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

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<sup>1</sup> Source: "La responsabilità dell'impresa. Per i trent'anni di giurisprudenza commerciale", Giuffrè Editore 2004

<sup>2</sup> G. Zappa, Le produzioni nell'economia delle imprese. Tomo Primo, Giuffrè, Milano, 1956, p. 312.

<sup>3</sup> P. Onida, Il bilancio di esercizio nelle imprese, Giuffrè, Milano, 1951, p. 33

<sup>4</sup> P. Saraceno, La produzione industriale, Libreria Universitaria Editrice, Venezia, 1970.



Many are scholars of management that showed over the years interest in the corporate social responsibility; but only in the years '50s CSR joined fully in the academic literature.

The first major contribution goes back to 1953 by Bowen (1953), the first comprehensive study on corporate social responsibility refers to the businessman.

According to the author, the social responsibility of businessmen refers to "the obligations of the businessman to pursue those policies, to make those decisions and to follow those lines of action that are desirable in relation to the goals and values of our society".<sup>1</sup>

In the following decade, reshape the international academic debate on corporate social responsibility and form different schools of thought.

At the end of the '70s was a very important moment, characterized by the proliferation of CSR definitions. On the one hand, we developed the neoclassical theory, according to which the social interest is profit and whatever compromise the efficiency of the enterprise represents an unnecessary cost. Simultaneously the first studies were proposed that shared the premises of stakeholder theory and viewed the enterprise as the bearer of duties against a number of parties. The leading exponent of neoclassical theory was undoubtedly Friedman, that "there is one and only one social responsibility – to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which equates to argue that compete openly without resorting to deception or fraud".<sup>2</sup>

Of the decade 1980-1990 we must mention an important contribution; Drucker offers a new perspective on CSR, stating that liability can be seen as an economic opportunity for profitable for business. The author identifies the existence of a positive correlation between corporate social responsibility and business.

In more recent years has been consolidated in the debate on corporate social responsibility the link between this concept and to sustainability.

The concept of "sustainability" as it is known was first introduced in 1987 by the Brundtland Report of the United Nations. In this analysis, the concept of sustainability was defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

In recent years, then, as pointed out in the previous paragraph, it can be seen as the firm is part of an environment with which it interacts and is influenced and therefore increases the interest about the nature of these interactions.

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<sup>1</sup> H. R. Bowen, *Social responsibilities of the businessman*, Harper, New York, 1953

<sup>2</sup> M. Friedman, *The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits*, *Journal New York*, pp. 122-124, 1970

## THE NEW CONSUMER

The theme of responsibility has received, especially in recent years, significant attention from food companies and consumers. As mentioned earlier, it is important to emphasize that this trend is wanted not only by businesses but also by final consumers.

The goal of this research is to find the new variables that influence consumer buying decisions.

As said previously, it has been confirmed by an empirical investigation based on a qualitative and quantitative methodology.

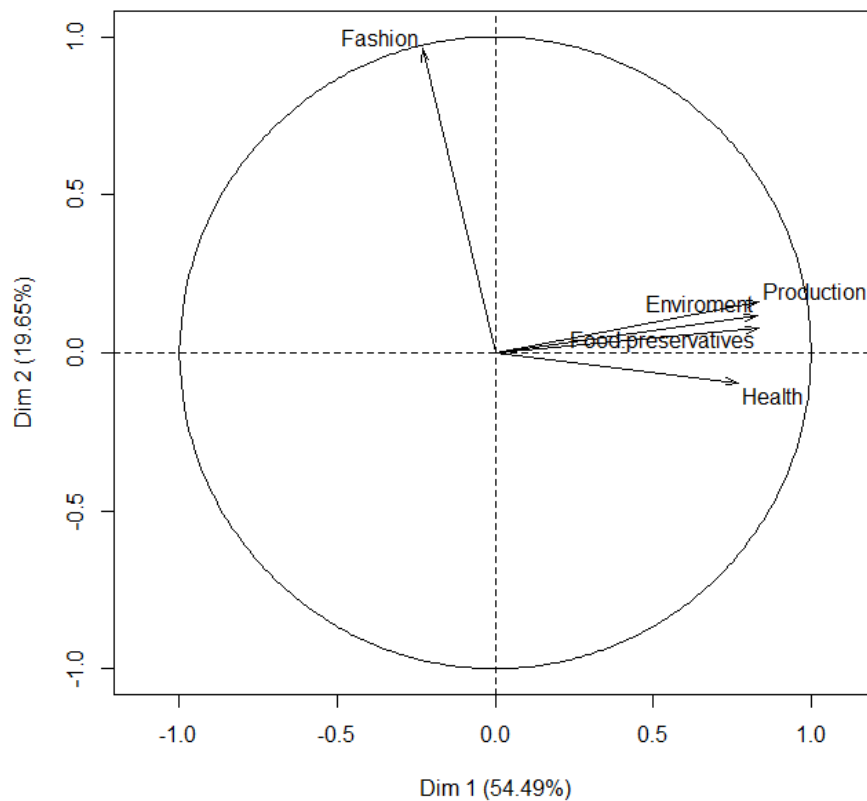
Broad questions were built mainly to answer closed, seeking to deepen the growing importance new variables that drive consumer choices.

