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Bachelor thesis in Business Administration

The role of entrepreneurial networking on internationalization of a micro-sized Born Global Swedish fashion company

A narrative ethnographic research

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Abstract

Title: The role of entrepreneurial networking on internationalization of a micro-sized Born Global Swedish fashion company: A narrative ethnographic research.

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Background: In recent studies a lot of attention is drawn to the connection between networking and entrepreneurship. Many scholars consider successful business and networking inseparable.

Taking into consideration the topicality of the two notions discussed above the authors of this thesis decided to conduct the research dedicated to these phenomena in the field that interests them most – in the field of Swedish fashion.

Purpose: The purpose of the thesis is to gain a deeper insight into entrepreneur's experiences to point out the role of entrepreneurial networking in the process of internationalization of a micro-sized Swedish fashion company and to contribute to the research in this field by telling its unique story.

Method: To achieve the purpose of the research a narrative ethnographic research was conducted. This research strategy was chosen because it suits the purpose best by giving an opportunity to get fresh insights into the field of entrepreneurial networking from the point of view of the entrepreneur. The data collected has a narrative nature therefore narrative analysis is used to present it. The methods of gathering the data are face-to-face interview and documents.

Conclusion: we can define the most important role of entrepreneurial networking on the internationalization process of Odeur as an effective accelerator and a tool to fulfil the knowledge and expertise gaps in certain areas through other actors in the network.

Keywords: Entrepreneur – Networking – Internationalization – Born global – Ethnography – Fashion – Swedish – Micro-sized firm – Narrative – Odeur – Petter Hollström

Definitions

Born Global (BG): *A business organization that, from inception, seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the sales of outputs in multiple countries.*

Entrepreneurship: *Entrepreneurship is taking advantage of opportunity by novel combinations of resources in ways which have impact on the market.*

Entrepreneurial networking: *By using this word combination the authors mean networking actions initiated and carried out by an entrepreneur.*

International entrepreneurship (IE): *A combination of innovative, proactive, and risk-seeking behaviour that crosses national borders and is intended to create value in organizations.*

International entrepreneurship capability (IEC): *Is a sum of various skills and abilities necessary to internationalize.*

Micro-sized firm: *Is an enterprise, which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million.*

Networking: *The process of developing and using your contacts to increase your business, enhance your knowledge, expand your sphere of influence or serve your community.*

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1 Introduction

The process of globalization has affected all areas of human activities and business is not an exception. Improvements in technology, communication and transportation broadened the possibilities for growth and expansion of business by removing trade barriers such as distance and time (Roudini and Osman, 2012).

However globalization brought significant changes in the business environment such as strong global competition, sudden and unpredictable changes in demand and increase in risk (Szerb, 2003). In such conditions entrepreneurship has become more and more vital in the world of business. Entrepreneurial behavior is characterized by innovation, immediate adaptation to changes in business environment and risk taking which can be a solution to challenges in the business world created by the globalization. (ibid) Therefore entrepreneurship as a way of starting and leading a company has gained a considerable popularity and even drawn attention of many scholars as a discipline for research.

Globalization and contemporary business environment have been challenging all kinds of companies but especially those of a small- and micro size. Such companies strive to start their way in the business world, survive and prosper. One of the biggest challenges for such companies is to find customers, therefore they have to penetrate into a foreign market from the inception and start their business life from the foreign market without having any grounds at the domestic market. Such a way of starting a company has become more and more common. Companies that start their operation in the way described above got a name of born globals, which reflects the way they immerge.

Along with the increased importance of entrepreneurship and born globals, a lot of attention has been drawn to networking in business environment. It is noteworthy that networking has always been an inseparable part of human society and there exist different kinds of networks: formal, informal, social, business, professional and etc. The importance of networking in the field of business has been recognized during the last decades and it has become another relatively new phenomenon for a scientific research. The connection between networking and entrepreneurship has been widely discussed in the scientific literature and it has been noticed that

networking is very essential in entrepreneurship because it is one of the ways of overcoming the lack of resources and expertise (Mort and Weerawardena, 2006).

The study focuses on entrepreneurial networking and internationalization of the company. In the internationalization of a SME company there are many components that play role in the success or failure of the process and in this study we have decided to analyze one of the very new components, which is entrepreneurial networking. According to Merriam-Webster role is “a part that someone or something has in a particular activity or situation” (merriam-webster.com). Within this definition through our purpose we seek to identify the part that entrepreneurial networking as a component has in the internationalization of the company.

Therefore we present the main entrepreneur’s networking activities and strategies with the second conducted interview in the result part with the entrepreneur and express the internationalization of the company based on the first interview. Finally with analyzing the entrepreneurial networking and pointing out the nature of the internationalization of the company in the analysis chapter we will reach the purpose of the study in the third section of the analysis which is the role of entrepreneurial networking in internationalization process of the company.

1.1 Fashion industry in Sweden

The definition of fashion given by Britannica Encyclopedia is “Fashion is best defined simply as the style or styles of clothing and accessories worn at any given time by groups of people”. Fashion industry is relatively a modern industry. It started to develop together with the introduction of new technologies like for example a sewing machine, which made a mass production possible. There are 4 levels within the fashion industry production of raw materials, the designing and production of fashion goods, retail sales and various forms of promotion and advertising. (Britannica.com)

During the last years there has been a considerable growth of fashion industry in Sweden. “Sweden has never exported as much fashion as during the first half of 2012. The Swedish fashion industry as a whole is moving forward abroad despite the financial crisis. In other words, the unexpected development during the first

quarter is continuing,” said Ola Toftegaard of the Swedish Textile and Clothing Industries Association (The Local, 2012).

“Less is more” is the main characteristic of Swedish fashion. Another noticeable feature of Swedish fashion is practicality and simplicity in design and at the same time creativity (sweden.se). Swedish fashion has much to offer both within a low price range for instance H&Ms products and within a higher price range for example Acne Studios, J. Lindeberg.

Fashion industry can stimulate growth of other industries, for example tourism. A fashion week can be the reason to attract tourists and popular brand shops can be the main tourist destinations of a foreign visitor. Ewa Björling, Swedish Minister of Trade, finds fashion industry very important in improving the image of Sweden abroad (Regeringskansliet, 2012). She says that Swedish fashion export is much more important than many think (ibid).

In 2011 Swedish fashion industry turnover was SEK 206 billion. 60% of the turnover was export which is SEK 123 billion and 40% import which is SEK 83 billion (Portnoff, 2013). It is noteworthy that without H&M the numbers look completely different. Excluding H&M the turnover for the same year was 20% export and 80% import. In 2011 the number of employees in Swedish fashion industry excluding H&M was 49 050 which is more than in the food industry or steel and metal industry. Number of women employed is bigger than the number of men. 74% of the Swedish fashion industry employees are women and 26% are men while on the whole in Sweden this number is relatively the same: 52% of men and 48% of women. However, on the decision taking level there are more men than women: 70% of all CEOs in the Swedish fashion industry are men and 30% are women. According to the data from the report, the main foreign markets for the 15 Swedish companies that participated in the research are Nordic countries and European countries. Then follow Asian countries, countries of North America and Australia. No company exported to Africa and Latin America. (ibid)

Taking into consideration the importance of fashion in Swedish economy the authors of this thesis decided to conduct the research dedicated to these phenomena in the field that interests them most – in the field of Swedish fashion.

1.2 Problem description

The process of internationalization has attracted the attention of many scholars and there exist a number of theories and research on this topic.

The focus of this paper is on entrepreneurial networking in the internationalization of micro-sized Swedish fashion company. According to the most recent research entrepreneurial networking is of the ultimate importance in the success of small and micro-sized companies that helps them to overcome the biggest problem on the way abroad – lack of resources. After the primary interviews with the respondent authors of the thesis identified the company as a born global firm. Born Globals are relatively new kinds of companies that started emerging as a result of globalization of a modern life style. Improvements in communication and technology made it much easier to start going abroad from inception.

The importance of fashion industry and entrepreneurship in the economy of Sweden as described above made us wonder how entrepreneurial networking can influence the internationalization of this Swedish micro sized BG fashion company.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the thesis is to gain a deeper insight into entrepreneur's experiences to point out the role of entrepreneurial networking in the process of internationalization of a micro-sized Swedish fashion company and to contribute to the research in this field by telling his unique story.

This means that we will investigate the internationalization of a micro-sized Swedish fashion company Odeur with focus on entrepreneurial networking.

This research problem will be addressed by answering the following research questions.

1.4 Research questions

How does the internationalization process of the company look like?

How has the entrepreneur established and developed his network?

What is the role of entrepreneurial networking on the process of internalization of the company?

2 Methodological framework

2.1 Qualitative study

According to Johnsson and Christensen (2008) and Lichtman (2006) the study conducted has a qualitative nature because of the following criteria:

1. The purpose of the research is to understand and interpret social interactions. The purpose does not include testing a hypothesis or making any predictions.
2. In the thesis we study the whole not specific variables.
3. The type of data necessary to answer the research questions collected in the thesis is words and not numbers or statistics.
4. Data collected has a form of interviews and open-ended responses that has a qualitative nature.
5. We accepted subjectivity of the gathered data.
6. The results are particular or specialized findings for the company that are less generalizable.
7. Our research objectives are to explore, discover and construct.
8. We focused on the depth of the phenomenon through a wide-angle lens.
9. The final report is narrative and descriptive from the research participant.

2.2 Research strategy – Ethnography, Narrative Analysis

Traditionally ethnography as a research strategy is associated with description of peoples and cultures. However according to Denzin and Lincoln "for over three decades a quiet methodological revolution has been taking place. The social sciences and humanities have drawn closer together in a mutual focus on an interpretive, qualitative approach to research and theory" (2003, cited in Johnstone, 2007).

Brewer (2000, cited in Johnstone, 2007, p.98) suggests a more comprehensive definition of ethnography "ethnography is the study of people in naturally occurring settings or 'fields' by methods of data collection which capture their social meanings and ordinary activities, involving the researcher participating directly in the setting".

Johnstone (2007) points out the following advantages of ethnography over other research methods in entrepreneurial research. Firstly, ethnographic studies can uncover understandings about a society and its values, which cannot be achieved using quantitative methods. Secondly, researchers can observe “a dynamic process of meanings in the making, rather than static meaning, and can trace the evolution of new meanings as new ventures emerge” (ibid, p. 119). Thirdly, ethnography enables to reveal a better understanding of entrepreneurial behavior by providing new insights into how a business appears and develops. The authors suggest that ethnography should be used as a valuable tool to study entrepreneurship from the point of view of those who are engaged into this activity. (ibid)

Ethnographic research is chosen to achieve the purpose of the thesis, which is to gain a deeper insight into entrepreneur’s experiences to point out the role of entrepreneurial networking in the process of internationalization of a micro-sized Swedish fashion company and to contribute to the research in this field by telling his unique story, because it suits the purpose of the research in a best way by allowing to get the details about Petter as entrepreneur, to gain a better understanding of his entrepreneurial behaviour, and to get deep fresh insights into the field of entrepreneurial networking from the point of view of the entrepreneur. Moreover, ethnography as a research method suits best for such a dynamic issue as entrepreneurship.

Ethnographic research design is characterized by its flexible approach to data collection (Johnstone, 2007). Ethnography does not have a strictly predetermined linear path of data gathering; on the contrary it follows a cyclical pattern (Spradley, cited in Johnstone, 2007). Spradley states that ethnographic research cycle starts with the selection of a topic, continues with defining the scope of a research and then ethnographers start the cycle of asking ethnographic questions. Then ethnographers collect ethnographic data, record it and analyze it. This is the cycle. After a complete cycle ethnographers can begin another cycle by asking more ethnographic questions, which helps them to investigate further and gain new perspectives of the phenomenon. (ibid) According to Davidsson (2003, cited in Johnstone, 2003) entrepreneurial emergence is a process of innovation and change, in other words, it is a dynamic process. Therefore ethnography with its ability to continue the research cycle over and over again is a very good means of

investigating such a dynamic process like entrepreneurship with all its complexities. (ibid) In our study we made two ethnographic research circles by conducting two interviews. It enabled us to get new perspectives on entrepreneurial networking in the dynamic process of entrepreneurship.

