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Master's thesis
Licentiate's thesis
Doctor's thesis

Subject	International Business	Date	4.3.2010
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		Number of pages	137
Title	Internationalization of knowledge-intensive business service franchise to Great Britain		
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Abstract

Knowledge-intensive business services is a growing industry. Internationalization of services is evident. The service concept of a knowledge-intensive business is often unique and human related. Therefore the internationalising of such firm becomes challenging and needs extra preparation as the knowledge sharing and securing systems need to be well designed. During the internationalisation process knowledge management rises to a high priority.

This research is a case study about the internationalisation process of a knowledge-intensive business service. The case study company is a small Finnish franchise chain specialized into business ownership transfers of SME's and is currently the largest operator in Finland. The empirical data in the case study was collected by theme interviews from industry and country expert of Great Britain, Markus Orava and from the CEO of the case study company, Juha Rantanen.

The service offering of the case study company is unique and knowledge-intensive. The expertise of the consultants is based on their own knowledge, education, training and experience, thus they are called knowledge-intensive workers. Due to franchising and in order to internationalise the company must hold suitable systems for knowledge management. The master chain has tools such as internet-based portal to share information and files and a wide support network of lawyers, bankers, insurance experts, and taxation experts in order to help the work of the consultants.

There are various possibilities for internationalisation of knowledge-intensive business service. Based on the case study the importance of partnering and finding a suitable partner was found to be a high priority in the success of the internationalisation. In Great Britain partnering process should be started by reviewing existing contacts and by attending to industry related conferences and trade fairs.

The goals to go to Great Britain are that the huge market in a dense area brings a possibility to reach large client base and with having a local office there it could be possible to get contacts to investors and new buyers to the companies for sale. Another point is to bring Nordic companies closer to Great Britain and to create similar support network and franchise chain of company ownership transfer experts to Great Britain.

Key words	Knowledge-intensive business services, franchise, internationalization, partnering, knowledge-management
Further information	

