

## 5.22: Entry Strategies - Modes of Entry

What is the best way to enter a new market? Should a company first establish an export base or license its products to gain experience in a newly targeted country or region? Or does the potential associated with first-mover status justify a bolder move such as entering an alliance, making an acquisition, or even starting a new subsidiary? Many companies move from exporting to licensing to a higher investment strategy, in effect treating these choices as a learning curve. Each has distinct advantages and disadvantages.

Exporting is the marketing and direct sale of domestically produced goods in another country. Exporting is a traditional and well-established method of reaching foreign markets. Since it does not require that the goods be produced in the target country, no investment in foreign production facilities is required. Most of the costs associated with exporting take the form of marketing expenses.

While relatively low risk, exporting entails substantial costs and limited control. Exporters typically have little control over the marketing and distribution of their products, face high transportation charges and possible tariffs, and must pay distributors for a variety of services. What is more, exporting does not give a company firsthand experience in staking out a competitive position abroad, and it makes it difficult to customize products and services to local tastes and preferences.

Licensing essentially permits a company in the target country to use the property of the licensor. Such property is usually intangible, such as trademarks, patents, and production techniques. The licensee pays a fee in exchange for the rights to use the intangible property and possibly for technical assistance as well.

Because little investment on the part of the licensor is required, licensing has the potential to provide a very large return on investment. However, because the licensee produces and markets the product, potential returns from manufacturing and marketing activities may be lost. Thus, licensing reduces cost and involves limited risk. However, it does not mitigate the substantial disadvantages associated with operating from a distance. As a rule, licensing strategies inhibit control and produce only moderate returns.

Strategic alliances and joint ventures have become increasingly popular in recent years. They allow companies to share the risks and resources required to enter international markets. And although returns also may have to be shared, they give a company a degree of flexibility not afforded by going it alone through direct investment.

There are several motivations for companies to consider a partnership as they expand globally, including (a) facilitating market entry, (b) risk and reward sharing, (c) technology sharing, (d) joint product development, and (e) conforming to government regulations. Other benefits include political connections and distribution channel access that may depend on relationships.

Such alliances often are favorable when (a) the partners' strategic goals converge while their competitive goals diverge; (b) the partners' size, market power, and resources are small compared to the industry leaders; and (c) partners are able to learn from one another while limiting access to their own proprietary skills.

The key issues to consider in a joint venture are ownership, control, length of agreement, pricing, technology transfer, local firm capabilities and resources, and government intentions. Potential problems include (a) conflict over asymmetric new investments, (b) mistrust over proprietary knowledge, (c) performance ambiguity, that is, how to "split the pie," (d) lack of parent firm support, (e) cultural clashes, and (f) if, how, and when to terminate the relationship.

Ultimately, most companies will aim at building their own presence through company-owned facilities in important international markets. Acquisitions or greenfield start-ups represent this ultimate commitment. *Acquisition* is faster, but starting a new, wholly owned subsidiary might be the preferred option if no suitable acquisition candidates can be found.

Also known as foreign direct investment (FDI), acquisitions and greenfield start-ups involve the direct ownership of facilities in the target country and, therefore, the transfer of resources including capital, technology, and personnel. Direct ownership provides a high degree of control in the operations and the ability to better know the consumers and competitive environment. However, it requires a high level of resources and a high degree of commitment.

 Minicase: Cola-Cola and Illycaffé ([www.thecocacolacompany.com/](http://www.thecocacolacompany.com/); <http://www.illy.com/>)

In March 2008, the Coca-Cola company and Illycaffé Spa finalized a joint venture and launched a premium ready-to-drink espresso-based coffee beverage. The joint venture, Ilko Coffee International, was created to bring three ready-to-drink coffee products—Caffè, an Italian chilled espresso-based coffee; Cappuccino, an intense espresso, blended with milk and dark cacao;

and Latte Macchiato, a smooth espresso, swirled with milk—to consumers in 10 European countries. The products will be available in stylish, premium cans (150 ml for Caffè and 200 ml for the milk variants). All three offerings will be available in 10 European Coca-Cola Hellenic markets including Austria, Croatia, Greece, and Ukraine. Additional countries in Europe, Asia, North America, Eurasia, and the Pacific were slated for expansion into 2009.

The Coca-Cola Company is the world's largest beverage company. Along with Coca-Cola, recognized as the world's most valuable brand, the company markets four of the world's top five nonalcoholic sparkling brands, including Diet Coke, Fanta, Sprite, and a wide range of other beverages, including diet and light beverages, waters, juices and juice drinks, teas, coffees, and energy and sports drinks. Through the world's largest beverage distribution system, consumers in more than 200 countries enjoy the company's beverages at a rate of 1.5 billion servings each day.

Based in Trieste, Italy, Illycaffé produces and markets a unique blend of espresso coffee under a single brand leader in quality. Over 6 million cups of Illy espresso coffee are enjoyed every day. Illy is sold in over 140 countries around the world and is available in more than 50,000 of the best restaurants and coffee bars. Illy buys green coffee directly from the growers of the highest quality Arabica through partnerships based on the mutual creation of value. The Trieste-based company fosters long-term collaborations with the world's best coffee growers—in Brazil, Central America, India, and Africa—providing know-how and technology and offering above-market prices.

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