The data is reported in the form of a narrative/story where the entrepreneur focuses on internationalization and networking. The data collected has a narrative nature therefore narrative analysis is used to present it. The story has several parts introduced by the subtitles in order to make it easier for the reader to navigate within the story.

Narrative analysis is "a form of qualitative analysis in which the analyst focuses on how respondents impose order on the flow of experience in their lives and thus make sense of events, actions in which they have participated" (Schutt, 2011). The authors of this thesis chose this method because of the following considerations:

1. It is noteworthy that narrative analysis is recognized and has gained popularity in the field of entrepreneurship as a reliable source of knowledge (Larty, and Hamilton, 2011) and because of the fact that it "offers new fruitful perspectives for (re)conceptualizing entrepreneurship (Johansson, 2004, cited in Larty and Hamilton, 2011). This is closely connected with the focus of our research, which is entrepreneurial networking of a micro-sized fashion company and its role in the process of internationalization of the company.
2. The focus of narrative analysis is the story itself where the truthfulness of personal biography is preserved (Schutt, 2011). According to Rae (2000, cited in Larty and Hamilton, 2011) life story research can be a basis for a theme-based conceptual model of entrepreneurial learning. In this study we are interested in a unique entrepreneurial story of a fashion company Odeur from its inception to nowadays which is closely connected with the biography of its owner and the only employee Petter Hollström.
3. Narrative analysis helps to identify how social creativity and practice can give basis for opportunity (Hjorth, 2007, cited in Larty, and Hamilton, 2011). In this work we want to investigate the role of entrepreneur, who is certainly a very artistic and creative person, in the creation of opportunities for developing his business network.

The analysis of the qualitative data collected has iterative nature, i.e. the analysis is an evolving process where data collection and analysis occur alongside each other (Denscombe, 2010).

According to Denscombe (2010) narrative analysis relates to a story and in order to analyze the data narratively we have the following components of narrative analysis discussed by Denscombe (2010):

1. The story has a specific purpose which is to tell the public about the company of Odeur from its beginning to the present, focusing on how the company managed to go abroad and how entrepreneurial networking helped to do that.
2. The story has a plot linking the past to the present. The story begins with how the company came into existence, developed over time and finishes with Petter's thoughts on future development.
3. The story involves people, i.e. human element that refers to experiences in the context of social events: Petter shares his experiences in the field of fashion and fashion events.

Therefore a narrative ethnographic research was chosen, planned and conducted.

2.3 Subjectivity

The data collected has a subjective character because the focus of the study is on entrepreneur's own perception and experiences, his interpretation of events in the company. Subjectivity allows us to explore the complexities of the fashion industry, gain a deeper insight into entrepreneurial behaviour and to uncover the deeper meanings of his strategic intentions (Johnstone, 2007).

The authors of this thesis position themselves on the objective side because it is it is a must for every researcher to be impartial and not to influence the interviewee.

2.4 Suitability, feasibility and ethics

We took the following factors into consideration for choosing the research strategy (Denscombe, 2010):

1. Suitability (ability to produce right kinds of data)

Firstly, we clearly identified the research purpose and, secondly, we saw a clear link between the purpose and ethnographic study as a research strategy.

Because we want to investigate the issue in depth from entrepreneur's perspective we used ethnographic research. The main advantage of this strategy is to get fresh insights into the field of entrepreneurial networking from the point of view of the entrepreneur.

2. Feasibility (ability to be fulfilled)

With this strategy there was enough time for the design of the research, collection of data and analysis of the results. We had sufficient resources for it. In our study we had the access to the necessary data.

3. Ethics (ability to be ethical)

We followed one of the core research principles that there would be no harm to the participant of the research. The participant understood the nature of the research and agreed to take part voluntarily.

2.5 Methods of data collection

Interview and documents are the methods of data collection used in this thesis.

2.5.1 The Interview

The interview is the method of getting primary data for the research. This method was chosen because it allows getting an insight into people's opinions, experiences, feelings, emotions and privileged information (Denscombe, 2010). According to Ghauri and Grønhaug (2002), the best method of collecting information is an interview.

Two interviews were conducted with an interval of approximately one year and one month, in years 2013 and 2014 respectively.

The format of the first interview is semi-structured one-to-one interview (Appendix B). This type of interview is chosen because we do not want to limit the interviewee to certain questions, on the contrary, we want the interviewee to speak his mind about certain topics and develop his own ideas (Denscombe, 2010). Semi-structured interviews let us control the bias by designing the interviewing technique, thus the bias of the sequence in which the subject matter is raised or the bias of careless skipping the questions is minimized (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2002).

Regarding the number of participants' one-to-one form of interview was the only one possible to implement because the company has just one employee. The list of the topics we planned to discuss was made beforehand and sent to the interviewee by e-mail, no particular question was given to him in order not to restrict his answer. However, we as interviewers made some specific questions that we would ask about each topic in case we do not get the answer from the interviewee. The meeting was arranged in the coffee shop Thelins in Stockholm. The interview was recorded and lasted for 1 hour. The interviewee said we could contact him any time we need additional information.

The second one-to-one interview with P. Hollström was conducted because there was a need for some additional and specific information. The interview had a structured character because the authors wanted to get answers to specific questions (Appendix C). The questions were prepared beforehand and were organized in order of importance. The interview was conducted on 02.05.14 at the cafe in the mall PUB in Stockholm and lasted 1 hour and 10 minutes. The interview was recorded and transcribed afterwards. The transcripts were sent to him by email in order to look through them and help to fill the missing words, especially proper names. The interviewee suggested that we should contact him via e-mail in case need additional information. We did contact Petter by email after the interview.

2.5.2 The Documents

Documents are the method of getting a secondary data for the research. We decided to use annual reports because they have the information about the company that we need, for instance general information about the company, the foreign markets, and the financial aspect of the development of the company. Moreover, we found useful such advantages of using documents for data collection discussed by Denscombe (2010, p.232) as easy access to them via university library's database and cost-effectiveness: the library provides free access. The validity of the documents was carefully considered according to the following criteria: authenticity, representativeness, meaning and credibility (Platt, 1981, and Scott, 1990, cited in Denscombe, 2010, pp.221-222). The annual reports are

undoubtedly genuine and signed by the owner of the company and the auditor. The annual reports are complete and are typical representatives of this type of documents. The documents have direct clear and to-the-point meaning. Therefore the documents are considered to be a credible source of information. (ibid)

Another type of documents that gave us valuable information about the company and its owner is online publications about Odeur and published interviews with P. Hollström.

2.6 Selection of the company

We chose the company of Odeur because it met our research requirements. Basically we decided to choose the case among the members of Association of Swedish Fashion Brands (ASFB) because these companies are the main characters in Swedish fashion industry and most of them have been established for more than five years. We were interested in a Swedish fashion company of a micro size with a background in international market and existence of more than five years. Another important factor is that we managed to establish the contact with the owner of Odeur Petter Hollström.

This is a first study conducted in the company at the university level. Odeur took part in studies organized by association of Swedish Brands. We are proud to say that this is a first detailed study about the company.

2.7 Selection of respondent

Petter Hollström was chosen to be the respondent for this study because he is the founding father, owner, designer and the only employee in the company who can tell the story of Odeur from its first days to the present. Our aim is to get a deep insight into entrepreneurial behaviour and Petter is a valuable source of knowledge in this case.

2.8 Limitations

A number of limitations have occurred during the work on this study. Firstly, we could not use observation as a research tool because of time and financial restrictions. The entrepreneur could only find time for interviews not for more time taking processes as, for example, full time observation on business relations at the work place. To be present at an event abroad requires a significant budget, which we could not afford. Secondly, taking into account that both researchers and the interviewee speak English as a second language made it harder to communicate.

Another limitation was the number of interviewees. To conduct a deep study on several entrepreneurs within fashion industry could give a better insight to our topic but it was not feasible to be achieved because most of the entrepreneurs couldn't find time in order to collaborate and also narrative study from more than one entrepreneur would be beyond the capacities of a bachelor thesis.

3 Theoretical framework

An object of this study is a micro-sized fashion company Odeur. The authors adopt the following definition of a micro-sized firm: “An enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million” (EU, 2003).

3.1 Theories of internationalization

3.1.1 Uppsala Model

Uppsala internationalisation model was developed by Swedish scholars at Uppsala University in 1970-s (Hollensen, 2014). Originally the model was developed on the basis of Swedish manufacturing firms (ibid). The researches identified four stages of entering a foreign market: 1. Sporadic export, i.e. there is no regular export, 2. Export through independent representatives, 3. Establishment of a foreign sales subsidiary, 4. Production in a foreign country (ibid). According to Hollensen (2014), international process needs both general and specific knowledge of the market. The base assumption of Uppsala model is that internationalization process is “slow time-consuming and iterative process” (Hollensen, 2014, p. 80).

3.1.2 Uppsala Model revisited

The model described above was reviewed by the Johanson and Vahlne in 2009 because of the criticism from other scholars, advances in the research on the topic of the internationalization and change in business practices since 1977. The authors reconsidered internationalization from the point of view of business network and business relationships in it (Johanson and Vahlne, 2009). In the revisited model there is stress on the importance of networks in the internationalization process. Moreover, being a member of a business network contributes to its success. Another difference from the original model is the way of acquiring knowledge about the business environment: in a business network new knowledge can be generated from the knowledge of different actors, in other

words, it is not just a matter of learning already existing knowledge. Johanson and Vahlne (2009) state that internationalisation nowadays is more about developing opportunities than overcoming difficulties. (ibid)

3.1.3 Born Globals

There are a number of both qualitative and quantitative definitions of a concept of Born Globals (BG). One of the most popular definitions of Born Globals (BG) is the following: “a business organization that, from inception, seeks to derive significant competitive advantage from the use of resources and the sales of outputs in multiple countries” (Oviatt and McDougall, 1994, p.49, cited in Andersson, p.236, 2006). The quantitative definition suggested by Knight (1997, cited in Andersson, p.236, 2006) states that Born Globals (hereafter BG) are companies that are founded after 1976 and have foreign sales of 25% or more. Andersson (2002) rightly suggests that when talking about Swedish BG sales into multiple countries should be taken into account. Considering the variety of the definitions available the authors of this thesis adopt the definition of a BG firm suggested by Oviatt and McDougall (1994).

Madsen and Servais (1997) present several characteristics of BG. There is a higher possibility for a BG to emerge in a country with small domestic market than in a country with a big domestic market. The authors state that BG from countries with small domestic markets may produce a wide range of products while those with big domestic markets tend to work within high-tech industries. Multinational countries (countries with high numbers of immigrants) tend to have more BG than single nation countries. Another distinct characteristic is that the products of BG tend to be more specialized for some particular niche. For BG network partners and joint ventures are important channels of distribution. Innovative skills and ability to reach effective distribution channels are of a vital importance for a BG firm. (ibid) These kinds of firms usually follow erratic style and stages in their process of internationalisation. However it does not fit classical models of internationalization because of the first step, which means to start in home country and assumption of being a time taking process. But even BGs have their own

specific kind of internationalisation process. This erratic process usually differs in different industries. For instance in IT and knowledge based firms it usually stops at the phase when they find new customers in different markets and they don't open stores or subsidiaries because there is no need for extending their activities in that way. But in some technology or even fashion born global firms it goes through internationalisation process, first through agents, second opening stores and finally production in the international country.

Among the factors that influence the emergence and development of BG: Globalisation, Entrepreneurship, Networks and Industry (Adersson and Wictor, 2003 cited in Andersson 2006). BG firms find a niche in a market and afterwards they try to increase the markets that they are present themselves in. They increase the production and their goals are sometimes to enlarge the company in the international market in many ways.

