

THE RESEARCH GROUP'S EXPERTISE "STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP, KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY"

DATOS DE CONTACTO:

Research Results Transfer Office-OTRI
University of Alicante
Tel.: +34 96 590 99 59
Email: areaempresas@ua.es
<http://innoua.ua.es>

RESUMEN

The research group "*Strategic Management, Knowledge and Innovation in a Global Economy*" at the University of Alicante studies how family businesses, multinationals and SMEs can grow, innovate and expand internationally. Its main areas of work are strategic management, knowledge management, business clusters, and sustainability and corporate social responsibility, all of which are applicable to companies in any sector, although its work in the tourism sector and also in the food and drink sector (primarily the wine sector) is particularly noteworthy.

It is also worth mentioning its work focusing on the natural stone and marble sector. With over 400 scientific publications and involvement in national and European projects, the centre offers consultancy, training and applied research to companies and institutions.

**INTRODUCCIÓN**

The research group "Strategic Management, Knowledge and Innovation in a Global Economy", based in the Department of Business Organisation at the University of Alicante, was established in response to its members' shared interests in strategic management and its practical application to the business world.

The group currently comprises a multidisciplinary team of researchers with extensive academic experience. The team includes full professors, senior lecturers, contract lecturers holding PhDs and assistant lecturers, all of whom have a solid background in the field of business organisation and management. This diversity of profiles enriches the theoretical and methodological approaches adopted in each research project.

The group's mission is twofold: on the one hand, to generate rigorous scientific knowledge on the factors that determine the competitiveness and growth of businesses in a globalised environment; on the other, to transfer this knowledge to society through publications in high-impact international journals, collaborations with businesses, specialist consultancy and postgraduate university education.

The group has published more than 400 research papers, participated in over 30 national and international R&D&I projects, and supervised numerous doctoral theses. Its research has directly contributed to the University of Alicante's standing as one of the world's leading academic institutions in the field of tourism and hospitality management, according to the Academic Ranking of World Universities (Shanghai Ranking).

The group's international focus is reflected in its active participation in European research networks, in the establishment of partnerships with foreign universities (such as Glasgow Caledonian University in the United Kingdom), and in the dissemination of its findings at leading international scientific forums.

RESEARCH AREAS:

1. Family businesses, growth and internationalisation: Family businesses account for 90 per cent of the Spanish business sector, generate 70 per cent of private sector employment and contribute 60 per cent of the country's gross value added. The group analyses the factors that favour their intergenerational continuity, international expansion and capacity for innovation. Its findings have been published in leading journals such as Family Business Review and Business Research Quarterly.

2. Strategic management and dynamic capabilities: Within the framework of corporate strategic management, the group studies how companies that develop dynamic capabilities manage to adapt to highly volatile and complex environments. Under this line of research, the group examines strategic decision-making, internationalisation processes and how companies manage to identify opportunities, mobilise resources and transform themselves in the face of uncertainty. Its findings have been published in high-impact international journals such as Current Issues in Tourism, European Journal of Innovation Management, International Journal of Hospitality Management and Strategic Change.

3. Knowledge management and intellectual capital: This examines how organisations access, create, transfer and apply knowledge to improve their performance. It also analyses how to measure a company's intangible assets (its 'intellectual capital'). For example: a company may know that it has highly skilled employees, but may not know how to make the most of that talent. The group provides tools to identify, assess and capitalise on this internal knowledge. Publications in the Journal of Knowledge Management and the Journal of Intellectual Capital attest to this work.

4. Clusters and industrial districts: This research examines the competitive advantages that companies gain when they cluster geographically around a common sector. The concentration of companies in a given area generates economies of scale, facilitates innovation and attracts foreign investment. The group also applies this approach to the tourism sector, analysing destination clusters. It has published in journals such as Regional Studies and the Journal of Business Research.

5. Organisation and organisational ambidexterity: This examines a company's ability to capitalise on what it already does well, whilst simultaneously exploring new opportunities and innovations. It involves striking a balance between building on established strengths and investing in new ventures. The group analyses which internal structures and corporate culture foster this dual capability. It has published in Personnel Review, the International Journal of Human Resource Management and Cornell Hospitality Quarterly.

