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Title	INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION OF A KNOWLEDGE-INTENSIVE FIRM THROUGH PARTNERING AND CORE COMPETENCE Case: Solid Information Technology Ltd		
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Abstract

In the last years, the global economy has been changing from a capital intensive and physical goods dependent economy to an economy where information and knowledge dominate. In knowledge-based, often technology-intensive markets, competitiveness is increasingly striven for through collaboration between different actors in the market. The technological and market uncertainty, combined with severe competition and globalization in the technology-intensive market drives small companies to utilize partnerships as a means of tackling these uncertainties. When forming cooperative relationships, the core competencies of the participants play a key role.

The purpose of this study is to examine how the case company Solid, a small knowledge-intensive software firm, can expand internationally through partnerships, given its core competence. The thesis analyzes through theory what the market and company features are that motivate small knowledge intensive firms to internationalize through partnerships, and how their core competencies can be used as a basis to identify potential partners.

Based on academic literature on the internationalization of small knowledge-intensive firms and partnering as an internationalization strategy, as well as a review on core competence theory, interview data on the case company was collected and analyzed to find out about its core competence. Furthermore, the research examines through an Internet survey what Solid's potential partners are like and what they value.

As a result, a partnering model is presented to help Solid analyze their potential partners and how the different partners could contribute to the international expansion objective, according to which category they belong to. Recommendations are given to the case company to carefully consider their allocation of scarce resources to different partnerships.

Key words	Core competence, internationalization, partnerships, software firms, small knowledge-intensive firms
Further information	