Globalisation makes it easier for a firm to follow its global strategy due to technological development, lower trade barriers, standardization and etc. (ibid). Therefore it has been suggested that the most significant difference that BGs have from the other traditional firms is the impacts of globalisation on them which made it possible to start or go after a while to an international country without a real base in home country and the fast process of internationalisation that they have achieved through increasing knowledge and network. Entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs are a very important factor in the appearance of a BG firm because they have a global vision from the beginning and a positive attitude towards early internationalization, which is called Global Mind-set (Numella et al.2004). Networks are also important constituent in the developing of a BG because they are the tools to achieve the main goal – to go abroad and to be a success there (Andersson, 2006). Both social and business networks are vital, as well as formal and informal networks. It is noteworthy that the network of an ultimate importance is a personal network of an entrepreneur in a BG firm because the procedures and routines are not yet fixed. (ibid) BGs are found in many industries. According to Boter and Holmquist (1996, cited in Andersson, 2006) the industry itself is of a more importance than the country of origin of a BG. Innovative companies look for niches on the market to begin internationalizing (Grinyer and Spender, 1979,

cited in Andersson, 2006). Andersson (2006) points out that knowledge in industry is not a decisive factor for internationalizing: in growing industries internationalizing is a natural process and in more mature industries BG try to find niches where they can work without being dependent on mature companies.

3.1.4 Network model

Network model views internationalization process as an interdependent activity between several business actors within a network (Hollensen, 2014).

According to Anderson and Narus (2004) a business network consists of 3 components: actors, activities and resources. An actor can be a firm or any other organization that has control over resources and performs activities. Resources are anything of a value to an actor, for instance, capital, human capital, equipment and etc. Activities are carried out by actors in order to create value from resources. (ibid) The table below illustrates the above-mentioned.

The assumption of the network model is that a firm's/actor's goal is to get control of the resources through its network positions (Johanson and Mattsson, 1988). The authors describe business network as relationships a firm has with all actors in a business network. They state that the amount and strength of such relationships between the actors grows with the internationalization process and internationalization helps to create and maintain these relationships between the actors of the same network. The relationships in the network are created by activities. (ibid)

Hollensen (2014) accentuates some specific characteristics of the business network. Firstly, exchange relationships are the means of connecting actors in the business network. Secondly, the initiative and will of the actors is what makes them cooperate, the actors can freely chose new actors to work with, creating new or breaking old business relationships, thus easily reshaping its structure. It is noteworthy that the business network is highly possible to be formed in the conditions when the actors will benefit significantly from working with each other and in rapidly changing business fields especially in the fields where technical change happens fast. The author states that the internalization process of the company will happen a lot faster if this company is a part of a network. (ibid)

overproduction, unsolicited foreign orders, extend sales of seasonal products, proximity to international customers/ psychological distance. (ibid)

3.1.6 Internationalization triggers

According to Hollensen (2011, p.57), “For internationalization to take place someone or something within or outside the firm (so-called change agents) must initiate the process and carry it through to implementation. These are known as internationalization triggers”. Hollensen (2011) divides the triggers into internal and external. *Internal triggers* are: manager’s personal experience and networks in global market, specific internal event or a major change in the firm. External triggers are: market demand, network partners, competing firms, outside experts.

3.1.7 Internationalization barriers

Hollensen (2011) divides the internationalization barriers into 2 main groups: barriers at the initial stage of internationalization and barriers that the firm may face after the internationalization start. Among the factors that create difficulties for internationalization initiation are the following: limited finances, lack of knowledge, lack of connections at the foreign market, restricted productive capacity, lack of foreign channels of distribution (ibid). The study of micro-enterprises, i.e. enterprises with fewer than 10 employees, conducted in the UK and Ireland showed that one of the barriers for internationalization initiation was a sufficient business in the domestic market (Fillis, 2002, cited in Hollensen, 2011). The barriers that the firm may come across after the internationalization start can be the following: rivalry in the foreign market, differences in language and culture, the problem to find the distributor, differences in the exchange rate, governmental restive policies, import and export regulations and etc (Hollensen, 2011).

3.1. 8 Phases of internationalization of SME Swedish fashion companies

According to the study on the international growth of SME Swedish fashion companies (Holm and Tijburg, 2013) the process of internationalization undergoes

through three phases. At the first phase a designer or a company gets in contact with an agent or a distributor through international trade shows. To go through this phase requires substantial time, financial resources and knowledge. The second phase is a further collaboration with a first partner, agent or distributor with higher volume of production, which needs deeper relationship between different actors. The third phase takes place when a company decides to open brand stores or/ and subsidiaries. This phase requires more resources, stability and leadership. (ibid)

3.2 Networking, entrepreneurial networking

There are many definitions of networking. According to Nohria's (1992, cited in Chell and Baines, 2000) "networking comprises social processes over and above the normal economic trading relationship". Another definition states that networking is "developing and using contacts made in business for purposes beyond the reason for the initial contact" (entrepreneur.com). The definition adopted in this thesis is the definition suggested by Ivan Misner (2012) who defines networking as "the process of developing and using your contacts to increase your business, enhance your knowledge, expand your sphere of influence or serve your community."

It is noteworthy that the research in the field of networking is limited at the present stage because it is quite a new field of study, however there is a growing interest of scholars in topic, especially in the importance of networks in internationalization of BG.

Throughout this paper the notion of *entrepreneurial networking* is frequently used. By using this word combination the authors mean networking actions initiated and carried out by an entrepreneur.

The scholars do acknowledge the importance of networking in internationalization for firms of all sizes (Chetty, 2003, cited in Mort and Weerawardena, 2006). However for BG networking is of an ultimate importance because they are usually dependent on one particular product that they deliver to a foreign market and therefore BG is in need of knowledge of the market that can be acquired in the business network (Madsen and Servais, 1997, cited in Mort and Weerawardena, 2006). BG can also discover new market opportunities by means of networking

(ibid). Through networking BG manage to overcome the shortage of resources (Mort and Weerawardena, 2006).

According to the conceptual model of networking capability and international entrepreneurship (IE) in BG firms presented by Mort and Weerawardena (2006) the dynamic networking capability is of crucial importance in the early and rapid internationalization of GB firms. This model illustrates the facilitative role of dynamic network capability in terms of rapid entry into multiple international markets for innovative products (ibid).

3.3 Entrepreneurship, international entrepreneurship (IE), international entrepreneurial capability (IEC)

There are a high number of definitions of *entrepreneurship*. Throughout this study the following definition is adopted: "Entrepreneurship is taking advantage of opportunity by novel combinations of resources in ways which have impact on the market (Wiklund, 1998, cited in Peverelli and Song, 2012, p.11)".

The authors of this study find the notion of *international entrepreneurship* (hereafter IE) relevant because the case study is conducted in a BG firm that is driven by an entrepreneur and started the process of internationalization from the inception. IE is "a combination of innovative, proactive, and risk-seeking behavior that crosses national borders and is intended to create value in organizations" (McDougall and Oviatt, 2002, cited in Andersson 2006, p.242).

International entrepreneurial capability (hereafter IEC) has been widely discussed in the literature because of the interest in entrepreneurship. The scholars suggest several dimensions of this phenomenon: international networking capability (hereafter INC), international marketing capability (hereafter IMC), innovation and risk-taking capability (IRC), international learning capability (hereafter ILC) and international experience (hereafter IE) (Roudini, Osman, 2012). In other words, IEC is a sum of various skills and abilities necessary to internationalize, for example being a part of a network, understanding and choosing right market strategies, ability to keep up with the latest ideas in technology, learning from other network actors and work experience. The international performance of BG is

significantly enhanced if these dimensions of IEC take place (Roudini, Osman, 2012).

4 Results

4.1 Introduction of the company (Odeur)

Brand Odeur was founded in Stockholm in 2006. Its founding father is Petter Hollström (See Appendix E) who calls Odeur a brand experiment. The idea behind the experiment was to introduce a non-visual logotype by adding a scent to the garments that would be an association with the brand. That is how Odeur got its non-traditional non-visual label. Petter Hollström is a head designer of Odeur. He also co-operates with a co-designer Gorjan Lauseger. Today the brand can be bought in more than 20 countries all over the world. (Odeur Official website)

According to the Odeur's annual report 2012 the business started in 2008 under the name of Facade Art Direction & Design AB. Its primary activities are fashion design, selling of clothes, accessories under the brand Odeur and consultation activity within graphic design and advertising communications. In 2012 the company was divided into two companies. Venture specializing in fashion design, selling of clothes, accessories remained in the original company that at the same time changed the name for Odeur Clothing AB. Consulting within graphic design and advertising communications were shifted to a new company. Further development of Odeur continued during 2012. The process of establishing the company at the foreign market continued and there are resellers in Sweden, Norway, Faroe Islands, England, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, France, Italy, Singapore, Denmark, Finland, Israel, New Zealand, Switzerland, Kuwait, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Japan and Canada. The company focused on garment quality and visited the suppliers in Lithuania and Portugal in order to improve the quality during the production process (annual report, 2012).

4.2 Odeur as a Micro-sized company

The authors adopt the following definition of a micro-sized firm: "An enterprise which employs fewer than 10 persons and whose annual turnover and/or annual balance sheet total does not exceed EUR 2 million" (EU, 2003). Therefore in order

to define Odeur based on the definition we present the necessary data from Odeur's annual report.

Table 1 presents key parameters from Odeur's balance sheet between 2008-2012. The numbers are in thousands Swedish kronor and net margin, liquidity ratio and solidity are showing the percentage of the numbers.

	2008-12	2009-12	2010-12	2011-12	2012-12
Turnover	748	2 331	2 836	3 657	3 049
Operating income before depreciation, EBITDA	13	100	210	185	257
Operating profit (EBIT)	12	98	208	183	255
Result after fin. cost.	16	99	197	197	271
Profit for the year	9	72	107	144	158
Total assets	375	503	827	998	1 080
net margin (%)	2,14	4,25	6,95	5,39	8,89
liquidity ratio (%)	127,82	126,4	147,85	152,51	196,4
Solidity (%)	29,07	35,98	37,14	46,88	61,47
Number of employees (each)	1	1	1	1	1

EBITDA: Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization

EBIT: Earnings before interest and taxes

Table 1: Odeur's balance sheet. Source: Årsredovisning för Odeur Clothing AB, Annual report 2012.

According to the balance sheet the latest annual turnover of Odeur is 3'049'000 SEK, Which is about 336 thousand Euro and the number of employees is 1. Odeur employs fewer than 10 persons (with 1 employee) and its annual turnover doesn't exceed 2 million Euro. Therefor we difine Odeur as a micro-sized company based on the adopted definition.

The first interview with the creator of Odeur Petter Hollström took place at a cosy coffee shop Thelins in Stockholm on 08.04.13. Petter was a little bit late and we became anxious that Petter would not come and we would never find out his story of success. We recognized him at once as he came out of T-banan (Swedish term for underground metro) Fridhemsplan because we had researched about the company and its owner before the interview. We shook hands, introduced ourselves, ordered coffee and he began telling his story.

4.3 Inception of Odeur

Petter Hollström, 30 years old, comes from Täfteå, Umeå municipality situated in the north of Sweden. He moved to Stockholm in 2004 to study graphic design at Berghs School of Communication. He says he was sure that after graduation he would work as an Art Director. In his graduation project he tried to experiment with the image of the brand. His idea is that a none visual logotype, a symbol can be used to identify the brand instead of a traditional visual logo. He chose a scent to be the symbol of the brand. With the help of two of his friends he made a collection of twenty scented garments. The project got a name Odeur (fr. French *scent*). It was actually his start point as an artist and entrepreneur. However at that time it was an experiment and Petter could not even imagine what would become out of it. After graduation he started working as an Art Director at a Graphic Design Studio.