The questionnaire is tested through word of mouth, social networking and online forums regarding the sector analyzed, it was divided into several sections.

The survey is aimed at studying the consumer with specific questions in order to identify, understand their needs, expectations, habits and preferences. The statistical sample that responded to the questionnaire consists of 66.7% of women and 33.3% of men, total responses amounted at 187.

In particular, with regard to the objectives of this article, it is useful to clarify that the variables that drive and that influence consumer buying choices have been identified: environment, protection, preservatives, fashion and health.

These values were used to see if there could be a particular correlation and verify which of the options listed above, are mainly related and those that are less so.



**Table 1** – The drivers that influence purchases<sup>1</sup>

The PCA chart shows us substantially the correlations between the various options.

The aim was to figure out which variables are in close correlation and therefore influential consumer buying behaviour. It can be seen as producing, preservatives and environment variables are strongly related to each other and at the same time are correlated with health but not with the same intensity that they have between them.

These variables can be summarised in the search by consumers of food obtained through quality production not to mention the respect for the environment.

One can therefore argue that the importance attached by the consumer to just one of these variables ensures the same importance as the other variables considered, precisely because they are related to each other. Regarding the variable fashion, we can affirm that in relation to the variable health appear to be inversely related (who looks more fashionable doesn't consider the salutary effect of a food).

<sup>1</sup> Source: Authors's elaboration

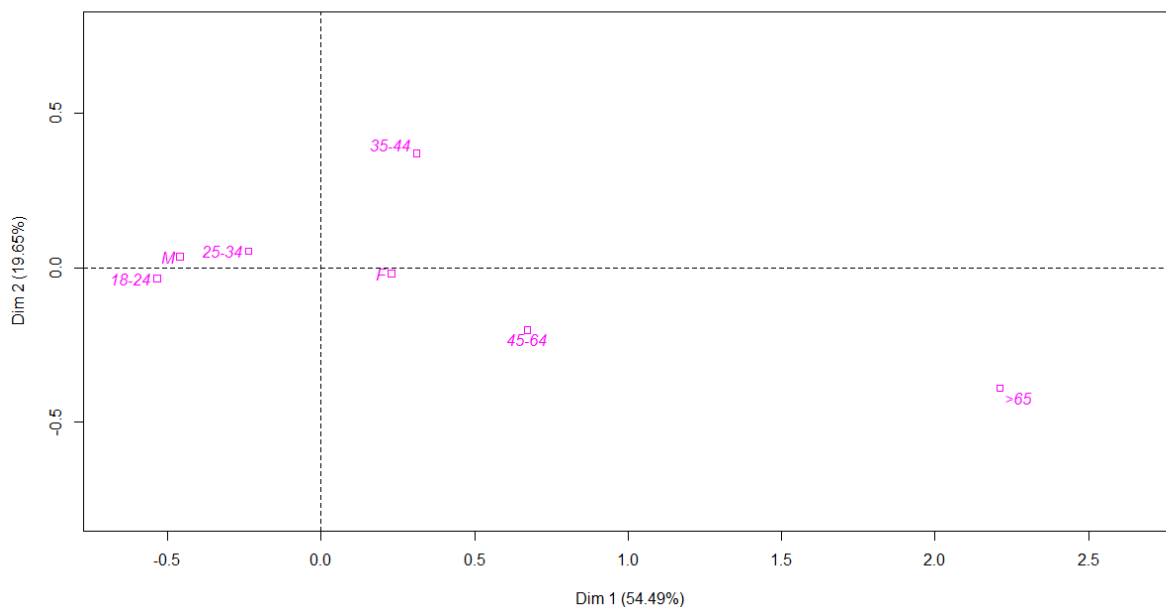
Finally, according to the PCA methodology arguably preservatives and fashion are as independent as can be seen from the graph form a right angle.