6. Circular economy, sustainability and corporate social responsibility: The group provides evaluation frameworks to transform ethical commitment into a measurable competitive advantage. The adoption of sustainability criteria has become a determining factor for business continuity and the improvement of financial performance. The group therefore investigates how organisations integrate social, ethical and environmental concerns into their overall strategy, analysing the impact of these practices on variables critical to long-term success, such as financial performance, corporate reputation, competitiveness, resilience to crises and the very survival of the business. Their findings have been published in leading journals such as the Journal of Business Ethics, the Journal of Sustainable Tourism and Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, amongst others.

7. Tourism research: This cross-cutting area applies the six previous lines of research to the tourism sector, one of the most significant for the Spanish economy. It examines hotel strategy, the management of tourist destinations, training in digital skills within the sector, and sustainability. Publications in Tourism Management, one of the world's most influential journals in this field, demonstrate the group's prestige.

8. Research in the food and drink sector (wine industry): The group has research experience in the wine industry, particularly in the analysis of business competitiveness, regional cooperation, the international outreach of wine companies and the adoption of sustainable practices.

RESEARCH AREAS INITIATED IN RECENT YEARS:

9. Business longevity and survival: Business mortality is characterised by its high incidence during the early years of an organisation's existence, making it a pressing issue in the economic and social context. Given the impact of organisations' closure on both their staff and the local areas in which they operate, this line of research addresses the topic of business longevity and survival from two angles: the analysis of the factors influencing both phenomena, and the differences in organisational behaviour and outcomes resulting from their longevity.

10. Management of sports enterprises and organisations: This focuses on the study of the management, strategy and sustainability of organisations linked to sport. It analyses companies, clubs, federations, sporting events and other entities in the sector, with a particular focus on sports tourism, governance, digitalisation, innovation and sustainability. This research area links business organisation with a sector of growing economic and social significance, which faces significant challenges in terms of professionalisation and strategic management.

11. Digital transformation of businesses: Analyses how digitalisation, automation, artificial intelligence and Industry 5.0 are transforming business strategy, processes and innovation, and their impact on competitiveness and sustainability. The findings have been published in journals such as Environmental Technology & Innovation, Internet Research, European Journal of Innovation Management, British Food Journal and European Food Research & Technology.

12. Natural stone sector (marble): In recent years, the group has carried out several research projects in collaboration with Alicante Marble, an association based in the Valencian Community. As a result of this research, two books have been published by the University of Alicante.

NOTABLE PROJECTS:

The group has taken part in more than 30 R&D&I projects throughout its history, funded both through public calls for proposals (European Commission, Ministry of Science and Innovation, Valencian Tourism Agency) and private commissions.

Among the most notable projects is its participation in “The Next Tourism Generation Alliance” (NTG), funded by the European Commission to the tune of €4 million. Fourteen organisations from eight European countries took part, and the group was the sole representative from a Spanish university. Its aim was to identify digital and sustainability training needs in the European tourism sector with a view to Horizon 2030. The project was followed by the PANTOUR initiative, which focused on green and digital skills for the European tourism ecosystem.

It is also worth highlighting project AICO/2021/192 (Grants for Consolidated Research Groups – AICO 2021), entitled “Clusters and Business Resilience Strategies in the Valencian Community”, funded by the Valencian Regional Government.

KEY PUBLICATIONS:

The group has produced over 400 research outputs: articles, book chapters and books. Of these, more than 100 are indexed in the Journal Citation Reports (JCR) and Scopus, both of which are leading global databases for scientific quality. The group has delivered over 400 papers at national and international conferences.

Notable journals in which the group has published include: Tourism Management, Journal of Knowledge Management, Journal of Business Research, Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, Technological Forecasting & Social Change, Business Strategy and the Environment, Sustainable Development, Journal of Environmental Management, Journal of Intellectual Capital, Family Business Review, Regional Studies, International Journal of Human Resource Management, Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, British Food Journal, and Scientometrics.

This wide range of journals reflects the group’s multidisciplinary scope.

VENTAJAS Y ASPECTOS INNOVADORES

ADVANTAGES

Collaborating with the research group offers the following advantages:

- 1) Specialised and proven expertise: over a decade of accumulated research in business management, tourism and knowledge management.
- 2) Publications in the world’s leading scientific journals, guaranteeing the methodological rigour of the analyses and assessments carried out.
- 3) A multidisciplinary team with complementary skill sets, capable of tackling complex business problems from multiple perspectives.
- 4) Access to international research networks and collaboration with European universities and organisations.
- 5) Experience in managing EU-funded projects, which facilitates the participation of business partners in EU calls for proposals.
- 6) Ability to translate scientific knowledge into practical solutions that can be directly applied within organisations.
- 7) Tailor-made specialist training for companies and institutions in high-demand areas such as talent management, internationalisation and strategic innovation.