The next big step in Odeurs development was a project called Swedish Style in Tokyo. This exhibition was arranged by Business Sweden. Petter admits that he could not resist the temptation of showing Odeur there. An agent in Japan noticed this creative idea from Sweden and suggested presenting it in Japanese market. At this point of his story when the project becomes reality Petter becomes very excited and continues that he was shocked to receive such an offer. With proud in his voice he says that he accepted the offer although his financial resources were very limited. That was how the collection from the examination project went into production.

4.4 Specific features of Odeur

What is very specific about the brand is that it has its own scent. The idea behind it is that the brand communicates with the wearer and the focus is that a wearer can feel that they wear Odeur not on others around you can see that you are wearing Odeur looking at the logo. In the beginning just hangtags were scented but later the fabric was scented. The sent was created in Stockholm especially for Odeur.

Another distinctive feature of Odeur is that all clothes are unisex. As he explains he sees no meaning why a garment should appeal just to a woman or to a man.

4.5 Petter's Experience in the fashion industry before Odeur

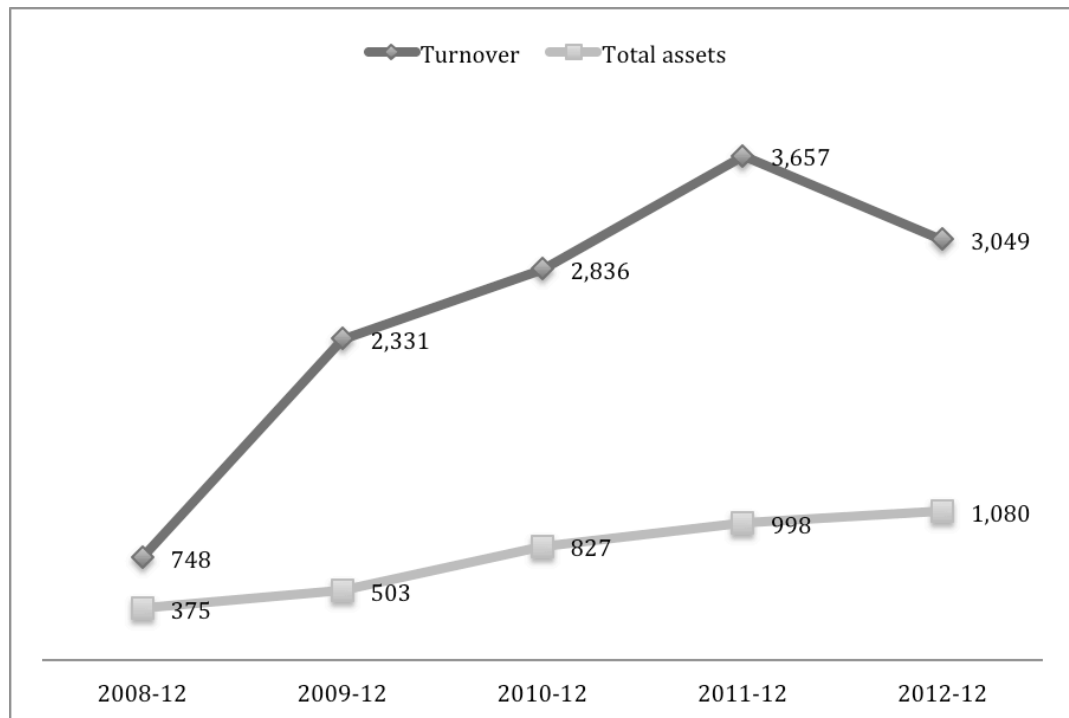
Such an interesting beginning made us wonder if he had any other experience in fashion industry before Odeur, for example education or work. Petter says "no" without hesitation. Before Odeur he studied in the field of graphic designing and worked in the same field – in a company that makes signs for other companies (Swed. skylt företag). However he admits that he has always been interested in fashion and in the image of garments. Petter starts recollecting his childhood memories and tells us that when he was a little boy he was fascinated by brands, logotypes and tried to create his own on an old computer. He adds that it is a mixture of opportunities and his own belief that he could do it.

4.6 Odeur's international expansion and growth

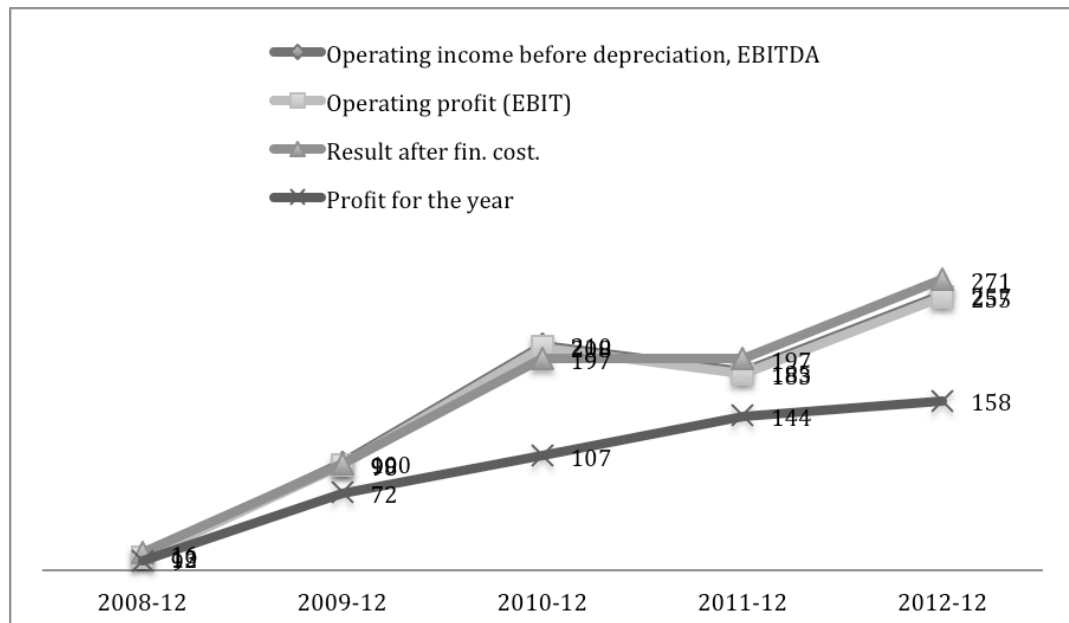
Then Petter continues his narration about the second country Odeur went to. Because of the fact that he had 300 extra T-shirts after the first order from Japan he decided to find where he could sell them. The nearest market was here in Sweden. He visited some shops talking to people and presenting his product. That was how he met a Swedish agent who became curious to present Odeur in Swedish stores. Sweden became the second market; however talking about internationalization the second market was Germany. Petter points out that this happened because news about Odeur was spreading fast on the Internet and many stores wanted to get in contact with him. At the same time stores from all over the world, for example, Taiwan, Singapore, Britain, Norway, became interested in working with him. Recollecting his early beginning Petter exclaims that he went to international market first and only then to Swedish.

The financial growth of Odeur can be explained based on the company's annual reports.

Graph 2 illustrates the financial growth of the company between 2008 and 2012 according to the turnover and total assets of the company.

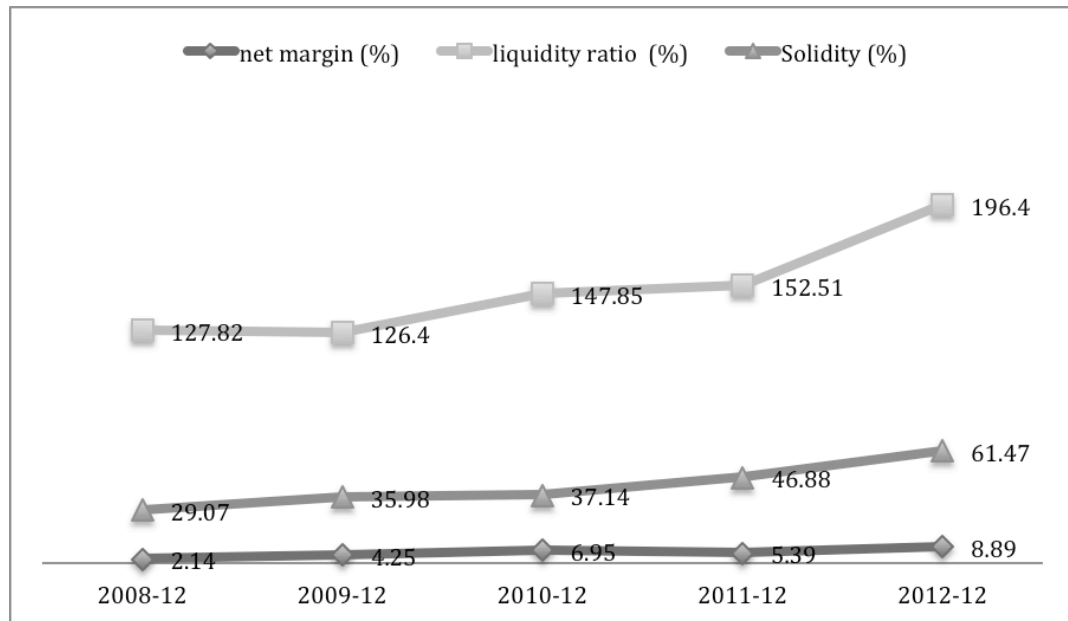


Graph 2: Turnover & Total assets 2008-2012



Graph 3: Operating income, operating profit, result after fin. cost and profit for the year 2008-2012

Graph 3 illustrates the financial growth of the company between 2008 and 2012 according to Operating income, operating profit, result after financial costs and profit for each year.



Graph 4: Net margin, liquidity ratio and solidity percentage 2008-2012

Graph 4 illustrates the financial growth of the company between 2008 and 2012 according to pecernatage of net margin, liquidity ratio and solidity.

4.7 Advantages and disadvantages of rapid internationalization for Odeur

One of the advantages of such a rapid internationalization Petter sees in gaining a much bigger market fast. Only in Sweden the brand would not be able to exist because of its limited target group. Communication technology – Internet, blogs made it possible to penetrate into foreign markets so fast and without it Odeur would never exist. The disadvantage of early internationalization in his opinion is that they did not have any chance to focus on the strategy of this process, the strategy of how to penetrate into a particular market. It would be good to have such a strategy in case one leaves an agent. However, he reminds us once again that the agents did it well. Another disadvantage is lack of time for strategy development. Analyzing how his company made it Petter says that there were just

a few barriers in the process of internationalization. There were general difficulties with customs, the way of marking the garments. However how to deal with these kinds of problems comes with experience and then they are not obstacles anymore.

4.8 Agents and distributors

At that moment (year 2013) Odeur was working more actively on the international market than on the domestic market. His ultimate market is Japan where he has stable position, contacts with agents, and what is more important – demand. To grow domestically is not his priority because his idea is that he should first of all focus on those markets where the product is perceived and popular. Petter is currently working with four international agents in Norway, England, Germany and Italy and a distributor in Hong Kong. Petter considers working with agents and distributors has been a good thing for the company because of lack of knowledge in different markets, however he admits that then it is not longer he who decides how to present the collection. He heard some complains from the buyers that they could see just one fourth of the collection. Agents and distributors find Odeur through fashion fairs, media, Internet. Petter makes a short break, drinks some coffee and continues that Odeur as a brand grew really organic. Agents contact him only if they are interested in the product, which means that customers wish to wear Odeur. Petter himself does not contact agents asking if they like to present him. He waits for them to make the first step and then he asks how they want to present the brand. Then follows a very curious story of working with an agent from Japan. Petter has been working with an agent for about four years. During first three and a half years they never met and never talk to each other, all communication was just via e-mails. Payments and deliveries were made in time. Petter says that he definitely gained a lot of market knowledge through the agents. For instance an agent from Japan was good at sending him sales report with description of how customers reacted to the product, what they thought of it. Petter adds that there is still a lot of things to be improved, for example to set more concrete goals for each market in order to know what they want to achieve there. His big plan is to open an online store later this year and to be able to distribute worldwide. He showed us the online shop template on his iPad. He plans to launch

it in August. Online store is a big opportunity for Odeur to show the image of all the brand and Petter believes that he will be able to find new distributors. In his opinion there are neither easy markets not difficult, the main thing is to find customers.