The second PCA was performed taking into analysis the sex and age of the respondents.

As can be seen from the graph females (black dots) are located further to the right than men, this demonstrates that women, main purchasing managers, are affected most to the peculiar characteristics of foods such as naturalness and quality.

Also, considering the age of respondents, we can see from the chart as people aged from 45 years of age are those that take into account the size that runs from left to right of the graph above and seek the assurance of a quality product.

Clearly it can be assumed that this preference of these variables requires a larger budget. In conclusion, this poll, with subsequent statistical analysis, allowed to better analyze what ought to be the characteristics of the food in front of consumers who are increasingly knowledgeable and competent. In addition, this analysis gives help and clarification about the composition of the market not only the institutions but also individual companies operating in this sector.



**Table 2** – Interviewees<sup>1</sup>

The questionnaire results represent a possible starting point of analysis to readers about the consumer orientation towards new paradigms.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Authors's elaboration

## **SOCIAL AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS INCREASES THE TURNOVER**

The theme of corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a topic of interest to the community. The European Commission (EC) on 25 October of 2011 has defined CSR as “corporate responsibility for their impact on society”.<sup>1</sup>

By this definition of CSR from the European Commission wants to push companies to focus their attention on a new way of doing business; incorporating the maximization of profit with the desire to play an active role in the context in which they operate.

This concept of CSR must go far beyond the simple compliance with any applicable laws, but the development of CSR practices should lead to business growth (Brino 2014).

Until a few years ago seemed a theme contrasting with the business, now it has become an integral part.

Here is that CSR becomes a useful tool capable of creating different types of value for a multitude of actors<sup>2</sup>:

- for employees: assuring them better working conditions and increasing their well-being;
- for vendors: through a logic of co-operation and sharing of objectives and values;
- for customers: by maximizing their well-being but also through the adoption of an ethical process of production;
- for the community: taking an active part in society through the development of activities aimed at environmental protection.

## **CONCLUSION**

In a highly complex environment, the company is confronted with an environment, which changes unpredictably. The company is called to play a productive role in response to the different needs of demand and the welfare of the local community in which it resides.

Corporate responsibility, understood as a commitment by the company to the environment in which it operates, has effects on both the internal and operational management and towards external social actions to maintain and increase the consensus of all stakeholders.

It's clear that this issue is important not only for businesses operating in B2C but is considerable even for companies operating in a logic of B2B.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Green Paper "promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility" of 2001.

<sup>2</sup> For further information please visit: Tantalus C., R. Priem, Competing for stakeholders: toward them to more context-sensitive theory of business sustainability ", accepted in the Journal of Management Studies," The Foundations of Sustainability "conference, Burleigh Court, Loughborough, 27th-29th September 2010.

In the questionnaire proposed in the paper, it was possible to highlight how the issue of social responsibility is a sensitive issue for final consumers.

It should be stressed that whatever the competitive situation in which the company develops, both B2B and B2C, to have huge success is not enough that the firm is proficient from the production point of view, but it is also very important that it be accepted by society.

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## FAMILY BUSINESS INNOVATION: PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS IN THE FOOD INGREDIENTS INDUSTRY. THE CASE KEMIN

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### ABSTRACT

Kemin is a family business set up by Rolland and Mary Nelson in 1961 in Des Moines (Iowa). Its core business is the production of ingredients and nutritional solutions.

At the beginning, they had two product lines, an office in their family room and a manufacturing plant in an old wool barn. The founders, who are still active in the business today, have started by serving the animal food market with ingredients such as antioxidants, flavors and mold inhibitors.

