

REBEL ALLIANCE

EMPOWERING

*a new paradigm for innovation
of production process and value creation in the Digital Creative Content Industry*

Project philosophy

sez. 1]

Introduction to the concept of empowering the resources to compete on the Digital Content Industry | Cooperation and the production: the Reconstructionist model | Digital Cinema in Italy

“The concept of cooperative working and strategic alliance for reaching goals is as old as Man himself.

Since Man turned into Sapiens, he started to organize tribes, then tribal communities and finally Nations.

History has often taught us that Nations form alliances to face threats from other Nations, or even just a single Nation which is more powerful and stronger than any other allied Nation.

So, ...

“Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success”

But remember that ...

“Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young.”

And ...

“When everything seem to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it ...”

Because ...

“Most people spend more time and energy going around problems than in trying to solve them.

(Henry Ford)”

However ...

" We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them

(Albert Einstein) "

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PREAMBOL

I conceived the Rebel Alliance project after a study, research and experiment route of production processes in the Digital Content Industry lasted over 10 years; a route started in 1995, with the research program of Humanism and Technology (promoted by the “University of Naples l’Orientale”, Sociology for Literature chair) and continued with a constant collaboration between Local Government Authorities, Universities, companies and individual professionals.

During these years of research and results analysis, most of the treated themes are the ones that build today Rebel Alliance Empowering’s company mission; on the empiric point of view, studying and analyzing, for example, the cross-communication problems between operators of the Humanistic and IT fields in cultural production process during the planning and production of digital contents; the plausible causes and the certain effects of conflicts generated by an expert management which faces only the technological aspects and for this reason orientated only to the productive processes finalized to the realization of products though just to be technologically specialized and a management with an only-cultural background more specifically belonging to the production of user-friendly products and coherent with the effective demand of the traditional and emerging markets.

Rebel Alliance Empowering is, so, a new “paradigmatic mode” defined to the aim of contributing in an operational view to the challenges which become generated between the Contents Industry players with the constant change we’re facing.

The great changes happening have radically changed the productive processes and the work environments, contributing to the birth of new jobs and professions: new tendencies are happening.

New theories about new companies’ organizational models, which finally came to our country too, are moving from the close, simple Domain of the academic research, to the whole Companies’ Culture, showing the ultimate transition towards the Economy of Knowledge. This transition has been encouraged from the utilitarian and methodic entrance of the I.C.T. technologies, which determined the development of the Information Society with the following overcome of the obsolete Organizational Systems, which were rigidly vertical, where employees were stably called to carry out predetermined tasks for the same employer, and which will gradually intended to disappear, in many

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segments of economy.

The digital revolution has introduced the possibility basing on which the different Companies can work in the specific networks allowing the productive specialization, externalization, and also encouraging phenomena of delocalization.

Today, it is much more efficient, for each operator, to concentrate on its own core business and sourcing, in any part of the world, from third-party subjects which have a precious non-material and organizational know-how.

This is not only for what regards logistic services, facility management, administration, informative systems, and product marketing, but also for the main and highly-specialized functions which are incredibly close to the companies' core businesses.

Even for the small and medium-sized companies the network logics and the organizational and management know-how from highly-specialized discourse are more and more fundamental for survival in mid/long terms in a continuously evolving socio/economic context, which is constantly becoming more competitive.

We see the formation of new forms of companies which have been internationalized from birth, some "pocket multinational" which allowed to the traditional manufactures to organize themselves flexibly in a Glocal strategy, which means operating in a global dimension and keeping/developing in the original territory the most intelligent functions to which are associated know-hows which are not always immediately available.

The autonomy of the worker increases in the performance of its own tasks and the rigid bonds of hierarchical and functional subordination slowly disappear.

From the moment that each organization is actually a Social System, to face in a successful way the changes imposed, it is necessary to act on all of the elements which condition the functioning of the System: on the one hand, the structural aspect (the "hard" variables of the organizational system), on the other hand, the behavior and cultural aspects (the so-called "soft" variables), especially for what concerns high tech.