4.9 Fashion shows

Odeur actively participates in fashion fairs and trade shows. For the primary stages of the company the fashion shows were a big help in order to bring recognition for the brand and Petter himself.

This is the list of main fashion shows Odeur took part in:

1. Spring/Summer 2010 - Stockholm Fashion Week by Berns (vimeo.com)
2. Autumn/Winter 2010 - Stockholm Fashion Week by Berns (youtube.com)
3. Spring/Summer 2011- Runway show at Shanghai Fashion Week (vimeo.com)
4. Autumn/Winter 2011 - Stockholm Fashion Week (vimeo.com)
5. Autumn/Winter 2012 – Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week (fashionweek-berlin.mercedes-benz.de)
6. Spring/Summer 2013 - Runway at Gallery Show Scene, Copenhagen (copenhagenfashionweek.com)
7. April 2013 - Swedish Fashion 3-year anniversary show at Shanghai Fashion Week (youtube.com)

4.10 Odeur's target market

Odeurs target group is based on the interest, not on age, not on gender. Petter describes his customers, as people who care about the quality, are interested in finding themselves what they want to wear. He thinks that customers are more than consumers - they are fans of the brand, which makes the brand strong. He mentions another important point, which is that he really tries to find out those markets where they really belong to and not to go to all the markets because it costs a lot for a small brand to produce a sample collection of 60 garments. Odeurs

market is where there is interest, for example they sell in Saudi Arabia and not in United Arab Emirates.

4.11 Support from other organizations

We wondered if Petter got any help – financial or consultative from any organization - governmental or non-governmental. Without thinking he answers “no ... nothing”! He was contacted by organization Business Sweden (former Exportrådet) but they charged a lot for the consultations. Odeur has always covered all costs itself. However Petter got some reductions in fair fees where Odeur participated but never real support. Fashion events organized by EU Petter considers as some kind support. In order to start internationalizing Petter never took any loans from the bank. The main source of money for production was his salary of an Art Director. He proudly says he “lived on bread and water” after he finished his education and never had his salary for himself. He was in contact with the bank in 2008 or 2009 because he had huge orders but the bank refused to finance him and stated that they did not give loans for fashion. He managed to deal with the situation himself. A year later contacted the bank again. This time they were ready to give him a loan with a huge interest. This time Petter rejected the offer and has never taken a loan since then.

4.12 Marketing mix

Marketing mix is the same in all markets because a small brand cannot afford to make adjustments. If the brand grows bigger then such variations are possible. What Odeur had to do is to add extra small size to meet the rudiments of Asian market.

4.13 Production

Because of the fact that Odeur is a small brand Petter does everything himself but his preference is for designing part of the process. Petter has a co-designer Gorjan

Lauseger and a production manager. The production manager is a very experienced person and has lots of contacts in fashion industry.

Odeur participates regularly in fabric fairs. This is where the collection begins. Petter works with textile agents from all over the world Portugal, Turkey, Japan etc., but mainly from Italy. The manufacturing takes place in different countries. Knits are made in Turkey. All woven and jerseys are made in Lithuania. Leather accessories are made in Portugal. Shoes and sneakers are made in Italy. They produced leather accessories in Sweden but not anymore. In Petter's opinion there is hardly any proper production in Sweden because of high costs. So in order to keep the price on the affordable level Odeur manufactures abroad.

In an interview with Verksamt.se Petter gave the following tips for production and finding producers in fashion industry. At the beginning contact Exportrådet or Handelskammare in order to get help from them however they won't be able to provide a list of local producers. Geographically close producers should be the priority for the inexperienced companies because they can go to the producer and discuss the terms of designs and production. The production outside the EU is more risky and complicated and better to be avoided at the beginning. Even with very low price offers from for instance Chinese producers could have lots of complications because of errors, travel costs and communication difficulties. For new actors in the fashion industry it would be better to find a production agent or manager in order to find suitable manufacturers (verksamt.se).

4.14 Future development

Spring/ Summer collection 2013 is sold on 20-25 markets. There is no specific market that Odeur would like to leave but there is a specific market that they would like to get into – USA. Petter would like to have an agent or a distributor there. Petter feels like they could find customers in this market.

Petter's focus right now is to be more strategic and plan for the future in order to see the company prosper during a long period of time. He expects the company to become more mature in the near future. Petter is also planning to start PR work, he does not call it advertising because he does not have advertising for such a big

scale of promotion. He tries to work effectively with those resources that they already have, for example their Facebook page.

This was the end of our first meeting. We thanked him for his time agreed to send him the script of the interview and he said we could contact him if we need additional information.

During the year we followed Odeur in the media and attended the archive sale that took place 26-27.10.13. The sale took place at Skofabriken in Stockholm. Petter and Gorjan were there too. We bought several T-shirt to try the brand that we have been following for such a long time. Odeur participated in fashion fairs abroad not in Sweden that is why we could not follow them there.

With a one-year interval we had the second meeting with Petter in order to learn about his entrepreneurial network. Petter suggested having a meeting at a coffee shop in one of the major malls in Stockholm PUB on 02.05.14. We were very happy to see each other. Petter wondered how our research is going, how we have been doing.

4.15 Petter's other business activities

We ordered coffee and started talking about Petter's other activities. He has been taking part in the project called Ytlig. He describes it as a project on an unstructured friendly level where he and his former classmates from Bergh School of Communication share their experiences. They started doing this from student times and sharing their impressions and opinion in a blog. Petter also worked with Ohlsonsmith and did consulting projects for them. He and his colleague from Ohlsonsmith have been thinking of creating something together and are looking for a studio now.

4.16 Business partner

We wondered how he finds the right people to work with. He thinks for a while and says that it is a difficult question and there is no answer to it. He explains that it is personal and he must have some kind of feeling to trust the other part. Talking

to people is important for him because only by oral communication one can get such a feeling. Then however he remind us the story about a Japanese distributor he neither met nor talked to for a long time since they started working together and Petter calls this a crazy thing. Among the personal qualities that he admires in people most the desire for improvement, strive to be better and he gives the example of his co-designer Gorjan.

When we brought up the idea of getting a business partner Petter said that during the last year Petter has been thinking to get a business partner who is more like a CEO and would take care of the business part because he admits that he does not do business or sales very well. His partner Gorjan helped him a lot in the designing part and has been like a mentor to Petter. Gorjan has a successful career of his own and Petter does not think that Gorjan is for the long time in Odeur.

Petter is closely working with a production manager Sverker. The production manager goes through every collection, he knows which fabrics they are going to use and he makes all the contacts with fabric suppliers and agents. He is also a support in the contact with the producers of the clothes. The production manager also comes to help in case they need to find another producer because he has a wide network of contacts.

4.17 Business Sweden

Petter says that if one starts a business in Sweden they should be in contact with organization called Business Sweden because they try to connect business partners together and they try to give directions to new starters. However he himself got no help in connecting to producers. Petter says that when he called to an organization within textile in Sweden and explained that he wants to start a fashion business they replied that he should go to producers and that was all information he got. Petter's advice is to get contacts from Business Sweden and then go and talk to the producers even if you do not know how, you have to start at this point. Petter found the producers through his first Swedish agent and he never felt like he needs help from Business Sweden. Today Petter gets 8 – 10 emails weekly from producers around the world.

4.18 Public relations (PR)

Talking about PR Petter mentions that he does not have a big budget for it. He thinks that it is a good idea to invest into PR if a brand has finances for it. But Odeur does not have much financial resources for PR. In Stockholm Odeur has a show room in Gamla Stan where stylists and magazines can borrow their collection for a photo session. Odeur works with an international PR agent Marlo Saalmink. Marlo works proactive by contacting blogs, magazines and sets interviews with magazines. Blogs have a great power in PR nowadays and they are crucial in getting more international. Petter wants to focus on blogs and the readers that like his style. When Petter started Odeur the phenomenon of blogs was yet coming and there were not that many blogs like nowadays and it was easier to get published. Petter acknowledges the role of Instagram as really effective. Odeur has Instagram account in order to catch up.

4.19 Petter's networking strategies

We asked Petter to talk more about his networks, how he makes them, develops and manages them. He exclaimed that is a difficult question. Then after thinking for a while then he answers that he would not call himself a networking person in terms of doing some actions in order to spread information about him. He adds that this may be due to the fact that he is from north of Sweden. He cannot say he is shy but he is not the type of person who meets others just to show himself. He prefers to find a suitable situation and interesting people. He says that to do so is easy today because of Facebook and social media. He is never afraid to ask people to collaborate. For him it is a natural thing to find someone like a good photographer, model or any other talented person. He offers Odeur as a platform to talented people that he wants to collaborate with. Petter says that networking can grow from such collaboration. In Stockholm in Sweden there is a favorable climate for this because there are many people who are interested. Sustaining and keeping the network is through work and it never ends because each season comes a new collection and you need to stay in touch with producers, photographers, agents, etc. Social events are also means of connecting to people. On the whole being in

the business, being a nice guy and being creative will keep your network alive. He says he trusts people and is not suspicious to people. He recommends to be open minded in this business.

Petter strongly believes that if his network was bigger in terms of business and financial part Odeur would be able to grow faster. He says that in the creative part, production part and many of other structural parts through his network he could fulfill his lack of knowledge and some certain expertise. He believes that involving more people who have knowledge would bring business further, for example a CEO.

4.20 Business relations

We asked Petter to define business relations. And that was another difficult question for Petter. He says that his business becomes with a friendly theme and understanding. One has to balance between business part and friendly part. Petter states that it is good that they have a Swedish agent to whom stores can freely express their opinion on the product because they do not want to say it to designer in order to stay on friendly terms. Both partners have to be understanding and help each other out in difficult situations, for example with payment. If one side has a delay with payment, another side should be understanding and not send Kronofogden. Then Petter describes the differences with payment procedures in different countries. Stores pay 30 percent of the order value after order confirmation. Taiwanese stores pay remaining 70 percent when the goods are delivered but stores in Sweden will pay in 30 days after the delivery.

4.21 Online Store

Odeurs online store was launched in November 2013. Petter says it is not perfect but it has been going well. It made a difference. It helps to perceive Odeur as a bigger label. Online store contributes to branding. The store was launched without announcement and already within a week they received orders for 2 000 Euro. The sales have been going fairly well. The web store is of a great help when there is no physical shop. At the moment he is working at the developing at another part of

the web site called editorial for both sales and promotional work. In this part he plans to put pictures of the new collections so it will be looking like a magazine. Then people can share those images. We asked Petter about a physical store. He answers "definitely" at once. He says it would be nice to have it in Stockholm and then in other countries and cities. He has been looking for a location for a studio with a nice show room but has not found anything yet.

4.22 Collaboration

Petter says Odeur has not done any collaboration with other designers in terms of design or doing a certain style. Many seasons ago he made a show together with Noir&Blanc. There were some fruitless attempts of a project through an agent with a talented designer but it remained unfulfilled.

Then we recollected the video we watched on the Internet where the band called Doves&Dust wore Odeur and at the end they said the name of the brand. We reminded Petter of that and wondered if there were more occasions like that. Petter says that he has got many requests to be a sponsor for musicians but he believes that they should pay for the garments and no one gets them free. However he names some artists mainly musicians for example Oskar Linnros, band Mankind who wear Odeur for marketing purposes. They usually help Odeur with music for the shows. He is thinking about collaboration with artist who could do prints for him as a future plan.