From these humble beginnings, Kemin has grown to serve the needs of customers in the global feed and food industries as well as the health, nutrition and beauty markets.

Kemin is more than a supplier to their worldwide customers. It's a researcher, a resource, and a partner. Kemin is a company committed to innovation and technology. Through constant innovation it creates innovative products for different industries. There are many factors that lead the company to continuous investments in research and development.

Among these:

- Market trends
- Competition
- New types of consumers
- Company philosophy (constant innovation)
- The need to improve

Innovation in Family Business is identified with the need and the courage to keep doing what you can do best. Kemin today is currently composed of 14 independent operating units, each with their own president. Together, they produce more than 500 ingredients to serve their customers. The net sales reached in 2014 was \$585 million.

**Keywords:** *leadership team, family business, innovations, technology, social responsibility, ability to evolve, entrepreneurship approach.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

The changes that have occurred in recent years have led to a change in the competitive environment. Today companies are continuously looking for new competitive strategies.

Several factors impact on the companies' propensity to innovate, such as the organisational structure of the companies, their size, the impact of their sectors and strategic approach to changes in the context. Some scholars argue that the role of innovation is the opening to the newness. The innovation for family businesses<sup>1</sup> may be considered as a means to reach and to maintain a competitive advantage in a long-term perspective.

Not only, as some research has emerged as family businesses invest a lot in terms of innovative strategies.<sup>2</sup> In the light of this, the paper has as objective the study of innovation management within a family company, Kemin.

## 2. THE CASE HISTORY: KEMIN

Kemin was created in 1961 by Rolland W and Mary Nelson in Des Moines, Iowa (United States). It's a globally family business that produces innovative nutritional and health solutions for a growing and constantly changing world. Kemin combines molecular science with human creativity to improve the lives of humans and animals worldwide. Using science, it produces more than 500 ingredients, therefore providing important nutritional benefits for humans and animals. From these humble beginnings, Kemin has grown to meet the needs of customers in the feed and food sector globally, as well as in the health, beauty and nutrition markets. It's production and organizational expansion dates back to the '60s.

It's precisely in the years of the economic boom that the company felt the need to expand outside the United States of America. The small company settlement turned into an industrial production. This allowed the company to take advantage of the extremely positive historical moment to invest and to find new opportunities in the market.

At the end of the '60s, Kemin was exporting its products to distributors in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands and Spain. With reference to the constantly changing and growing European demand, in 1970 Kemin opened its first regional office in Herentals, Belgium. After the '80s, convinced of the idea of expanding effectively in other territories the company established manufacturing facilities in many other countries outside the Usa, fully respecting the local cultures and customs. The internalization

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Dreux 1990: "Family Business are companies that appear to be controlled by one or more families, who have a level of incidence in organizational governance sufficient to substantially influence the company's decisions".

<sup>2</sup> Source: Craig, Moores 2006

strategy consisted in use of qualified staff and management chosen locally. This smart production choice allowed the company to achieve significant results not only in the relevant markets, but also with local distributors. During these years, a new approach to R&D was introduced. Not by chance, in fact, the development of Kemin translates into the ability to continuously invest in research and development. In reference to the ever changing, Kemin decided to found his second regional headquarters in Singapore in 1988. Then through continuous investments, the company expanded its global presence through further openings of new subsidiaries:

- In 1994, it opened an additional production site and sales in Zhuhai, China. Since then its philosophy was to use science and education to address market requirements and therefore provide better quality products.
- Shortly after that, the company turned its attention to the Indian market, taking on sales and manufacturing operations and displacing an additional site in Chennai<sup>1</sup>.
- The increasing amount of products exported to Europe, made it necessary to establish production facilities, R&D and administration by implementing a penetration in the European market. To this regard, in 2010, Kemin opened a cutting-edge production facility in Veronella, Italy<sup>2</sup>.

Thanks to the increasing quality of products and the distribution capillary action, there was a decisive step forward not only in terms of sales but also in industrial investment. During these years, the company implemented significant investments in R&D in fact, since 1980, it expanded the range of products to the human food sector as well. By means of constant research they discovered that the same chemical products used for the production of animal feed was also effective to the inhibition of mold, bacteria and microorganisms that may arise also in human food. All these improvements make Kemin a bioscience company that produces nutritional and innovative solutions for a world that is growing and changing.