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“THE MAP IS NOT THE TERRITORY”

From a social point of view, in the new organizational thinking through which the new models take place, the aspects which studies the side of the individual in its relations with others, through disciplines such as applied Cultural Anthropology or other disciplines which refer to the neural-sciences, gain an increasing important role in the Change Management.

A constructivist approach, capable of easing the communicational and cognitive processes among individuals which not only have different Companies' Culture, but also with very different general-culture fundaments, which work in cooperation, turns out to be fundamental. The study of intercultural relations and the adoption of the right intercultural communication instruments is not determining only for the planning of new services and products, which have to be coherent with the latent demand of different markets, but also to understand the meanings of the constructs to define the best way to convey information regarding the change itself and its consequences, presenting them so to be understood and comprehended by people with different mentalities and superstructures.

This document, so, is proposed to give food for thought to the *aspirant Rebels* that want to: apply (even temporarily) to the Rebel Alliance System, the conceptual coordinates on which the planning proposal is founded; to the potential Costumers, about the positioning of Rebel Alliance in the Digital Content Industry and which can be the benefit of interacting with the Rebel Alliance Empowering System.

The aim of the present document is to introduce some concepts which build the basis of the business model which Rebel Alliance adopts with the aim of building an Integrated System of Knowledge: **a Knowledge Intensive Business Society**¹.

¹ The growth of services, especially the ones with a high knowledge rate, (KIS – Knowledge Intensive Services), is a complex phenomenon which covers on more levels either the productive system and the society in its whole. This growth is manifested with an increasing weight of the Service Industry activities in the value production inside the company, and with a tendency of the companies to externalize some phases of the chain of value. Specifically, when KIS societies have as costumers other companies they are defined as KIBS (Knowledge Intensive Business Societies).

This concept was introduced for the first time from Miles & co. in 1995 to denote private societies which provide gathering, analysis, generation and distribution of knowledge activities, aimed to provide products or services which the costumers (other companies or businesses) are not able to develop by themselves.

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Rebel Alliance has defined a system based on a model in which Humanists and Technicians compare themselves daily in an organized System and are capable of defining innovative and cost effective solutions.

The aim of Rebel Alliance Empowering is to self-determining to have the right instruments capable of responding efficiently to the urgent strains and to the expanding difficulties which characterize competition not only to the market of Cinema Industry, but even in the other segments of the Content Industry of Culture and Entertainment.

An industry in which many operators challenge today, most of which had birth in the last few years.

Don't compete with Rivals, make them Irrelevant!

These companies, intervening actively in all of the phases of the chain of value, not only contribute to the competition attitude of the costumer businesses, but promote their innovative capacity, technical and managing development.

Examples of KIBS involve different categories of services: human resources managing and consulting, marketing and advertising, IT and connected services, legal services, technical services, etc. Different studies showed widely how these societies represent a crucial element for the competition capability of entire economic services. Especially, KIBS are awarded of the capacity of feeding the innovational potential of a local system (eg. a district or companies' network), contributing to its economic development.

Part of these networks can be not only homogeneous subjects, territorially present such as companies, but even subjects of a different nature such as trade associations, universities, scientific and technological parks, authorities, etc. On the other hand, as expressed in the logics of the Open Innovation (Chesbrough, 2003), the modern economic networks are tend characterized by the lack of hierarchization ad opened to flows, cross-connectivity, freedom of access and sharing. The lifeblood that flows and animates throught the business network is Knowledge.

KIBS perform the function of Knowledge Gatekeepers to support innovation inside a local system.

To do so, KIBS execute processes of selection and gaining outside knowledge, so rework it and share it with the costumer companies.

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PREFACE

To ease the interpretation of the Rebel Alliance Business model for a sustainable competition in the industry of digital content, in this preface we refer to the “Cinema” segment which represents the sector (together with the audiovisual one) in which we highlight, more than in others, the need of realizing policies capable of innovating the organizational processes to ease the intercultural and intergenerational paths in planning and productive approaches which are becoming necessary with the advent on these segments of a much more massive use of the digital technologies ²

TOWARDS A DIGITAL CINEMA

Cinema was originally created as a technical mean: the cinematographer.

