

# **Rol que juegan los activos intangibles en la construcción de ventaja competitiva sustentable en la pyme. Un estudio de casos con empresas de Cataluña y de Jalisco**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the factors which determine the success of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) . The emphasis of the investigation is on the role that intangible assets play in the construction and maintenance of a competitive advantage.

Several studies have agreed upon the identification of the collective of assets which may be key in the success of the SMEs. Among these assets we find the skills and attitudes of the employees and managers, the characteristics of the manager-owner, the reputation of the company, etc. Most of these are intangible and their characteristics appear to coincide with those of the strategic resources from the resource-based view of the firm.

The resource-based view of the firm indicates that the possession of valuable resources and capabilities, unique and idiosyncratic, results in the acquisition of above-normal returns, even on a long-term basis. These strategic assets are obtained and accumulated within the company as a result of day-to-day activity and through learning processes and amassing knowledge specific to the firm

In order to delve further into the analysis of the characteristics of intangible assets and their relation to the success of the SMEs , a study of the cases of five companies of unrelated activities, two located in Catalonia and three in Jalisco, was conducted. The data was obtained from various sources, principally from interviews with teams responsible for management and visits to the company's facilities to observe its operations on site.

The data found supports the validity of the hypothesis of the investigation and allows the consideration that the resource-based view of the firm is an appropriate explanation of the success of the SMEs.

The results of the investigation confirm the relevance of intangible assets in the construction and maintenance of the competitive advantage of the SMEs. They also prove the existence of a relationship between the skills, preferences and attitudes of the management team and their capacity to administrate the training process and the creation and use of the resources and capacities which lie within the knowledge specific to the firm.