Kemin now has wide range of ingredients (about 500) and more than 200 patents. Its peculiarities and its values are well known in the United States and around the world, in fact, they sell in more than 90 countries including Belgium, Brazil, China, Italy, Singapore, South Africa and the USA.

### **Mission and Vision**

Kemin's intent is to work in partnership with its customers to satisfy their needs.

Through the mission the company reaches its target, with primary emphasis on the satisfaction of customer needs; through a combination of talent and science Kemin aims to find innovative

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<sup>1</sup> India

<sup>2</sup> Source: <http://www.kemin.com/about/history/>

nutritional and health solutions for a changing world.

With constant innovation at the molecular level, thanks to new technologies and research and development, the company promotes steady improvements in its products and processes.

In 2005, the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 17025 awarded Kemin an international recognition. Through this quality standard the company's competence in the conduct of laboratory tests was certified. It is easy to identify those values that best represent the company's essence:<sup>1</sup>

- Integrity, communication, respect for colleagues, customers and suppliers.
- constant work maintaining high product excellence
- Constant change as a business model to be pursued
- Teamwork across functional and business units.
- Passion in serving customers.
- Confidence in the value of the products.
- Innovation and quality in processes, products and services.

### **Business Unit**

The company is structured into seven divisions<sup>2</sup>.

- *Animal Nutrition and Health*: Kemin intends to meet the animal's nutritional requirements and completely eliminate from its feed all toxic substances and bacteria.  
In addition such innovative solutions help manufacturers and meat breeders reduce production costs.
- *Pet Food Technologies*: For more than three decades Kemin has cooperated with many of the major pet food producers of the world. In close collaboration with its suppliers they create innovative ingredients that meet the formulation needs, taste and attractiveness of the products.
- *Rendering*: As an active partner in the pet food industry for more than 30 years, Kemin has realized important relationships that help provide solutions and unique services for the rendering industry.
- *Dietary Ingredients*: Kemin offers a diverse line of scientifically developed nutritional ingredients. It provides supplements designed to encourage the hiring of certain elements and substances not present in some foods.
- *Food Technologies*: Extensive knowledge of oxidation processes and molecular food, made Kemin a leading choice for comestible preservation and safety. To best meet the particular

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.kemin.com/about>

<sup>2</sup> Source: <https://www.kemin.com/en/europe/markets>

needs of diverse economic and geographic regions, as well as the needs of multi-national companies, Kemin Food Technologies has production facilities around the world.

- *Personal Care*: Their personal care line is composed of ingredients that improve skin appearance, formulation texture, stability, performance, and delivery of actives. ingredients consistent, reliable, effective and safe, for the various sectors in which it operates, including the cosmetics sector. Moreover, it is able to offer active and functional ingredients, with the aim of offering further benefits to the final consumer.
- *Pharma & MedDevices*: Kemin was the first company to introduce lutein-based intraocular dyes. Today, Kemin Pharma offers one of the most comprehensive lines of intraocular dyes available for the ophthalmology surgical device market.

Today, these seven divisions are held together by Kemin's mission. The current market penetration of the company is estimated to "touch" to 2.5 billion people every day; this clearly show Kemin is vision and a values.

### Swot Analysis

The SWOT analysis is one of the main measures undertaken within the strategic analysis.

It is a structured planning method used evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The SWOT analysis (also called SWOT Matrix) is the kind of analysis that can be used for a company, a product or even on a person. The starting point is focusing on the goal the company wants to achieve. Thanks to this tool the company makes an analysis of its:<sup>1</sup>

*Strengths (S)*: characteristics of the business or project that give it an advantage over others; *Weaknesses (W)*: characteristics that place the business or project at a disadvantage relative to others; *Opportunities (O)*: elements that the business or project could exploit to its advantage; *Threats (T)*: elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the business or project.