After some time, an artistic intuition was added to the technical side, giving birth to the so-called Seventh Art.

Its dual nature kept going peacefully for some time, although technological innovation wasn't always welcome by its artists and authors. However it is the actual innovation of technology that is a fundamental aspect for the evolution of cinema, sometimes even helping it to reborn after its worst periods of crisis.

Cinema is the only art that constantly changes, because it contains within itself all the other arts (music, painting, writing, etc.), supported by the always growing technology following new scientific discoveries.

Considered by historians as the greatest technical and aesthetic improvements interesting the seventh art, the advent of sound and colour was initially a shock for film workers used to black and white and no sound. However, after a while these new inventions were essential to model what we presently know as the industry of dreams.

² Recent studies show that the efficiency of the American Cinema Industry, notoriously owned by Hollywood, is “short-circuiting” because of the exaggerating insistence of stand-alone technologies without a side-by-side work with the experienced generation of knowledge holder, as an example, film-makers and DoPs (DoP= Director of Photography) . The scrip development, as a major example, must work on the same unconditioned interconnectivity line for its digital implementation up to the final production and post-production. In the same Hollywood, nowadays, were're attending at the development of the new and best solutions (New Generation Production Workflows – NGP Workflows), in which Rebel Alliance (through Rebel Alliance Los Angeles hub professionals) is already active in collaboration with major Studios and Production Designers, for the definition of best practice for the actual production of cost-effective productions.

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The same phenomenon is happening at the present time with digital.

On one hand it is changing the way of shooting, threatening the long life of film stock. On the other hand it supports the film shooting and the artist's creativity by innovating **the post-production process** up to the point that the two separate phases of production and post-production will be joined together in the near future.

But the future is already the present!

Although post-production is considered as a single process of the whole production, in constant change since the beginning of the digital era, in Italy (and in other culturally outdated countries with no consideration for the digital means) post-production is merely considered as an accessory to complete the work.

Thanks to computer graphics, Cinema began to gain the possibility of going beyond reality, gaining the ability to create “things” that it would normally be possible to achieve with the aid of extremely expensive conventional means, often limiting the authors' creativity.

With the release of James Cameron's “Avatar”, 2010 is the year of the definitive revolution. Digital is officially integrated into Cinema.

Techniques, technology, means and processes involved in production have definitely changed. With the introduction of *virtual cameras and simul-cam technology* for the application of *augmented reality*³, we barely understand the boundaries between production and post-production.

Starting from this point, cinema can gain brand new creative life, bringing into the industry new themes such as the binomial: science fiction and philosophy, as well as impossible and unlikely film characters.

³ Augmented Reality: definition of emerging applications able to enrich the public's physical space through the mix of virtual images and real footage. The visualised reality will then be “augmented”, through digitally created synthetic data added to real world images. These technologies are used in many other sectors of society such as the Health-care system (e.g. Telemedicine, surgery, radiological), archaeology, aeronautical industry and national defence [e.g. Military training through Virtually Simulated Environments (scenarios) played in real life places].

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This coincides with the need for a technique for ideas and contents, not the other way round. But this is only a primordial phase. The concept of post-production, therefore the concept of Cinema, is already moving on.

Almost seventy years ago, René Barjavel, in his essay “Cinéma Total” (1944), theorised about “*cinema as a mean capable of introducing us to fully realistic characters entering our homes. A cinema that will not replace traditional arts but instead will use them as communication in which images are transported by waves: this will happen in a world where millions of spectators can enjoy a show of sounds, colours and scents.*”

Some statements by Barjavel on Total Cinema, seem to prophesy the path where cinema is heading with the advent of digital: “...it will be completed when it will be able to bring us three-dimensional, coloured and maybe even scented characters; when these characters will step out from the screen and from darkness and will start walking in our own homes and public places.”