4.23 Fashion groups and thoughts on starting from other brand

As far as additional financial resources by joining a fashion group are concerned, Petter says, "of course yes ... and of course no". On the one hand that it would be a great development for the company. He would be able to employ a number of people and start working in a really professional way. On the other hand that would entail to take into considerations the goal of the investors that they want to achieve. It can happen that the opinions of the investors and founders will become different, which will ruin the company as in case of Local Firm and V Avenue Shoe Repair.

We became interested in why he decided to start from his own brand and not from working for others. He says that he had a possibility to work with Odeur full time and invest his own money in it. He was so young that he was not afraid to fail because all life was ahead of him.

For further development he needs both knowledge and resources. His priority for now is growth and not profitability. Petter enjoys the creative process itself, working with talented people, money and profit is not on the first place. Nowadays Odeur gets no investments from Petter's other activities as in the beginning.

4.24 Mistakes

The last topic suggested was the mistakes what Petter has done in Odeur. In his opinion made many. Several Danish stores never paid to him. Sometimes he bought fabrics that were too expensive and as a result production cost was more than the price the shops bought the garments. He mentions the mistakes that he has not done like other brands. Firstly, he did not brought an investor who could have had different ideas about the company. Secondly, unlike many other small businesses he has not been suspicious and believed that things will work out.

That was the end of our meeting. We thanked Petter for his time. He wished us good luck and said he would like to read our research. We promised to give him the copy. We agreed to send Petter the transcription of the interview. He said we could keep in touch via emails.

5 Analysis

5.1 Internationalization process of Odeur

5.1.1 Theories of internationalizations

Odeur is a vivid example of a BG company because from the inception it started internationalizing – the first market was an international market. The following characteristics of a BG can be applicable to this company. Firstly, it emerged in a country with a small domestic market. Secondly, the product of the company is oriented on a particular niche at the market – those customers who have interest in unisex clothes. Thirdly, its innovative skills, for example making the scent its logo and ability to find effective distribution channels – agents and distributors played an important role in early internationalization of the company. Due to Internet, which is an advanced communication technology, Odeur can stay in touch with its agents and distributors, ship the goods from its online store worldwide and be able to present itself to public. Another factor that influenced on the company to start early internationalization is the fact that Petter Hollström is an entrepreneur who had a positive attitude towards early internationalization. Petter thinks that without international markets his graduation project would never have become a reality.

The internationalization process of Odeur does not fit into a classic Uppsala model of internationalization that identifies four stages through which the company follows in order to go abroad. Odeur as has been described above was born global and foreign market was its beginning. The importance of network and business relationships in internationalization process that was recognized by revisited Uppsala model can be seen in the internalization process of Odeur. The company would not come into existence if it had been in isolation from other actors in the network.

Internationalization process of Odeur can be looked upon through network model of internationalization consisting of actors, activities and resources. Business network of the company is very complex (See appendix D) Actors in this case are Odeur, its agents, distributors, suppliers, producers, public relations (PR), co-designer, production manager, musicians, stylists, magazines, photographers,

model agencies, stores, fashion organizations, banks, logistics, media. Agents and distributors are a very important part of the network because they are the main bridge between the product and consumer, without them Odeur would never have started internationalizing. Agents contact Odeur if they are interested in the product. The channels through which agents find the company are fashion fairs, show rooms, social media and PR.

All actors in this business network possess certain resources and they perform actions in order to gain resources that they do not have and these exchange relationships keep the actors in the network. The examples of such exchange relationships are the following. Odeur works with agents because it does not have knowledge of the foreign market. Odeur needs a production manager to get in contact with producers and take care of the production process. Odeur cooperates with musicians because it needs music for fashion shows and musicians provide the music because they want garments for their performance. The company does not get into a business relationship that has no exchange, for example Petter refuses to give the garments to the musicians if he receives nothing in return. All network actors are free to join the network and come out of it. The company became part of the network when a Japanese distributor became interested in the product and suggested selling their T-shirts. Therefore we can say that Odeur's early and rapid internationalization was possible when it became part of the network.

5.1.2 Internationalization motives

Speaking about what motivated Odeur to start internationalizing from the inception a combination of motives should be taken into consideration. The main motives of internationalization of Odeur have a proactive character, i.e. the firm itself was interested in going abroad and the fact that it is a BG firm that had no grounds at the domestic market and therefore no reactive motives. Firstly, the company has had an ambition to grow and to get profit. Secondly, the owner's ambition, desire and enthusiasm to find the fans of the brand outside the borders of Sweden stimulated the company to expand internationally. Thirdly, a unique idea of garments that have a unique scent instead of a traditional visual logo was

the reason to find a niche in fashion industry abroad. To find such a niche in foreign markets was very necessary because at the domestic market there are a limited number of consumers.

5.1.3 Internationalization triggers

The main triggers for internationalization of Odeur are network partners and market demand. Knowledge and experience of the agents made it possible for the company to be present at twenty countries and 34 cities (Sweden and Swedish cities are excluded, see appendix A). Undoubtedly, the demand for Odeur's style was the reason why the agents became interested.

5.1.4 Internationalization barriers

The main barrier to start the business abroad was lack of financial resources. The other minor difficulties were those of a general character, for instance toll and customs. The fact that Petter did not come across many internationalization barriers can be the result of working through the agents who deal with such barriers and have the knowledge of international markets.

5.1.5 Development of internationalization process

According to the phases of internationalization suggested by Holm and Tjibburg (2013) Odeur went on to the second stage because the business relationship with the agents became stronger and volumes of production increased.

5.2 Entrepreneurial networking

Petter is an example of an entrepreneur because he took advantage of the opportunity by using novel approach to fashion, creativity and took risk in order to establish his business.

Based on the data collected, Odeur uses four different ways of establishing contacts thus creating a network:

1. Petter initiates getting in contact with a necessary person or an organization himself, for example when he found the store to sell the T-shirts that remained from the first order.
2. Petter and a new actor in his network meet each other without intention, for example at a fashion fair.
3. Petter is contacted by a person or organization that is interested in Odeur, for example he is frequently contacted by agents in order to represent his brand.
4. Petter is introduced to a new contact through his already existing contact, for example his production manager introduces Petter to one of his contacts. In other words Petter gets in touch with a secondary network.

At the company's inception Petter mostly contacted the necessary people himself because the company was young, he did not have enough contacts and his business network was not yet created. Therefore the ability of entrepreneurial networking was very important at the early years of the company because Petter had to find the right contacts by himself.

With time his network expands through fashion fairs, fashion shows, trade shows, showrooms and other events when he meets people. At such occasions he showed his creativity and innovation in fashion design and it was the main reason for his network expansion. His personal characteristics like being social and adventurous also contributed to attracting people.

When Odeur became more famous and could find its niche in the fashion market the dominant way of broadening its business network became through agents, producers and other actors who initiated contact with Petter. Being not suspicious to new people and a very risk taking person resulted in getting a bigger and a stronger network. Despite of financial losses it was a successful experience of broadening the network and making it stronger.

Finally the secondary network, i.e. the contacts of the initial network, becomes the major means of networking. With the growth of his experience, knowledge and the network itself Petter became more selective and conscious in choosing actors in his network. However from the inception of Odeur to the present, Petter mostly let

his network grow organically that means most of his networks established after he has been contacted by a person or organization who is interested in Odeur and he did not apply deliberate effort to get this contact. Even after the growth of his network he relied on the networking by the second party, which has some advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are value creation and saving time, capital and energy. The disadvantage is missing networking opportunities for the further growth in projected directions for instance find an agent in desirable market with a good reputation that could be a financial success for his company.

In some certain areas like production, designing and creative part his network could grow to a larger extent to fulfil the lack of knowledge and resources but the lack of knowledge in the business aspect was not fulfilled through the networking. Therefore Petter has realized the necessity of bringing in a business partner who would help him to take care of the business part.

The idea to add an actor in Odeur in order to balance the company's capabilities and to overcome the lack of resources in some areas like marketing and business strategies can be analysed in two different scenarios. In the first scenario the areas that Petter couldn't cover by networking will be covered and the new actor will bring and design a new network according to the existing network and his/her capabilities. In the second scenario the new actor cannot cope with the task and fails to restructure the company's business strategies according to Odeur's values and his existing network will not match the desired network and also the new actor cannot perform well in the existing network.

Therefore it is very vital for Petter to use his networking capabilities to find the right partner who can perform close to the first scenario.

The last matter that we can specify about entrepreneurial networking of Petter Hollström is the fact that he lives and operates his business in Stockholm. This has so many advantages on the networking possibilities in fashion industry for him. First of all Stockholm holds an annual fashion week and considers as one of the fashion bookmarks in the world. Second, there are lots of talented and experienced people in fashion industry that are living and operating in Stockholm. Third, there is an international environment in this city with people from different cultures and languages.

5.3 Role of entrepreneurial networking in the internationalization process of Odeur

Petter's modern approach to the internationalization exists in all aspects of the company's sectors. From production, marketing, PR, distribution and sales are dependent on the international market.

The first sign of entrepreneurial networking can be seen at the very first times that Odeur was presented in the international market, which was company's inception. Through the network the entrepreneur could make production in another country and sell it in another international market.

In order to analyse the role of the entrepreneurial networking from Petter Hollström on the internationalization process of Odeur the authors point out the following types of networking based on the channel of establishing and developing the network.

- Role of entrepreneur's networking via social media networks and PR activities on internationalization

Petter uses Odeur's account on Facebook and Instagram, and also Odeur.se as the main channels to create and develop his network with customers or in other words fans of Odeur. These tools are very effective ways of increasing the number of contacts. Now Odeur's Facebook page with more than 5.5k likes publishes different sorts of information. For example different pictures of collections, articles about Odeur from different magazines, published interviews with Petter, sales times, Odeur's events, editorials and many other activities. The Instagram account with more than 1000 followers publishes different pictures. With the Vimeo channel of Odeur Petter posts videos from the runway on fashion shows and official introduction video for each collection.

Through this type of networking that we would call it virtual networking Petter as an entrepreneur expands the sphere of influence of the brand internationally.

Odeur's online store was a successful experience for the branding and bringing more international recognition. The informative structure of the site and contacts

possibilities through it make it possible for agents, distributors, stores, producers, suppliers, customers, designers and many others to get in touch with Odeur. This can be the biggest opportunity for networking for the entrepreneur. Broadening the international network can be achieved with strategic networking and risk seeking behaviour of the entrepreneur. It can be also an analytic tool to explore internationalization potential in different markets according to geographical places of the orders or fans of the brand.

Another significant international approach by Petter is creating networks through an international PR. This can be a great help in international marketing of Odeur.

- Role of entrepreneurial networking through agents and distributors on internationalization

If we divide the entrepreneurial networking into two terms: First increasing the number of contacts in the network and second developing relation with contacts in the network. The company could present in different countries through different agents and gained a bigger market within increasing contacts in distribution part. The entrepreneur by developing contacts with agents and distributors deepen the influence on the markets.

It is noteworthy that Odeur's internationalization opportunities through agents and distributors were mostly a result from an unexpected opportunity (agents/distributors/stores interests on the brand) rather than through planned action determined by the business plans and strategic decisions from the entrepreneur. However the characteristics of Petter played a notable role in the internationalization through agents/distributors/stores. The combination of risk seeking behaviour and innovative approaches in fashion by this example of an international entrepreneur (Petter Hollström) opened up internationalization opportunities through agents and distributors for the Company. The main advantage that Odeur gained through the agents and distributors was fulfilment of lack of knowledge on each specific international market for marketing and sales and also increasing the pace of the international process in various markets. It is a fact that without this network Odeur would never exist in the international market and would not have been able to distribute on its own.

- Role of entrepreneurial networking at events on internationalization

The best opportunity for a micro sized BG Fashion Company to increase the contacts in the international network and provides the most entrepreneurial networking possibilities are fashion fairs, fashion events, shows and industry fairs. The international nature of these events helped Petter to give Odeur international recognition from agents and distributors. These opportunities and successful networking activities by the entrepreneur (Petter Hollström) from the inception of Odeur had a significant role on the internationalization of the Company. The other advantage of these events is to meet new actors in the industry and creating new network. For instance he met his co-designer for the first time in one of the events called +46. The other entrepreneurial networking activities in the events rather than recognition from agents/distributors and meeting new people in the industry can be the growth of network through media and press within customers.