From the intersection of these four points we get many different strategies that can be adopted by an enterprise:<sup>2</sup> **SO** strategies use their strengths to take advantage of opportunities; **ST** strategies use their strengths to avoid threats; **WO** strategies take advantage of the opportunities overcoming weaknesses; **WT** strategies make minimal weaknesses and avoid threats. Applying the Swot Analysis allows Kemin to identify its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as follows.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Pellicelli A.C. (2009), Introduzione al marketing strategico, Giappichelli, Torino, To

<sup>2</sup> Source: Pellicelli G. (2009), Il marketing, Giappichelli, Torino, To

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Over 200 patents supported with quality processes and procedures;</p> <p>Cost advantage through the property know-how;</p> <p>High quality products;</p> <p>Sales in more than 90 countries (global coverage);</p> <p>Advanced Research and constant innovation with patenting of new formulas;</p> <p>Equitable and sustainable development;</p> <p>Great selection of human resources through a high vocational training;</p> <p>Exclusive access to natural resources</p>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Low investment in adv;</p> <p>Lack of products directed for children;</p> <p>The patchy distribution of products throughout the Usa;</p> <p>Limited brand visibility to the final consumer;</p> <p>Use of ingredients not available in every countries;</p> <p>Constant need of investments in R&amp;D.</p>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Information and communication;</p> <p>New market trends;</p> <p>Removal of international trade barriers;</p> <p>Possible partnerships and strategic alliances with other companies.</p>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Strong competition (direct and indirect);</p> <p>Presence of substitute products;</p> <p>Instability of the commodity market prices due to war for the extracts and the raw materials.</p> <p>Development online shopping;</p> <p>Strong barriers to enter world markets due to different regulations;</p>

Figure 1.4 - SWOT Analysis Kemin<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: Results of SWOT performed by the authors

The following table shows the strategies that Kemin could adopted by crossing the four areas below:

<p>Strategies S-O</p> <p>To take advantage of new market trends (e.g. food) in order to create new products, by reducing the amount of chemical additives and components;</p> <p>To maintain a high quality level of chemical recipes;</p> <p>To keep training staff at high level;</p> <p>To expand its presence into new countries through the opening of new production sites (eg. Turkey).</p>	<p>Strategies W-O</p> <p>To focus more on the image and brand awareness approaching the B2C market;</p> <p>To resort to research Joint Venture by reducing costs in R&amp;D. To enter emerging countries (Asia, Japan), very sensitive to the culture of natural products;</p> <p>To reinforce the segments in which the company operates;</p> <p>To expand the range of products and natural/innovative ingredients.</p>
<p>Strategies S-T</p> <p>To increase marketing strategies in order to involve multiple buyers;</p> <p>To continue to invest in R &amp; D due to high competition (highly skilled competitors);</p> <p>To increase the information about the company products and their use;</p> <p>To develop biological products by responding in detail to the trend of the sectors.</p>	<p>Strategies W-T</p> <p>To abandon the sectors with the decreasing sales and the references which do not generate substantial returns;</p> <p>To focus on visibility and brand awareness both in positioning against competitors, and as returns in terms of customer loyalty (B2B and B2C).</p>

Figure 1.5 - **Strategies**<sup>1</sup>

### 3. FAMILY BUSINESS INNOVATION

In this section, we examine the impact of this changes in all services offered by the company and we explain the many factors that push the company to constant investments in innovation. First of all, these changes consist in an evolution of the operating businesses and their organizational structure. The opinions in the field of innovation in family firms do not seem to be unique. Dunn (1996) says that family businesses tend to be less innovative but more traditional and conservative; very often these companies focus on the internal dynamics of the company and are less prone to develop external collaborations.

Contrary to what some scholars say, family businesses invest a lot on innovation in order to maintain a sustainable competitive advantage in the long term. In fact, according to Craig and Moores<sup>2</sup> "consolidated family businesses seem to attribute much importance to the practices and innovative strategies". According to these theories, the family owned businesses are more creative and innovative. There are many factors that drive companies to constant investments in innovation. An examination of the literature in the field of high-tech companies emerge a variety of definitions. It may be useful to summarize one of the most significant.

According Kleingartner and Anderson (1987), the high-tech companies as a feature of the primary objective of transferring new ideas in the market. To achieve this goal:

<sup>1</sup> Source: Results of the strategies carried out by the authors

<sup>2</sup> 2006, pp. 1-10

- Devote significant resources to R & D, with an R & D ratio / sales at least twice the average of other sectors;
- Take on employees and develop professionalism highly technology-oriented;
- Research of new products for existing markets and new markets.