This is not about a cinema based on flat realism tending to “*represent to perfection a father's moustache*”, but it is a sum of all the arts joined together. It is a cinema made of colours and sounds, but not based on dialogues. Words are not the only sounds in Barjavel's point of view. Dialogues destroy the sounds. It is a three-dimensional cinema, even if Barjavel cannot figure out what technology is capable of such skills. He theorises about solid images made of “waves”. He thinks of replacing the screen with a “waves' screen”, and by saying so he is not far from the theory of holographic cinema.

James Cameron will in fact be known as the first screenwriter and director of digital thought! His first creation is totally thought and realised digitally, confirming Barjavel's prophecy.

Barjavel was blamed for emphasising technology's role instead of the work of the author. Instead he criticises those who step back horrific because of “mental laziness” in front of new technological inventions such as colour and three-dimensions. It is not a mere enhancement of technology itself, because the French writer notices the great power that cinema would gain from it. Power would be the first quality: total cinema, powerful as a “ten ton tractor”, can demolish “the physical world of bodies and things and enter it with its double fantasy”. Total cinema plays with reality. It will make use

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“of these misleading materialistic appearances in order to carry the spectator into the world of illusion, of absurd, of marvellous”. It is really worth quoting another paragraph of his essay: *“Animals, men, objects, the entire world with all of its creatures, and all of its dreams, all of the wonderful or horrendous living beings that can be generated by the imagination of poets, will come to life in front of the spectator. They will swarm about next to him, around him, shining, making noises, vivacious, real and yet they disappear. Colour will materialise in vortex, in veils, in volumes, in explosions. All the blue from the sky will suddenly slip into the virgin's eye. From the heart of a rose, clouds of spring will rise. Sound will be real, words will explode, trumpets will open galleries made of brass, the nightingale's song will dance in multicoloured flames. Real volume will give to total cinema its last chances, which will go further than the craziest surrealist mind...”*

We get the impression that criticisms of Barjavel's theory seem to be present in many people. But we're convinced that this is only due to the cultural gap created by new technologies.

Total cinema takes up again Wagner's concept of the “Gesamtkunstwerk”, which consists in the unification of single arts *“in the monadic perfection of an independent language”*.

Wagner states that *“only revolution (...) can give us back that supreme work of art”*, which from his point of view was taken from Greek Theatre, intended as a multimedia example, uniting singing, recital, movements and images. Greek Theatre, which can be defined as 'total', was also one of the first examples of research for interaction, ending in catharsis, in the collective effect of purification.

In cinema “the creation of the image is historically and technically accidental”. Total cinema aims for a complete recreation of sensitive experiences that the spectator has to feel while at the same time changing its role, implying a strong emotional movement: **in other words, it is the effort of reaching “Interaction”**.

The inevitable advent of digital in both cinema and television, from the first pioneering experiments with holography to the recent commercial achievements with films shot in stereoscopy with 3D cameras, but most of all the other future scientific achievements about to come into the audio-visual in general, are all aiming to the real third dimension, moving us closer to this final goal.

This is another essential aspect of the constant mutation of the technological means, viewed by many

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experts as: *a shift from the two-dimensional recent commercial cinema to three-dimensional technology, could even bring our brain to a more realistic assimilation of images, consequentially amplifying emotions and self-identification.*

Today's cinema seems to be at a turning point. Over the last few years cinema is going through a declaration of its own death, or at least of its unease, because of both an economic crisis (caused by the constant threat posed by television, home video and internet) and a lack of contents. This applies in particular to Italian cinema.

Because of this situation, some directors are today hoping in the use of digital technology.

They also wish that the application of digital will help the film industry grow, thanks to a progressive cooperation between cinema and new media. The tendency is leading to a conversion into digital of all phases of film production, also according to many of the production companies with which we are working at the moment.

All hopes and criticisms are related to the use of digital technology in the film shooting and post-production phases.

The boundaries of digital production give us two options: shooting almost in a traditional manner (new means suggest different ways of realising a film), using digital cameras instead of film cameras, or directly creating images on a computer without the need for re-acting real events, using virtual spaces and characters. The history of the so-called “digital cinema”, a definition which is still hazy, is fairly recent and studies on the subject are currently just a few.

