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## Application of the RBV as a Tool for Obtaining Competitive Advantages in a Metallurgic Company

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### ABSTRACT

This article is the result of a studied case realized in a metallurgic company located in Rio Grande do Sul that considered the Relationship Marketing, Sales, Financial Services, Product Design and the Resale Value as resources responsible for building a business model that adds value to the customer, having them as competitive differentials. Based on that, was elaborated a framework constituted by interconnection between the resources of the company, showing how this alliance is a successful model. The results demonstrate the importance that the network of internal resources represents in obtaining competitive advantages. In fact, the true differential of this company is the people who are inserted and run their processes in the best possible way and feel able to suggest improvements. However, for these benefits are identified, it is essential that the management is committed and committed to ensure the best conditions for their employees, so that these talents are directed to this purpose. Invest in training and qualification of personnel is an important way to enhance the internal resources. The model of RBV, even that has not yet been fully consolidated in academic area, proved to be an important tool, applied perfectly and makes it possible to obtain a competitive advantage in a market inflamed, as the company Alfa S/A is inserted.

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## INTRODUCTION

The RBV defends that the main focus of the company should not be the standardization of their products or even to differentiate them, but how it can create value for their customers based on the resources that it has or will develop and that it allows a competitive differential. The customer realizing the differential of this network of resources, which is made available by the company ends up having a loyal partner, creating a reliable bound for a long time.

This work was developed into a company of metal mechanical branch of the state of Rio Grande do Sul that works under the system of production of customized products, seeking to attend on every specific needs of each client. During the development of the article is shown how the company uses its network of resources for the customer to realize all the differentials offered and that probably will not be found in competition. After having made a search with several members of the organization, raising information of the most different areas of the company, focusing on the network of resources, has been prepared as result a framework of how occurs the coordination of the whole chain of RBV.

**Theoretical Framework:**

**Resource Based View:**

The Resource Based View (RBV) or Vision Based on Resources became from the pioneering work of Edith Penrose, called "Theory of the growth of the firm" in 1959, according to the vision of Rugman and Verbeke (2001). For Barney (1997) a vision based on resources can help managers to choose strategies to achieve competitive advantage, just as long as the rules are relatively fixed.

By this way, the company's main focus should not only be standardized products or even differentiation of products, but how it can value for their customers based on their resources Andersén (2010). According to the

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same author, the strategic management based on resources focuses on development of barriers against imitation of resources rather than protect the products. In function of the dynamic environment, it is fundamental that the companies construct a solid relation with their employees and other key features. It is indispensable the alignment of practices of human resources management. The company's strategy has two functions: increase the organizational learning developing strategic resources in terms of different compatibilities and insert strategies to retention of employees in order to keep some competitive sustainable advantage.

Hax e Wilde II (2001), considering that the point of departure of the RBV according to Porter's approach is based on factors directed to the market. Porter ponders that the structure of the company has a fundamental role in creating opportunities for greater profitability. The RBV argues that the central forces of competitive advantage are directed to factors, which are dependent on the development of the company resources. By the eyes of Rugma and Verbeke (2002), the main contribution from RVB to the strategic management is the ability of redirect for the same objective point, the economy and the industrial, scientific and strategic organization. They say that even with the existence of a great number of studies that adopt this perspective the concept still needs a maturity.

According to these same authors, there are four characteristics that define companies that use the RBV approaching: i) obtaining of sustainability and above-average return of competitors; ii) range of resources does not imitated by our and the combination of them in competence and capability; iii) all intents: harmonize the differences between the various areas to achieve complementarity; iv) innovation: combination of new features.

Hammel e Prahalad (1990) say that the organizations forget themselves of making clear to their team witch direction to be followed, where the company pretends to arrive and by this way the collaborators aren't able to help the company reach its objectives. According with the same authors, acting like feudal lords does not work anymore. Instead of that, the executives should collaborate in favor of the company's name in a general sense. These leaders should be placed to leverage the company's central competences, because it is the only way to create competitive innovations, linking improved processes to the company's global strategy. If the company's central competences are its critical resources the high manages should insure its continuity.

A great important point to contribute with RBV should be the human resources. According to Schuler and Jackson (2007), SHRM (Strategic Human Resource Management) had its origin in the beginning in the 80's coming from the work of Devanna, Fombrum and Ticky (1984) witch article was redirected to explore the bond between business strategies and human resources. The SHRM did not come from RBV, but became essential to its development.