Entrepreneurial networking and other fashion brands (competitors)

The Swedish fashion wonder and reputation of the other brands in recent years in the international market can be considered as the major positive point for internationalization of Odeur. Petter as an entrepreneur gained valuable expertise from the other actors in the Swedish fashion network. However the unique style and design of Odeur cannot be considered as the point of discussion but the expertise and knowledge on production, distribution and marketing could be granted as the Swedish fashion environment network effects on internationalization of Odeur. But in terms of collaboration and other mutual works between Odeur and other Fashion brands we cannot see any significant outcome on Odeur's internationalization.

Entrepreneurial networking within suppliers and producers

With the defined approach to the networking we can discuss that better quality of production gained by increasing the number of suppliers and producers and

broadening the network and also selective behaviour by the entrepreneur. Developing the relations with producers could help Odeur in financial terms to get better payment terms from them and also receive the orders faster by being the priority for the producers.

The role of the secondary networks and entrepreneurial networking activities were vital on the internationalization of the Odeur. The primitive production activity was according to the networking that he made contact to the production manager and the following suppliers and producers as a result of secondary networks through the production manager. Access to foreign production and supply possibilities in Odeur was a result of this approach by Petter.

Role of entrepreneur's personal contacts, other activities and personal international networking abilities on internationalization

In order to establish the contacts in the international market speaking of the common language by the actors is very essential and can be defined as a vital international entrepreneurial skill. Petter can speak Swedish and English fluently, basic German and understands a little French and Spanish.

One of the most important considerations for any international entrepreneur is capital for starting and running the business. He could overcome this problem by invoicing from his other company into Odeur. It helped Odeur to grow at the first steps of internationalization. The company had the opportunity to be born global and stay alive. In other words Odeur didn't die global after a while, because of his financial strategies at early stages of internationalization. It is notable that he overcame this problem by his personal network in another business. But nowadays the company performs organically and can provide its financial expenses. By all means networking didn't directly fill the financial gaps in the company in addition never brought any investor or partner to expand the network in this way.

Petter's relation and the networking approach to his international allies are mostly formal. For instance he was in a very formal and transactional relation with the first agent that he started his business with. This approach was in the interest of both parties and helped the network to develop in business manners. He believes in separation of business and friendship boundaries in the business. It doesn't let the

company to be limited with the just secondary networks from the friends to become limited and helps the international perspectives of Odeur.

6 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to gain a deeper insight into entrepreneur's experiences to point out the role of entrepreneurial networking in the process of internationalization of a micro-sized Swedish fashion company and to contribute to the research in this field by telling his unique story. The purpose of the research was fulfilled and the research questions were answered by collecting qualitative data and conducting a narrative ethnographic research.

A micro sized Swedish fashion company Odeur is an example of a BG company. Using its innovative skills in fashion designing and finding its niche in fashion industry Odeur managed to go to a foreign market from its inception and get its ultimate profit from there. Petter Hollström, the owner of the company and a founding father of the brand, thinks of company's early internationalization as the only means of making his examination project a reality. The process of internationalization of Odeur does not fit into a traditional Uppsala model of internationalization but can be viewed upon through a network model of internationalization consisting of actors, activities and resources. Odeur's early and rapid internationalization was possible when it became part of the network.

At the company's inception Petter mostly contacted the necessary people himself because the company was young, he did not have enough contacts and his business network was not yet created. With time his network expands through fashion fairs, fashion shows, trade shows, showrooms and other events when he meets people. At such occasions he showed his creativity and innovation in fashion design and it was the main reason for his network expansion. His personal characteristics like being social and adventurous could also have contributed to attracting people.

When Odeur became more famous and could find its niche in the fashion market the dominant way of broadening its business network became through agents, producers and other actors who initiated contact with Petter. Being not suspicious to new people and a very risk taking person resulted in getting a bigger and a stronger network. Despite of occasional financial losses it was a successful experience of broadening the network and making it stronger.

Entrepreneurial networking can be traced from the company's first steps in the direction to an international market when Odeur participated in its first event in

Tokyo. The authors point out the following types of networking based on the channel of establishing and developing the network for internationalization of Odeur: networking via media networks and PR activities, via agents and distributors and networking at events.

Odeur has accounts in Facebook, Instagram and Vimeo channel. This helps to significantly increase the number of contacts and to share all sort of information about the brand. As a result the sphere of influence of the brand expands all over the world by broadening the international network. PR is another effective tool to conduct an international marketing strategy.

The main advantages of entrepreneurial networking in the internationalization process of the brand through the events are to gain recognition from international agents/distributors and to meet new people and actors in the international fashion industry.

The main advantage that Odeur gained through the agents and distributors was fulfilment of lack of knowledge on each specific international market for marketing and sales and also increasing the pace of the international process in various markets. Another advantage is that gained better quality of production by increasing the number of suppliers and producers and broadening the network and also selective behaviour by the entrepreneur. Developing the network with producers could help Odeur in financial terms to get better invoice terms from them and also receive the orders faster by being the priority for the producers. It is noteworthy that the company did not have a plan or strategy how to get in touch with agents or distributors; it was a matter of opportunity. Peter Hollström is the example how the combination of risk taking behaviour and innovative approaches in fashion opened up internationalization opportunities through agents and distributors for the company.

To sum up we can define the most important role of entrepreneurial networking on the internationalization process of Odeur as an effective accelerator and a tool to fulfil the knowledge and expertise gaps in certain areas through other actors in the network.

In this part it is noteworthy to explain two matters. First is that in the internationalization of this company there are many components that play role in

the process and in this study we have decided to analyse one of the very new components, which is entrepreneurial networking. And secondly when talking about internationalization process it can be applicable to a BG company. In a way that even this BG follows some classical processes and skips some. This BG company usually skips the first step which is to strengthen the home-basis and then broaden the horizons of sales through export and internationalization which is a time taking process. But still they follow up in the process and sometimes the nature of their internationalization activities are very close to traditional firms. However the main difference at the upcoming internationalization stages between BGs and classic firms can be the pace of the process.

One of the most interesting matters that followed up in the study is how the brand born and lives with only one person and how Petter Hollström became a core in a network. The study shows how in the fashion industry actors find each other, establish the trading terms and use the opportunities. The main findings of the study can be divided in three parts. First the study shows the internationalization of Odeur and explains it based on the major internationalization theories. It is noteworthy that the study shows the main differences of this BG Company with other traditional firms, which can be explained based on the Uppsala model, is the pace of the process and the order of the stages. It means the company didn't start from the home country and strength its influence and capital and then think about broadening the income by export. However this stage may be reconsidered in order to making the stronger brand afterwards. The pace can be seen as how a brand can be global over a night with new trends and globalizations and the traditional models cannot explain the phenomenon.

Secondly how the entrepreneur established and enlarged his network through networking. We found this matter very interesting because of the nature of fashion industry and characteristics of the entrepreneur. The main understandings that we gained from Petter is that how he in this industry with innovative approaches, perseverance, patience, risk taking and intelligence could build a network. This network helped him in many ways. He could overcome the lack of expertise and skills in many situations.

Thirdly how in the internationalization of Odeur the networking of Petter as a component played the role and helped the brand to go forward and overcome difficulties. Without the new networking possibilities because of globalization maybe the Odeur would never exist. The lack of knowledge in the international market is a very serious barrier for any company in this matter. Petter could find the possibilities and opportunities within the network in many ways. Designing, producing and distributing are the main fields that Petter found networking useful. To sum up we found the fashion industry is full of opportunities and possibilities. Even with few financial resources the entrepreneur with brilliant ideas and skills can follow up the dreams. However there are so many dreamers in this industry. They are usually artists with little business knowledge and expertise and they face serious problems. Young companies appear without any business plan and strategy and just follow the opportunities and as they say go where ever wind blows. This approach maybe be sustained in the short term and make primitive successes for the company but in the long run will bring nothing except bankruptcy for them. We believe that it would be a wise strategy for any fashion entrepreneur to look up at the business part as much as the artistic part of the company. Making duo partnership can be an effective solution to give the right responsibilities to the experts. It is noteworthy that making this kind of duo (Designer and CEO) can be discussed in future studies.

We found that it is the global network of fashion industry that makes the companies international and sometimes BG. There are so many producers, talented artists, models, agents, designers and fashion activists all around the world. The new possibilities through Internet, improved logistics, different fairs and social media help them to find each other and join this network. Nowadays any talented designer around the world can find the producers and distributor online and follow up the dreams with joining this big global network of fashion industry.

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that each company has its own unique story and experiences, which can be a valuable source of knowledge. Story of Odeur is a proof for the need for more studies on this interesting topic. From the beginning, to follow your dreams through the examination project of the school and to sell the first order to an agent from far east of the globe. Or the possibility of entrepreneurial activity in this business without previous experiences and not to

have one of the very common assumptions of the society about the fashion designers, which is tailoring skills and knowledge on human ergonomics. The curious communication style with an agent for three and a half years and a lot more makes us wonder that to which extends globalization changed the nature of classic business strategies and challenges the classical theories in this way.

We believe an in-depth ethnographic study on each company can present an interesting view on internationalization process, networking and entrepreneurship. Identifying barriers, triggers, target markets, potential markets, risks, threats, network opportunities, entrepreneurial capabilities and etc. can help Swedish fashion companies to speed up their development in foreign markets.

7 Practical implications

This thesis has contributed to the entrepreneurship research area and of how entrepreneurial networking affects internationalization process of a micro-sized Swedish fashion company. However the most significant possible limitation for the practical implication of the thesis might be to make generalizations from the findings, due to the chosen narrative ethnography as research strategy.

The result of this thesis sheds light on the need for more research within the topic, and contributed to a new insight into a very specific research area that previous studies on this area are very limited.

One of the powerful implications of this thesis is for entrepreneurs in fashion industry. They can observe entrepreneurial experiences from the perspective of a young entrepreneur. Therefore the research mostly reflects the standpoints and experiences of the entrepreneur in an academic frame within 3 new areas: networking, internationalization of BG and international entrepreneurship. Further, the thesis could be very interesting for SME clothing firm managers, agents/distributors, fashion NGOs and governmental organizations in certain areas.

8 Suggestions for future research

During the conduction of this research the authors identified some areas that could be investigated further. Therefore the following areas are suggested for future studies:

- Agent networking activities and their role on internationalization of born global fashion companies.
- Similar studies on other Swedish fashion entrepreneurs in order to trace a pattern if there is any, which can be a useful contribution into the field of business studies.
- The other interesting area is the role of e-commerce in the internationalization process. In current fashion market with just a website with good logistic strategies companies can become international over a night. It can help them to identify the potential markets and target groups. However there are many parameters that should be considered for the success that can be studied.
- The production process is one of the most complex and also most interesting subjects in connection with the internationalization of fashion companies that deserves deeper studies. The trans boundary approach by most of the small fashion companies is a big trigger in their internationalization process. The company starts with the founder in the origin country, the production outsources to the other countries for cheaper labor, more expertise or both, the companies find agents and press representatives in the countries with higher market fashion opportunities and finally they sell through shops all over the world or even with an online store with shipping worldwide possibilities.
- A quantitative study on the profitability of different fashion brands who have the same target groups but different retailers. Because nowadays most of the rookies and fashion entrepreneurs start their business without a practical business model and their target markets, audience and strategies just happen with an incident so it would be interesting to analyze their profitably while they work with different agents and distributors.