Today's definition of “digital cinema” generically involves all those films produced with digital means such as cameras or computers. Therefore the images that belong to it are virtual. The discussion on digital is therefore a complex theme which needs clarification and differentiation: it has to be kept safe from “misbelief” and stereotypes.

Nevertheless every study on digital is destined to quickly become obsolete.

Supporters and detractors of the new technology are today in favour or against technical, economical and aesthetic innovations brought by it. While those who are engaged in studying its characteristics and evolution are trying to predict, through a more profound analysis, what new scenarios lie ahead for “digital cinema”.

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Cinema is essentially an industry.

THE CULTURAL DIGITAL DIVISION IN THE ITALIAN AUDIOVISUAL INDUSTRY

Is it possible that a large number of professionals in the Italian audio-visual industry, all belonging to a particular age group (mostly over 45), suffer from a cultural gap towards the new concept of digital?

We're convinced it is so!

Could this be one of the reasons why Italian cinema suffers a crisis based on what national and international audiences recognise as the Italian cinema of a few decades ago, an example of high quality and style, compared to the recent national productions lacking in the stylistic and narrative quality which attracts the audience/consumer, who instead prefers north American productions?

We're convinced it is so!

Could it then be true that the wise application of creative digital technologies could help Italian cinema to renew itself maintaining its traditional narrative style (therefore without renouncing the distinctive features typical of the Italian school of film), focussing on public needs, open to foreign audiences and not merely stuck in a niche of market?

We think this is true!

Is it true that creative digital technologies can only be used in high-budget productions and for this reason Americans can use them and only they know how to use them?

No!

It's essential to dismantle this myth! A myth which seems to be frequent in the imagination of most of the representatives of the Italian film industry we met until now. Since technology and economic change seem conspiring to create a new cultural elite and a new cultural underclass. We must tackle myths and false beliefs enabling social inclusion policies and life-long learning programme to reduce the cultural digital gap.

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The American entertainment industry represents the second/third national industry in their country, just behind the army industries.

In 2000 Hollywood produced almost 385 films. Of these films, only a small amount were high-budget films.

The analysis of the film industry in the USA, shows that the strength of the industry depends on low and medium budget films (Hollywood's "bread and butter").

It is our opinion that they have understood that the key is to “think” and then to “build” (with all possible means) *low-budget films with high-budget values will be the new frontier!*

Obviously it will not only be knowledge of digital creative technologies or understanding how and when to use them (with a wise balance between costs and benefits) that is going to simplify the process of restyling Italian cinema in order to internationalise its productions.

Many and new factors (such as the ability to optimise financial resources e.g. *tax shelter* and *tax credit*), the capacity to operate, networking in international co-production circuits, or even the definition of *product placement* strategies to apply at the beginning of project development (necessarily in close contact with advertising agencies), today are all part of the financial side as well as the creative side ⁴

⁴ In the analysis by Derrick de Kerckhove (former Director of the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology), the concept of the sensorial explosion offered by new digital instruments is particularly important, and it becomes a “technological extension” of our body. De Kerckhove writes about “psycho-technology” defining “*a technology that emulates, extends or amplifies the sensorial, emotional, psychological and cognitive functions of the mind*”. We reckon that the possibility of defining instruments capable of facilitating the development of digital creative thought in a screenwriter could be one of the main approaches in reaching the objective of digital cinema's growth. In this year Rebel Alliance has learned that a screenwriter that has the basic knowledge of what can be made through computer graphics, faced with its commitment and difficulties, could express all of his potential imagination during the first creative process, organising it in function of what will be the possible financial resources the production is willing to invest for the realisation of a film. It is clear that this approach, which needs constant cooperation between the creative humanist and the technologist, could revolutionise the method of film production, helping to virtually bring down the production costs from the early stage of creative writing. With this goal in mind, Rebel Alliance wants to create partnerships starting a

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of the projects that follows this reform.

To make these processes easier, it is necessary to research and use new and/or revised professional competences that will work together with who actually makes cinema and audio-visual products.