### ***Relation Marketing:***

According to Gronroos, the nordic school became internationally known by its resources on the services marketing area in and in 1990 developed the marketing of relation thinking. This term was introduced in the literature in 1993 by Berry.

This school introduced concepts and models related to the business, which was the breakup of a paradigm and its thinking exalts the importance of the relation of the company's net.

The marketing of service became one of the pillars of the relationship marketing, services have interface with the perception of the consumer and their behavior. The Nordic school puts the management of service is the main reason for the construction and maintenance of relationships. The relationship marketing is supported also by other factors such as network construction, establishment of strategic alliances, integrated communication, among others.

The school addresses that deploy the relationship marketing, companies need make changes such as: i) the shift of focus in decision making for marketing of transaction: customers do not look only for the goods or services, they want a holistic view; ii) change of focus of central areas of marketing: targeted approach for operation must be replaced by a construction of long term; iii) communication integrated marketing: it is necessary to support the creation, maintenance and enhancement of the relationship marketing and interaction of its processes; and iv) perceived value by the customer: create a process of value that is noticeable to the customer over time.

The authors Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000) describe that was a paradigm shift in which relations are no longer to be exchange operations, the domain of relationship marketing are focused on meeting the needs of customers, to achieve this, the company may have to cooperate and collaborate with suppliers and competitors by doing this also part of the domain. They stress the importance of retaining customers, who demand lower costs than to buy new, and with advent of technology, allowed a more direct interaction between consumers and end customers to establish channels of communication to share information with customers and thus be able to improve its relationship with the same. Customers have a natural tendency to reduce the choices, they are motivated to seek out the benefits and rewards associated with offered in these programs. It is not feasible to involve all the customers in these programs, in this way the criteria for selection of partners vary in accordance with the objectives and policies of the company as revenue potential customer values and management.

It is important the periodic evaluation of the results of the relationship marketing, because it helps in taking corrective measures if necessary. Another point to be stressed is the training of professionals who will interact with customers, being relevant create motivation through incentives and rewards.

The relationship marketing extends in many areas such as channel relationship, business-to-business marketing, marketing services, strategic alliances/partnerships, sales management, logistics and supply chain integration.

Cannon and Perreault (1999) feature six connectors of relationship: i) exchange of information: it is a pre-requisite for the construction of the trust (Morgan and Hunt 1994); ii) bonds: operational procedures and routines of purchase and sale that has been associated to facilitate the operations; iii) Legal ties: contractual link that specify the obligations and the roles of both parties in the relationship; iv) cooperation: two companies can be flexible to respond to new conditions and deal with problems such as joint responsibilities; and v) specific adaptation of relationship demanded by the buyer and seller: is the mode that focuses on the individual behavior specific to another part of the relationship. Can deliver value for one or both of the parties to the extent that investments reduce costs, increase revenues or create dependencies.

The search of them demonstrated that when there is sharing of information, there is a higher degree of confidence in the relationship, and another point would be that the operational integration might influence the issue of dependence and thus generating barriers to exchange. And the authors conclude that this new approach aims to develop relationships in the long term.

Sharma (2007) highlights the need for metrics in your marketing efforts, with systems such as CRM companies can analyze the profitability of customers, but issues such as satisfaction and loyalty perceived in metrics, it is still not easy. In relation to relationship, marketing discusses its importance and the growth in the last decade. The approach are the needs and desires of customers, making a long-term relationship, where the same are considered more profitable customers, of which new customers.

For Sirdeshmukh, Singh and Sabol (2002), confidence can be defined as "the expectations of the consumer that the service provider can be trusted in the delivery of its promises". The facets of trust are inter-related and influence one another. Thus, the confidence of consumers in a company is influenced by reliability in employees of contact (front line) (FLE) and by reliability in policies and management practices (MPPs). The authors explain that, while consumers through the observation of the behavior of officials assess the reliability in employees of contact during the meeting services, the second dimension is assessed by trial of consumers in relation to the practices and policies that guide the positioning of the company.