This feature provides a strong scientific/technical content to the sector which result in pressures that make different competition from that of other sectors. One of the reasons why Kemin is considered a high-tech company is given by the impact that its R&D has of sales. The net sales recorded in 2015 amounted to about \$3,4 billion and the impact of R&D represent 13%<sup>1</sup> of it.<sup>2</sup> This data is a clear proof of how the company follows this market trend to offer more quality products and services. Despite Kemin is a family business, innovation represents the means of strategic change. The innovation for Kemin may be considered as a means to reach and to maintain a competitive advantage in a long-term perspective.

Hereinafter is a list of some of the factors that drive a company like Kemin to innovate:

- Competition: great global competition means that companies continue to invest in R&D to maintain their competitive advantage. In a constantly changing world, innovation is the first tool to compete.
- Company philosophy (constant innovation): As our world continues to change and evolve, it is necessary to provide innovative solutions for the consumer designed to meet the increasing needs following the market trends. Motivated by personal health, animal welfare, Kemin invests in R&D to create new solutions for the new consumer.
- Need to evolve: The rapid economic growth and the population growth lead to the need to evolve. To evolve means to be able to change and adapt to new market drives.

Whatever the specific goal of an enterprise is, this is due to the desire to build its competitive advantage by exploiting the opportunities that arise in the macroeconomic environment. In the specific case of Kemin, that advantage is represented by constant innovation of products and processes. This innovation is surely guaranteed by high training staff, maintenance of hygiene factors (Those factors the absence of Which demotivates people), quality production guaranteed by sustainable methods and international certifications as well as in the high investment in scientific research laboratories. The strategic tool that takes into account the trends dictated by the industry is PEST. PEST represent the analysis of the following detailed environments:

- *Political-legal*: the political environment surrounding the company has an important influence on its strategies. The legislative measures and upgrades, both national and international, are

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<sup>1</sup> Result obtained using the following formula: R&D as % of sales = (Expenditure on R&D/Total Net sales)\*100

Source: Kleingartner and Anderson (1987)

<sup>2</sup> Source: Data provided by the company - Kemin

increasingly regulating the operation of businesses and represent indispensable guidelines for placing products on the market.

It is clear that a company like Kemin, a manufacturer of ingredients and natural extracts, operating internationally, must necessarily comply with the rules followed by each of the countries they wish to operate in.

- *Economical*: is the collection of forces acting on the economy and interacting with the operations of the enterprise. Such an environment is influenced by factors such as income, unemployment, inflation and interest rates; items to be evaluated with particular care when planning a strategy. The constantly increasing globalization and emerging markets, make the economic dynamics more complex, with respect to both paying attention to the local rules and the instability of the money exchange.
- *Socio-cultural*: this field refers to population characteristics, education, consumer habits and their lifestyles. The different trends, changes in perceptions and attitudes in relation to certain themes can have significant effects on both the demand and the supply of goods and services offered by the company. Focusing more on the consumer preferences, companies need to adapt their offers to new trends that keep manifesting within the industry.
- *Technology*: technological trends have a significant impact on the company's products and services. Substantial and constant technological improvements are carried out within the industry as far as the R&D of new ingredients, materials and solutions. The technological impact on the products of the company and its production processes make it cutting-edge and able to protect itself against potential threats.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

An analysis carried out has emerged as family businesses play a fundamental role in the global economy. Innovation in a family business plays a very important role, acknowledged by all stakeholders. Like other companies, Kemin, over the years, is structured internally with a specific area of R&D. Kemin like family owned have some advantages over other companies, in their focus on the long term, their commitment to quality and their care and concern for employees. They separate individual business and coordinate them in order to create value and customer satisfaction. They have to coordinate the individual business in order to cut the costs and create synergies. The advantages of organising a business like Kemin in independent business units is that they care about them in a separate way which is meaning that they can take separate risk, and less risk as well. It is necessary that the entrepreneurial family never cease to study the market and its dynamics (SWOT).



In fact, the supervision of the family is essential to innovate while retaining the values and corporate culture. This research has analyzed a large-size operating in different sectors, in particular in the food ingredients market.

Innovation is an important element that is also affected by the economic environment, social, technological (PEST) in which the company operates.

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