LA FILOSOFIA DEL MODELLO PRODUTTIVO REBEL ALLIANCE

INTRODUCTION

If it is true that Rebel Alliance has initially been created to take care of digital content productions and that digital technologies and techniques are still its “daily bread and butter”, it is also true that since its establishment, Rebel Alliance's founders noticed that the market needs something else.

In this period of profound change, super-specialisation is certainly an opportunity to consider, but a strategic interdisciplinary thought, capable of offering 360° consultancy in those areas that need a connection between humanistic and technological knowledge, represents a competitive advantage skill possessed by just a few Small and Medium Enterprise (SME); with the purpose of gaining the right instruments to effectively answer urgent issues and growing difficulties which characterise competition in the market of digital film and the audiovisual industry.

A market which is crowded by a multitude of professionals, the majority of whom appeared only in recent years.

However only a few of them are really qualified.

This is not because they are unable to master techniques and technologies, but mainly because they come from a cultural and managerial background which is too specialised or too closely linked to their product disclosing.

The division between those who “really know how to operate like a company in all of its managerial functions” and the majority of those young newcomers who instead “don't know how to operate with

process of spreading of Digital Culture for Cinema, in order to cancel the cultural Digital Divide that could delay this new philosophy until the natural generational change in screenwriters.

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responsible ethic because they are unaware of their lack of specialisation”, is constantly growing.

This phenomenon, added to the so-called “*cultural digital divide*” which still effects that wide range of Italian producers, directors and screenwriters afraid of the “unknown”, **represents that resistance to innovation we still generally witness in Italy.**

This does not refer exclusively to the Content Industry and all of its aspects such as Cinema and Audiovisual (therefore favouring the sector's innovation), but is usually implied in all other sectors of the economy.⁵

Following, we proceed in the introduction of organizational principles to which the Rebel Alliance Empowering System inspires.

It is now time to introduce two considerations:

- The first one is the explanation of the concept of *empowerment* in the social sphere of the model considering the relationship between individuals and organised groups of people.
- The second one goes from the concept of empowerment to the explanation of new business relationships such as *virtual supply chain* and *cooperative networks* is the most suitable for our industry.

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THE CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT AT THE BASIS OF COOPERATION

The English word *Empowerment*, means a collection of knowledge, team working skills and duties aimed to help an individual or a company to reach final goals and plan strategies in order to fulfil them using their initial resources.

Empowerment is a process of social action through which people, companies and

⁵ The effect and importance that communication and information technologies have on our economy and way of living is an indisputable fact. Various researches have demonstrated that a large part of the European population is still deprived of the benefits of information development, clearly compromising the economy. For this reason, the European Union has recently financed the activation of a wide range programme aimed at closing the *cultural digital divide*, especially among older people. Since 2002, Rebel Alliance works together with universities and local government authorities, planning and developing new ways of fighting the cultural digital divide in Italy.

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communities acquire skills in order to change their social and political environment and improve their quality of life.

Such a definition examines the psychological aspect of empowerment as well as the organizational one, presenting it as a constructed multi-level.

This multi-level approach was originally proposed by Rappaport (1984) and was then examined more thoroughly by Zimmerman, who gave a clear description of the three levels of analysis:

psychological, organizational and community.

Zimmerman (2000) points out that the three levels of analysis are closely connected to each other, even if explained separately.

1. **Psychological Empowerment** is generated by the junction of three elements:

- ✓ the personal conviction of controlling all decisions on which a life depends (personal component);
- ✓ the understanding of a self social and political environment (interpersonal component);
- ✓ taking part in collective activities aimed at interacting with the social and political environment (behavioural component).

2. **Organizational Empowerment.**

In economic terms, empowerment is “The process of expanding one's possibilities (an individual but even a work team or a company) to interact in a context and apply decisions. It is a technique that relies on existing resources in order to improve self-determination. To be empowered means having high powers to satisfy the client's requests and express innovative and creative abilities”.

Organizational Empowerment includes processes and structures that improve its members' participation and the efficiency to reach its aims.

An organization that authorises its members to fully control their own existence is considered an “**empowering**” organization; an organization that successfully develops political decisions and has an influence on them, is considered as an “**empowered**” organization. These features can both exist in an empowerment organization.