The authors claim that the reliability in the company, under the aspect of managerial practices and policies, is related to the policies established by the company, contracts, terms and documents that express how will your actions forward to various situations of exchange. Consumers evaluate the company in accordance with the compliance of its policies through the practices found in the implementation of the service. They argue that the two facets of trust (employees of contact and policies and management practices) suffer direct influence and should be analyzed through three distinct dimensions: the operational competence, benevolence and operational guidance for the solution of problems.

Operational Authority: it is the first dimension that influences the reliability of consumers and is related to consumer expectations in relation to a competent performance of the service provider. The authors emphasize that the operational authority is one of the main "precursors of development of trust". They emphasize that consumers could not judge the competence of a supplier unless the jurisdiction is signaled by visible practices of management. In This way, the authors conclude that the judgment of consumers with respect to operational competence is crucial for the formation of trust and "have their origin in visible behaviors of employees of contact and of policies and organizational practices (Sirdeshmukh, Singh and Sabol 2002) ".

According to the same authors, the benevolence operational would be prioritizing the interests of customers, forward to all the other. All actions are taken with the aim of favoring customers.

The guidance for the solution of problems is also defined by these authors as the motivation of employees at operational level and managerial, to which it is perceived and evaluated by the customer, and that have objective of anticipation of appropriate solutions to problems that may occur during the process.

#### *Methodology:*

For the preparation of this article it was used the technique of case study. According to Yin (2001), the case study is the result of an empirical research, comprehensive manner, following a logic of planning, data collection and analysis of it. Moreover, the own Yin (2001) adds that the use of the technique of the case study is the most appropriate when the research questions are focused on "why" and "how", where the researcher does not have control of the situation, which is inserted in social contexts. According to Gil (1991), it is a strategy of global vision problems, seeking to identify some points that can be influenced.

According to Roesch (1999), a good advantage of the case study is the possibility of studying the people inserted in its natural environment, which has just differentiating this technique of experiments reproduced in controlled environments and artificial.

This case study had as its main objective the identification of existing resources within the company as well as competitive differentiators for they offered. For such, the procedure adopted was to conduct interviews with professionals in each area. Figure 1 contains the sequence of the interviewees.

Name	Position	Company Time
Interview A	Manager	35 years
Interview B	Engineering Analyst	13 years
Interview C	HR Analyst	8 years
Interview D	Consultant MKT	26 years
Interview E	Manager	5 years

**Fig. 1:** Relation interviews

Source: Authors

The Article is structured in five parts, the first being that it is the theoretical framework, which covers aspects of the theory of RBV and Relationship Marketing. The second part contains a brief history of the company. In the following step, were commented upon the five company resources, relying on the collaboration of people who work in the areas. The fourth part contains the framework elaborated by the authors and finally some relevant conclusions.

#### ***Company History:***

The company Alpha S/A operates in metallurgical segment and is located in the northeastern region of Rio Grande do Sul. Has more than 50 years of experience and offers its clients customized products, seeking to meet the needs of the same. Account currently, with more than 9 thousand employees, distributed in two manufacturing units located in Rio Grande do Sul and the factory in these plants around 80% of the components used.

Consistently delivers, programs of training and improvement to its employees, such as the incentive to education, in which the same has a policy of seeking to offer the middle school to all employees, in addition to courses that involve the technical scope of the product, informatics, of interpersonal relationships as well as motivational.

The hierarchical structure of the company is segmented as follows: i) Engineering: the engineering department is responsible for the development and design of all components used. It also encompasses the sector of prototypes; ii) Production: the production area is responsible for execution of the projects. It is divided into sectors that perform the most diverse tasks in a logical and organized as lay out; iii) Acquisition and Logistics: are responsible for materials, both the manufactured internally as those purchased from third parties. It also involves the part of transport of ready products; iv) Quality: coordinates the efforts of the company to obtain products in the best way possible; v) Human Resources: area responsible for labor-both direct and indirect, hires and shutdowns, job security, social service, trainings, among others; vi) Financial: Administrative department on which are the sectors of information technology, financial, cost and equity; vii) Post Sales: main responsible for the services of technical assistance and spare parts; and viii) Commercial: with respect to the commercial part, the company that uses a structure for the Brazilian market that account with 18 commercial representatives, who are strategically located, aiming to meet the all states of the country. In addition, these sales representatives are also responsible for network of post sales, where are offered spare parts and technical assistance services.