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Appendix A – List of retailers

RETAILERS			
Country	City	Store	Website
ASIA			
China	Shanghai	Glossy	glossy.cn
China	Hong Kong	Harvey Nichols	harveynichols.com
China	Hong Kong	A Big Company	abigcompany.asia
China	Hong Kong	Vie	bvein.com
Japan	Tokyo/Aoyama	Addition Adelaide	adelaide-addition.com
Kuwait	Kuwait City/Shuwaikh	The Number 4	thenumber4.com
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	Anma Group	anmagroup.com
Saudi Arabia	Riyadh	Le Gray	legray.net
Singapore	Singapore	Actually	actually.com.sg
Taiwan	Taipei	Awa	
Taiwan	Taipei	Deeplay Boutique	wretch.cc/blog/deeplay
Taiwan	Taipei	Saturday Guy	saturdayguy.com
AUSTRALIA			
Australia	Braddon	Box	
New Zealand	Auckland	Thousand Piece Puzzle	thousandpiecepuzzle.co.nz
EUROPE			
England	Birmingham	Autograph	autographmenswear.com
Finland	Helsinki	Acolyth	acolyth.fi
Faroe Islands	Saltangará	Jungle	100 Heidavegur
Germany	Berlin	Baerck	baerck.net
Germany	Cologne	Bob 10.5.10	bob10510.de
Germany	Berlin	Orimono	orimono.eu
Germany	Munich	Ruby Store	
Germany	Munich	Stierblut	stierblut.de
Germany	Berlin	Temporary Showroom	temporaryshowroom.com
Germany	Berlin	The Flag	theflag-berlin.com
Netherlands	Amsterdam	Ultraviolet/2pr	2pr.eu
Israel	Tel-Aviv	Kerenvemichal	kerenvemichal.com
Israel	Tel-Aviv	Tema	Tema on Facebook
Italy	Vercelli	Buchineri	buchinerishop.it
Italy	Matelica	Flat Shop	flatshop.it
Italy	Savona	Il Bagatto	
Italy	Bari	Insight	Insight on Facebook

Italy	Monza	Norrgatan Boys	Norrgatan on Facebook
Italy	Casoria (Naples)	Particolari Semplici	
Italy	Rome	Quaranta Gradi	
Italy	Rome	Super	
Italy	Naples	Traffic	
Italy	Milan	Wok Store	wok-store.com
Norway	Oslo	Cortado	Cortado on Facebook
Norway	Kristiansand	Image	
Norway	Bekkjarvik	Vikki	
Romania	Bucharest	MUS Concept	musconcept.ro
Spain	Barcelona	Doshaburi	doshaburi.com
Spain	Valencia	Victims	victimssstore.com
Sweden	Stockholm	Aplace Brunogallerian	aplace.com
Sweden	Stockholm	Aplace Norrlandsgatan	aplace.com
Sweden	Gävle	Fico	storefico.com
Sweden	Umeå	Kii	kii.se
Sweden	Stockholm	Les Market	les-market.com
Sweden	Visby	Mojo Independent Store	Mojo on Facebook
Sweden	Kalmar	Selvage	selvage.se
Sweden	Halmstad	Soda	
Switzerland	Zurich	Fashionslave	fashionslave.ch
Switzerland	Zurich	Fidelio 2	fidelioleider.ch
NORTH AMERICA			
Canada	Vancouver	Board of Trade Co. 1	boardoftradeco.com
Canada	Vancouver	Board of Trade Co. 2	boardoftradeco.com
ONLINE			
England	Birmingham	Autograph	autographmenswear.com
Finland	Helsinki	Acolyth	acolyth.fi
Sweden	Stockholm	Aplace	aplace.com
Spain	Barcelona	Doshaburi	doshaburi.ocnk.net
Italy	Corso	Flat Shop	flatshop.it
New Zealand	Wellington City	Good As Gold	goodasgold.co.nz
Sweden	Stockholm	Les Market	les-market.com
Germany	Berlin	Orimono	orimono.eu
Germany	Munich	Stierblut	stierblut.de
Germany	Berlin	Temporary Showroom	temporaryshowroom.com
New Zealand	Auckland	Thousand Piece Puzzle	thousandpiecepuzzle.co.nz
Spain	Valencia	Victims Store	victimssstore.com

Source: Odeur.se

Appendix B – Guide for the first interview

Company establishment (how the idea appeared, etc)

- Where did the idea of starting Odeur come from?

Experience in the fashion industry before Odeur

- Did you have any other experiences in this business before?

Business strategy for Odeur in the beginning – whether to go abroad or not

- Foreign expansion vs. domestic expansion: where did you plan to sell more from the beginning? Where do you plan to sell more now? (Current and desirable Situation at the domestic market)

What is your target market?

Governmental support

- Did you get any help (financial support or consulting) from any organization (either governmental or non-governmental) to start internationalization?
- Did you have enough capital to internationalize? Did you have to take loans from the banks?

Why, how and when you decided to internationalize

- What are the advantages and the disadvantages of Odeur's early internationalization?

Motive, triggers and barriers of internationalization

- What were the main risks you experienced during internationalization?
- What is the main motive of the internationalization?

Choice of the channels of distribution

- What are the main export channels? Are they as you mentioned agents and distributors?
- Did you feel distributors and agents limited or control your activities in anyway?
- What about word of mouth?
- Fashion fairs? Do you participate? How often?

Foreign markets choice and knowledge & on which foreign markets you sell more

- How did you identify which market to enter?
- How much time and effort did it take?
- Do you adapt your marketing mix to the foreign market?

The production process

- Where do you buy the textiles and accessories for making the garments from?
- Do you manufacture in different countries?

Future developments

- Are there any new foreign markets you would like to enter? Are there any foreign markets that you would like to leave?

Online Store

- What do you think about Swedish fashion in general?

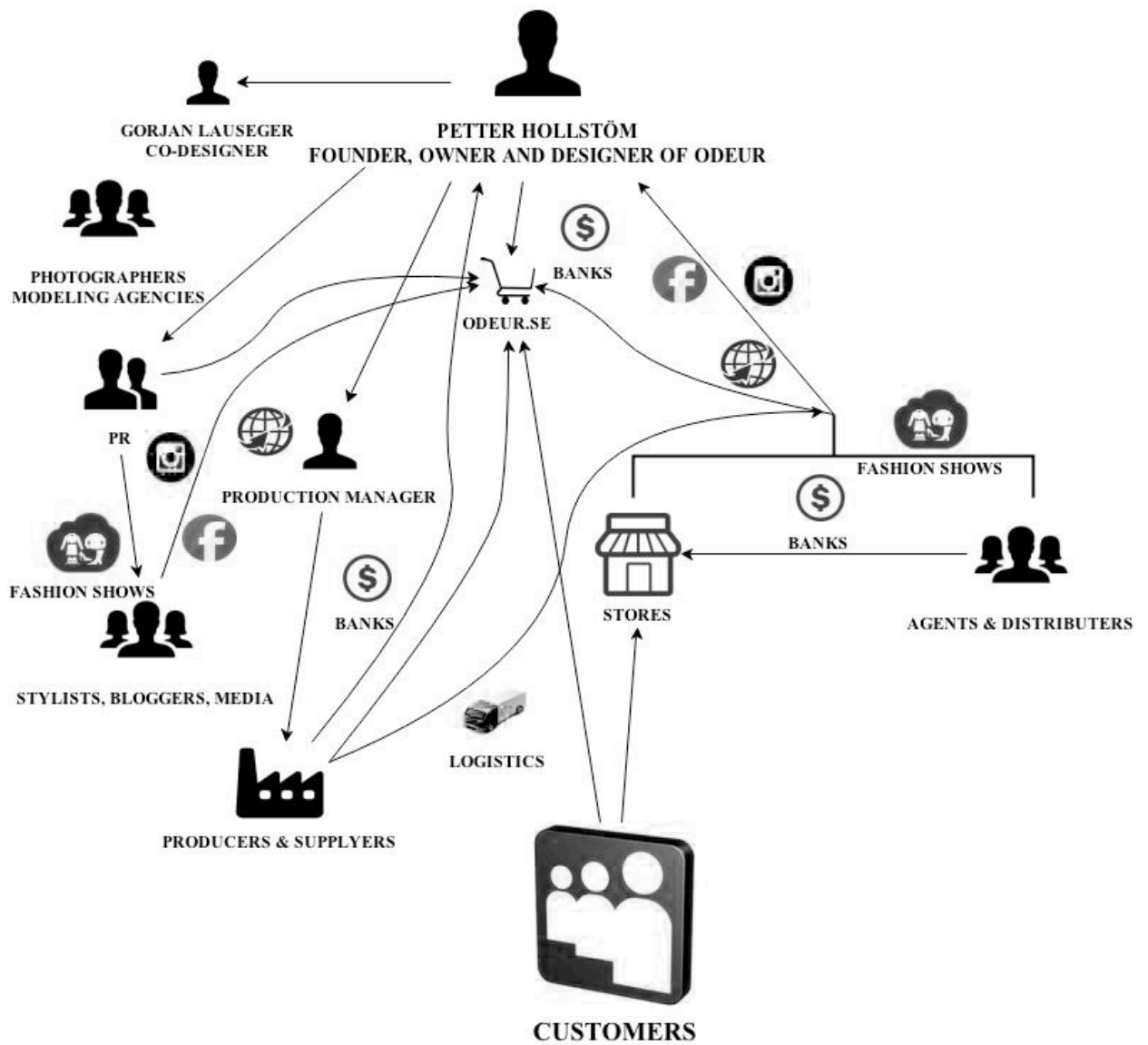
Conclusion

Appendix C – Guide for the Second interview

- What made a very young graphic designer, with no background in clothing design, think he could create a fashion company and make it a successful business? Did you know about Tailoring?
- Would you talk more about your other activities: ohlsonsmith, facade, ytlig.se
- As a young entrepreneur, how you found right people to work with?
- Co-designer, business partner? We would like to know more about Gorjan Lauseger. Didn't you have any plan to get a business partner to handle business part of story and you focus more on designs and artistic part?
- You talked about your Production manager? What he does for you? Do you use his networks? Who makes the Quality control on production, you or him?
- Exportrådet business Sweden. Did they give you info on local producers? How you manage to find them? How you made Initial contacts with producers?
- PR? What is he doing for you? Marlo Saalmink. How helpful you found public relation in this industry?
- *Instagram*
- *Networking* (Primary and secondary networks). How you make them? And how you manage to keep your networks and develop them?
- How you define your business relations. We mean the relationship with business partners? (Formal, informal)
- The role of networking in odeur's internationalization.
- Did your online store meet your expectations? E-commerce, for developing networks and gaining bigger market.
- Did you have any Collaboration with other designers?
- What about collaboration with artists for marketing purposes?
- Any market knowledge after the internationalization through agents?
- To increase your financial resources do you have any desire to join any fashion group?
- What was your main motivation for starting your own business not to join others businesses? (Thoughts on starting from another brand)
- Swedish style in Tokyo. Which organization arranged that?

- Physical store? Where? When? Do you still think about stronger Foundation at home?
- Knowledge & resources. Which one you lack to go further?
- Do you get your desirable return from your investments in Odeur? Capital, internal or external? Do you still bring external money to Odeur?
- What is your Priority? Growth or profitability.
- What mistakes have you done? What you think about the other companies' mistakes?
- Any previous researches on Odeur?
- Fashion shows vs. showrooms. Which one you feel suits you more? Why?
- In your opinion which are difficult and easy markets. London, New York, Paris? Marketplaces are difficult in your opinion?
- Why unisex?

Appendix D – Odeur’s network



Appendix E – Petter Hollström's profile

Petter Hollström



Source: Odeur.se

Designer/Art director

Born: 30 May 1983 in Täfteå, Umeå.

Lives in: Stockholm, Sweden

Current jobs: Founder/owner/designer at Odeur. (2006 – Present)
 Owner/Art Director/Designer at Facade Art Direction & Design
 AB. (2006 – Present)
 Art director at Ohlsonsmith. (2006 – Present)

Previous job: Rå communications (2005 – 2006)

Education: Berghs school of communication (2004 – 2006)