INNOVATIVE ASPECTS

What sets this research group apart from other academic teams is its cross-cutting nature: the same lines of research – knowledge, clusters, family businesses, ambidexterity, and sustainability and corporate social responsibility– are applied in an integrated manner, producing a more comprehensive and useful assessment for organisations. The business is not studied in isolated parts, but as an interconnected system.

Furthermore, the group combines advanced quantitative methods (statistical models and structural equations) with qualitative approaches (interviews and focus groups), enabling it to identify patterns in large samples whilst also delving deeper into the specific realities of businesses.

The research group is a pioneer in applying concepts such as ‘organisational ambidexterity’ and ‘green intellectual capital’ to the Spanish tourism and wine sectors, representing an innovative contribution that provides companies in both sectors and public institutions with analytical frameworks and recommendations that are not yet widely available in the consultancy market.

ESTADO ACTUAL

The group is currently very active in research, with ongoing projects and recent publications that maintain its presence on the international scientific scene. The PANTOUR initiative, a continuation of the European NTG project, is one of its main active projects, focusing on the development of digital and sustainable skills for the European tourism sector.

As for recent publications, the group maintains a steady output in indexed journals. Among its most recent works are studies on the effect of green intellectual capital on firms’ innovation performance, published in the proceedings of leading international conferences (2023), as well as research on university students’ engagement with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The group has also explored the impact of artificial intelligence on research and business management, thereby consolidating its commitment to keeping pace with new paradigms in the economic and technological landscape.

In the field of researcher training, the group has supervised numerous doctoral theses, with topics ranging from knowledge management models in Ecuadorian public universities to the analysis of the internationalisation of family businesses in cluster environments. This reflects both the group's commitment to Latin America and to the training of new researchers.

The group maintains active international partnerships with various universities. These include, amongst others: Stellenbosch University, the University of Bucharest, the Technical University of Machala, the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Sonoma State University, Southwest University of Science and Technology, Marmara University, etc.

APLICACIONES DE LA OFERTA

The knowledge accumulated by the research group is particularly useful for a wide range of public and private organisations, including:

Tourism and hospitality sector: Hotels, hotel chains, travel agencies, tourist destinations and destination management organisations can benefit from consultancy on competitive strategy, digital talent management and sustainability. The group has extensive experience in this sector, as reflected in publications in leading international tourism journals.

Food and drink sector (wine industry): Wineries, cooperatives, regulatory councils, designations of origin and agri-food companies can benefit from consultancy on competitive strategy, innovation, internationalisation and sustainability.

Sports sector: Clubs, federations, sports event organisers, destinations and public authorities can benefit from assessments, analyses and studies on strategic management, governance, sustainability and the professionalisation of sports organisations, as well as on the development of sports tourism.

Family businesses: The group offers diagnostic tools and recommendations for the professionalisation of management, succession planning and the internationalisation of family businesses, which make up the majority of Spain's business sector.

Small and medium-sized enterprises in cluster environments: SMEs located in industrial districts or business parks can obtain an analysis of their regional competitive advantages and recommendations for strengthening intra-cluster cooperation and their international presence.

Public administrations and regional development agencies: Regional tourism departments, regional development agencies, provincial councils and local councils can commission studies on the competitiveness of their regions, the economic impact of tourism or the training needs of their business community.

Training centres and universities: The group can contribute to curriculum design, specialised content and teacher training in areas related to strategic leadership, knowledge management and entrepreneurship in global economies.

International organisations and European research networks: Its experience in European projects (the Erasmus+ Programme and Blueprints for Sectorial Cooperation) makes the group a strategic partner for international consortia seeking high-level scientific representation from Spanish universities.

COLABORACIÓN BUSCADA

The research group is seeking public entities, private companies or research organisations to:

- Set up R&D&I projects with the aim of opening up new lines of research.
- Produce technical or advisory reports.
- Provide specific training or technical support in areas requiring a high level of expertise.

DERECHOS DE PROPIEDAD INTELECTUAL

The research areas and services of the research group are protected by the group's **know-how**.

SECTORES DE APLICACIÓN (3)