#### ***The Resources of The Company Alfa S/A:***

##### ***Post Sale:***

According to Kotler, the post sale services, are originally linked to the marketing's theory. The same author says that this is the "science of winning and keeping customers and develop profitable relationships with them".

The company adopted, since 2001, a policy that requires the availability of after-sales services differentiated to their customers. According to the interviewee, the company "has a program of post-sales comprehensive with respect to the fundamental aspects." These aspects are, in fact, the responsiveness and quality of care. Also according to the manager, the services offered are the technical assistance, the provision of a network of spare parts and the realization of technical training courses to clients aiming to disseminate the loyalty to the brand, empower and improve the same and thus contribute to the results of the organization. This interviewee also commented that, "after the product leaves the dependencies of the factory, any problem that might appear is the responsibility of the post-sales service and for this reason we need immediate solutions, for which the customer feel secure and comfortable with our products".

With respect to training offered, there are some arrangements, such as the courses, offered on the premises of the company itself or in other locations determined by country and which are administered by internal experts. In addition to this, another feature employed on the same line are the training carried out via the internet, in which customers can access it through the website after held the registration and obtaining a password. This virtual tool was offered two years ago and is similar to that of higher education institutions offer. The courses and virtual meetings, more offered are: mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic and electric.

**a) *Technical Assistance:***

The technical assistance network the company Alfa S/A is composed by 18 official representatives. These representatives, in addition to the sales, are responsible for providing services for assistance. To this end, the same feature workshops installed in locations where they operate and rely on professionals trained by the company itself. These workshops should comply with the criteria of standardization, for which the customer who purchase the product in the southern region, for example, any time buy in southeast region, find the same services.

Trainings are offered improved constantly, both on the premises of the company, where the people responsible for these services remain for some time along the areas of engineering and production, as well as by means of technical professionals in these areas go to market offering training.

The company also disponibilizes, by its website, the maintenance manual of all the products that comercializes. These manuals are available for download at this website, without having to have a password or ID. They are available too in three languages: Portuguese, Spanish and English.

In addition, the manuals have been developed to provide information and instructions necessary for the use and maintenance of the products. The same can also be used as tools for additional training and thus instruct the maintenance personnel. These documents also contain the rules, deadlines and relevant comments to the scope of the guarantee. Another point that deserves to be highlighted is that in this manual are also the safety standards, which customers should be aware of their obligations and commitments.

The main care related to maintenance are explained in detail. Considerations and recommendations on the best practices and components indicated for a better preservation of products are also present in the manual. On the web site are also offered technical bulletins maintenance, where customers are constantly updated on new optional inserted. Several maintenance tips are also offered through the web site. For aggregating a greater value still, videos are being developed and made available on the web site of the company, with the aim of directing customers details of the operation and maintenance of the products.

Complementing the exposed, and aiming at the dissemination of information related to the product, with a network of representatives and customers, were introduced the so-called Technical Bulletins. In This way, the company seeks the levelling and dissemination of correct information to all parties involved. These bulletins are sent by e-mail and are also available on the website.

In addition to this, searching within the practices of best care, was launched recently (2011) a service called mobile workshop. This practice is in equipping vehicles such as trucks and vans with all equipment and tooling to enable the solution of any problem that might occur in products produced by Alfa S/A. The main premise of these itinerant workshops is to streamline the process, providing the services directly where the customer is located.

**b) *Replacement parts:***

With regard to the aspects of replacement parts, the company Alfa S/A part of three basic premises, which were perceived after a survey carried out among the 10 largest customers, in the year 2009: i) ensure the availability of parts for the majority of cases; ii) that the waiting time of parts is minimal; and iii) that the cost of same is accessible.

On this basis, the company deployed along its network of representatives and posts authorized what was termed as "Aftermarket Kit", which consists in maintaining specific components in dependencies of representations, which prevent the products remain stopped for lack of parts. The size of this stock technician varies according to the potential buyer of the region where the representative is inserted. This kit has validity of one year, leaving the company responsible for possible repurchase of these components. In this way, only parts with validity of warranty will be offered to customers. With the deployment of the kit, the company proposes a compensation of 10% on the selling price of these parts, aiming that this discount is passed on to customers, because it is believed that lower prices discourage piracy and advantages the customer. The structure of spare parts the company works as follows:

a) Eighteen official representatives who offer the entire portfolio of parts and components, while maintaining a stock in their dependencies;

b) Forty posts authorized, spread across several points of Brazil, which also have conditions of supply of original spare parts.

The kit can be perceived in a preventive manner, where the goal is to streamline and minimize idle times harmful to customers. It can be concluded that this is a normal flow of spare parts. However, there are situations where this flow should be considered as special, due to the client's need. To this end, the company introduced the call Red Line, which is only triggered if the request is considered as urgent. These parts are sent under character of exception airway, where the customer will receive the components up in up to four days, depending on the region where it is located.

### c) *Trainings:*

With the aim of improving the quality of after-sales services the company introduced a program of training offered to customers. In This way, the Alpha S/A demand act preventively, seeking to empower and/or refine the professionals who work with their clients to carry out maintenance and repairs on products purchased by them.

The trainings were divided as follows:

a) Classroom training: it is a modality in which customers will hold the course in person, on the premises of the company Alfa S/A or in places defined by the representatives of the region. A timeline of the types of training to be offered, as well as locations where will be administered is done and distributed semiannually, for that might occur the scheduling on the part of customers. The advantage of this method is the proximity between the company and its customers, the opportunity to observe and interact physically with the product, making the training more didactic

b) Distance training: in this modality, the courses are offered via the internet, through prior book, where an online form must be completed and the obtaining of a personal password. This type of training can be carried out according to the availability of time for each client and the location that the same wish. The goal is to provide appropriate conditions, for which the participant of this modality is not physically present in a formal setting of teaching-learning, as well as enable its self-study in the time that it is convenient. In addition, one of the advantages of this modality is to disseminate the information on products and services in a more efficient and responsive. The aim is also to prepare for subsequent presence trainings.

Both modalities, offer training related to mechanical, hydraulic, electrical and pneumatic. Contributing to this, the company makes available on its website, a virtual library of files, where customers can clarify any doubts.

### *Product Design:*

The company, constantly, seeks excellence in aspects related to the design of their products. Throughout its existence, the same has been developing and investing in the improvement of its products, seeking to serve their customers in the best way possible. You can say, then, that the company chose to be inserted in a context of flexibility, in which the products can be configured by customers. According to Swimidass (1986) to choose to increase their level of flexibility in manufacturing, the company may get some kind of aid to overcome and live with the uncertainties imposed by the environment, for the market. Nigel Slack (1990) also lists that the manufacturing flexibility may become an important tool for live with the uncertainties, both in the long and the short term. All the processes of creation of new products are performed internally by engineering teams of development and product design, according to the interviewee B, analyst of engineering.

For its products currently offered, the Alpha S/A has determined some fundamental points of design of project, as follows: i) the creation and development of innovative products, seeking as well, a market leadership, in addition to providing a greater reliability of customers; ii) reduction of maintenance; and iii) prioritize the comfort, considering it as a competitive issue, including in this point thermal characteristics, safety and ergonomics.

The company seeks to use market research to identify the main needs identified by customers, in addition to identifying a profile of the same. For the current moment, the same was performed along the 500 customers between the years of 2006 and 2007 and counted with the collaboration of teams, marketing, product design and engineering.

The innovation (referencing) is another point quite chased by Alpha S/A, in which the targets were to develop products in evolutionary segment where it operates that is in constant improvement as well as consolidate a company's identity, related to physical aspects of the product. This innovation has been contributing to the company achieving market leadership, in the segments where it operates, as shown below in Figure 2:

Company	% Market Share		
	2008	2009	2010
Alfa S/A	30,4	35,2	40,3
Company A	28,0	26,5	27,4
Company B	12,9	11,5	12,0
Company C	9,4	10,6	9,7

Company D	5,4	8,4	7,5
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**Fig. 2:** Participation of market

Source: Company Alpha

**Human Resources:**

The management of people is perceived by the Alfa S/A as a competitive differentiator that sustains and provides for obtaining superior results. The goal is to provide a working environment in which people feel motivated and the willingness to carry out their functions. In addition, they are encouraged to contribute to the process of innovation, which is reflected in the products and services offered by metallurgical, according to the interviewee C, HR analyst of the company. Another important point is that the people are prepared and trained to occupy any position within the organization, since the production of the technical positions, strategic and management.

According to information made available by the department of Human Resources, the company presented in the year 2010, turnover levels of 1.71% and absenteeism of 2.71 %.

To this end, some strategies were outlined as follows:

**Compensation Plan and Career:**

With regard to remuneration, the company offers the following modalities:

a) Plan of variable remuneration, which has the objective of rewarding employees for contribution to achievement of results tactical and operational. The value is based on targets pre-established between the administration of the company and representatives of the employees, also considering a portion of the annual net profit.

b) Plan of fixed remuneration, that considers the relative weight of each post and lists qualifications and skills required for the occupants of each function. It can be said that the plan of fixed remuneration is based on skills and abilities. Search offer perspectives in a transparent manner and also provide an increase in the possibility of professional development through the establishment of appropriate criteria.

Related to aspects relevant to career plan, the company created in 2005 an internal recruitment program that has as its objective leverage internal talent to fill the job opportunities that arise in the most diverse sectors. For this, a database was created of talents. According to inside information, the percentage of seats occupied by the use of this database is of the order of 90 %.

**Incentives to Education:**

The company prioritizes and encourages the education and training of its employees, which seeks to offer conditions for its implementation. For this, there is an incentive program, founded in 1991, which grants scholarships to study that covers all levels, from the elementary and middle level education, graduation and post-graduation, in addition to foreign languages. All employees are eligible to enroll to receive this incentive. This program consists of a committee composed of representatives from all areas that seeks to assess the candidates through a set of criteria.

At the time, according to the company, there are more than 500 people being benefited by the program. The Figure 3 shows the evolution of the level of education of the employees of the company.

Category	1996	2010
Incomplete elementary	58,2%	7,2%
Complete elementary	12,8%	24,0%
High School incomplete	6,9%	10,1%
High School complete	12,4%	41,4%
Higher Top incomplete	6,3%	11,7%
Higher Top complete	2,7%	3,0%
Post-graduation	0,7%	2,6%

**Fig. 3:** Comparative internal education evolution

Source: Company Alpha

**Efficient Internal Communication:**

Alpha S/A stipulated how agile communication principles, clear and objective, where employees can have easy access to the same. With the objective of contributing to the dissemination of information, were deployed some vehicles and programs, through which all employees have access, such as internal, intranet journal, wall charts, electronic panels, free channel, new employees integration program and meetings of management teams.

The company also held every two years, the organizational climate research, being that the last consultation was carried out in the year 2009 and obtained results of the order of 78% of approval with regard to aspects of efficiency in internal communication.

**Healthy, Security and Life Quality:**

The company demonstrates its concern for the health and safety of their contributors, through controls, education and preventive measures and improvements in the work environment. To ensure these premises and demonstrate this commitment, Alfa SA has the certificate OHSAS 18000, which regulates matters related to health and safety of workers

In addition, individual protection equipment (PPE's) are provided by the company to all officials. The correct use of same is one of the obligations of employees and is linked to the existing hazards in each sector or activity. To help with this, are offered to staff medical services, Infirmary " ( and dentistry, at the premises of the company. Clinical examinations, periodic and complementary are carried out to ensure a good health to all.

**Relation Marketing:**

The company Alpha S/A seeks to establish and maintain long-term relationships that are mutually beneficial between the two parties involved.

For this, the construction of this relationship, it is the process of attracting and keeping customers over time, through the maintenance of constant contact and by offering services before, during and after the sale, it is an imperative for the organization.

In order to assist this process, certain assumptions, as follows: i) to give priority to maintain current customers and win new ones; ii) to maintain a high level of commitment to these customers; iii) guidance for sales multiple, creating loyal relationships; iv) to keep updated, through systematic surveys of opinion to improve the relationship; v) be committed to with the services offered; vi) the quality should be a concern and obligation of all; and vii) focus on the long term

According to the interviewee D, marketing consultant, the company has some programs to enhance the relationship with customers, as well as offers some facilities with this purpose, namely

- Program of visits to customers: program through which aims to customer loyalty, as well as to preserve the image of the company and the effective closure of business. For a better service, there are some procedures, such as the representatives, who are the link between the Alpha S/A and the customer must schedule all visits with a week in advance, at least as well as inform the marketing department through standard form data and customer information, the issues that should be addressed during the visit, as well as customs, special features and preferences of each client.

- Visit of children of customers: annually are meetings between the children of customers, with the aim of familiarizing them with the business environment and seeking to enhance and perpetuate the existing relationship.

- Show room traveling: always that develops or perform some improvement in their products, the Alpha S/A performs what determines to show room traveling, because it organizes a technical team and commercial that goes to the market making exposures to customers, introducing new products and clarifying doubts

- Visit to one of our clients - factory program on the client: this program seeks to address the problems encountered by customers by sending teams to the places where they are where these teams can observe the problems in work environments prevail over the search for solutions.

- Another way that the company has to be closer to and interact with your customers is the market research.

Through constant research of the market, the company Alpha S/A seeking to draw closer to their customers, in an attempt to get to know the needs and views of the same. The objectives of the research can be described as follows: i) draw a profile of the customer identifying the segment of the same; ii) evaluate the structure provided by the representatives; iii) check technical assistance services of the representative; iv) VALIAR services of spare parts by the representative; and v) perception regarding the mark of the company.

**Resale Value:**

The Alpha S/A is seen by the market as a company with innovative inspiration which continually invests in the development of technologies that anticipate needs and trends. The line of creative campaigns for the launch of new products is proposing a new dynamic of communication in a language environment, without sacrificing a consistent planning and creativity focused to enlarge each time more the success of the company and in the disclosure of the total benefit to the customer.

The company is closely monitoring the competition, seeking their products are perceived as superior in relation to other similar. A point that deserves much importance is the resale value obtained front to competitive products.

According to the latest market research carried out in 2010, the resale value of company Alpha S/A was considered better by 65% of respondents in relation to competing brands.

**Financial Services:**

Second Cobra (2000), the identification of value activities requires an individual analysis of their function, the resources that employs, its inputs and technology, which can be divided into primary activities and support activities. The primary are related with the creation of the service, its sale and transfer to the consumption of the purchaser. The support activities support the primary activities and themselves, providing human resources, technology, inputs and even a bank to finance the customer.

A service can only be of value to a consumer if the benefit offered is recognized as important to him. The service must be constantly innovating for that to differentiate yourself from the competition and provide a higher value to the consumer.

Characteristics of the sector of services:

- Intangibility: the challenge of marketing professional is to make tangible the intangible aspects of a service, highlighting the benefits of clearly.

- The relationship with customers - Many services cannot be produced without the presence and cooperation of the client, as they cannot be stored, they must be produced at the same time as they are consumed.

- Perishability- service cannot be stored for later use. The demand must be well calculated and administered.

- Inseparability: the service depends on the performance of people. A bank depends on the performance and cordial service of its employees.

As Tucker (1991), in order to stay competitive in the sector of services companies should follow several steps: i) rethinking the company from customers and not the services; ii) create the means to get closer to the consumer customer; iii) become an attentive observer of trends; iv) introduce constant improvements in services; v) continually seek new ideas, even bold; vi) create services that save people's time.

The company Alpha S/A discovered an opportunity to retain even more their customers by increasing their loyalty on the basis of a need felt by a portion of its consumers. Some customers felt that they had been difficult to obtain in the financial market, a line of credit to finance the purchase of the products. It was done a research work with customers and banking establishments and it has been found that some banks were afraid to perform operations on the market for financing of this nature, by considering an operation of higher risk. The financial institutions were hindering the release of funding with the allegation that the risk in financing was much higher than the faced, with other products.

As was examined, this would be justified by these products are manufactured in a manner very customized, and that after a possible defaults and seizure of the well, would entail a difficulty too large to achieve replacing the same in the market. Envisioned at this moment, a new opportunity for the company that would be able to finance its own product for the customer who felt difficulty in achieving an appropriate credit line for the purchase of this product as specific.

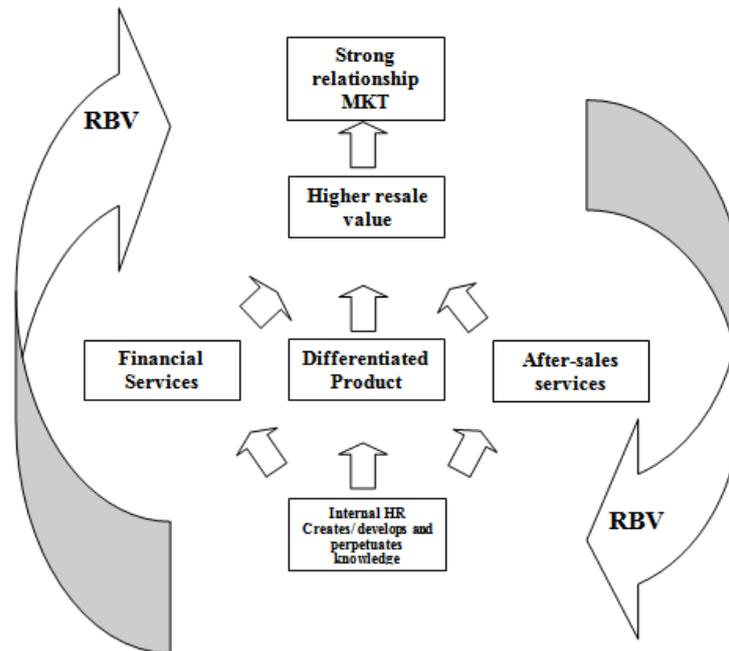
The company Alpha S/A is structured and ended up creating a financial arm, The Bank Y whose main function is to help promote sales. It operates in basically two forms of funding. The first is the FINAME (Special Industrial Financing Agency), which is a subsidiary body of the BNDES (National Bank for Economic and Social Development), created in September 1964, in which she is only makes the transfer of the credit granted by the Federal Government and the second would be the CDC, direct to consumer credit. In addition to these financing arrangements mentioned above, the bank, possibly, acts in conjunction with other banks when the customer wants a modality of financing differentiated, not yet exercised by the institution.

In the accounting period 2008/2009, according to the balance sheet of the company studied the banking arm of the same had a 10% increase in the level of funding which demonstrates its insertion and acceptance among the customers of the company Alpha S/A.

#### **Framework Connection Between Resources:**

Based on company studied was drawn up a framework, as shown in Figure 4, which shows the relationships between the features perceived by the company. It is also a logical sequence and continuous. The RH can be considered as the starting point and the basis of support for the development of people, that can be proven by the investment in training and professional development of employees.

This way we can say that the company shows a great concern to retain employees, obtaining in this way a of its differentials in the market. On the basis of the foregoing, this knowledge generated and developed internally by employees results in differentiated products with innovative design and that adds value perceived in the eyes of customers. It is worth remembering that the whole part of development and creation is performed internally.



**Fig. 4:** Framework of Company Resources Alpha S/A

Source: Authors

Combined with the economic issues, the deployment of a financial institution itself has provided facilities in the provision of funding for customers, which tends to accelerate the process of sale and delivery. As far as the after-sales services, it became apparent that the company seeks to demonstrate responsibility for its product to offer the same. This is generating a greater reliability of customers with respect to the image of the same.

Based on all of the points discussed, it can be noticed that the company seeks to make a relationship marketing effective, by which develops long-term partnerships with its customers, looking for a relationship of mutual trust.

The need for self renewal makes this cyclic structure. At this point the RBV assists in constant search by your competitive advantage in the market.

#### **Conclusions:**

The Alpha S/A has been consolidating over the years a market-leading position, aiming to offer products fully developed internally, customized and that meet the needs of customers. For this, the organization seeks to develop and improve each time more the features to which you're giving these competitive advantages in a sustainable manner, within their specific reality. These features have been evolving since the foundation of the company and because of this, cannot be easily faked. In addition to this, it was found that the people themselves who are part of the company incorporated these values to organizational culture. Then It is really something very present, that has been translated in good results.

In fact, the true differential of this company is the people who are inserted and run their processes in the best possible way and feel able to suggest improvements. However, for these benefits are identified, it is essential that the management is committed and committed to ensure the best conditions for their employees, so that these talents are directed to this purpose. Invest in training and qualification of personnel is an important way to enhance the internal resources.

The model of RBV, even that has not yet been fully consolidated in academic area, proved to be an important tool, applied perfectly and makes it possible to obtain a competitive advantage in a market inflamed, as the company Alpha S/A is inserted.

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