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3. Community Empowerment.

Empowerment at a community level is a collective action aimed to improving the quality of life and the connections between organizations and social agents. Through Community Empowerment we have the “competent community” (Iscoc, 1974), in which citizens have “competences, motivation and resources to run activities aimed at life improvement”.

In his revision of the description of empowerment, Wallerstein highlighted a series of **features of empowerment**:

- Empowerment can be seen both as a **process** and a **solution** (Swift e Levine, 1987).
- It is a concept **turned to the action** with the aim of removing formal and informal obstacles and changing power relationships between communities, institutions and governments. It is based on the assumption that communities' cultural structures are strengthened by **dialogue and action** (Freire, 1970).
- It is **specific** to culture, society and population and therefore calls for the action to be in the local empowerment context.
- It is a dynamic interaction between internal major abilities and the overcome of external obstacles to resources (Speer and Hughey, 1995).

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There are many different classifications of empowerment in literature; among these, two have been chosen which are based on the constructed multilevel of empowerment.

The first classification was proposed by Cox and Parsons (1944): the two authors stated that strategic actions finalised towards empowerment are a **continuum**, which go from individual empowerment to a social and political level. Based on the *focus* of the action, it is now possible to distinguish four dimensions:

- personal dimension**
- interpersonal dimension**
- micro-environmental and organizational dimension**
- micro-environmental and social/political dimension.**

A similar classification was illustrated by Labonte and Laverak in 2000. This was made by rethinking

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the “welfare state” for solving problems in studies of Healthcare reform.

Labonte and Laverak described empowerment as a process that develops through a **dynamic and evolutionary continuum** including:

- ✓ personal empowerment
- ✓ development of small supporting groups
- ✓ organizations of community
- ✓ partnership between organizations
- ✓ social and political action

Labonte's classification is particularly interesting because it fits within a conceptual field and attempts to describe two different approaches to the Healthcare offer:

“bottom-up” (empowerment in the community) and “top down”⁶ (campaigns of prevention in the public Health system). Finally, Labonte's studies are an important bibliographical reference to Wallerstein's report.

Empowerment is then both a process and a concept based on two essential elements: the knowledge of a will for efficient actions finalised at reaching a goal, and the ability to understand the influence of personal actions on events. All with the aim of reaching targets, regardless if their personal, social, political, corporate or humanitarian implications.

Empowerment is a methodological approach needed to facilitate the control of

⁶ **Top-down** and **bottom-up** models are strategies of knowledge and data processing. They may be applied to systemic and humanistic theories. Generally, these are part of a methodology used to analyse problematic situations and hypothesise on their solutions: The concept of a problematic situation can apply in various fields such as programming a computer software, the solution of a mathematical problem, the creation of a text or any other practical/operative problem. The **top-down** model is a **general vision of the system without analysing it in its parts**. Each part of the system (*decomposition, specialisation and identification*) is subsequently analysed adding more details about its planning. Each new part can be analysed again in even more detail in order to finalise the model. The top-down model is usually designed using black boxes which simplify their filling but do not allow their elementary mechanism to be understood. This is different from the **bottom-up** model, in which the design shows detailed explanation of its individual parts. These parts are connected with each other to create bigger components. The bigger components are connected with each other until they form a complete system. Strategies based on the bottom-up data circulation are sufficient as they are built on the knowledge that any variation that can affect the system's elements.

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professional and personal life. It is a way of efficient planning and acting, but most of all it is a brand new epistemological approach to front the change: towards the individual, the group and society.

It is not a philosophy of research for the best tactical strategy to solve problems, but it is the explanation of a strategy for the improvement of possibilities, choices and freedom.

In our case we will briefly consider the concept of empowerment in company organization to reach corporate objectives, considering its psychological implications.

PSYCHOLOGY OF EMPOWERMENT

It is part of a well-empowered psychological condition for one to have power of self-control, to feel useful, to realise that his power can affect events, to possess great self-esteem, to consider failure as a moment of learning, and so on. However, this condition is something that develops through time and it should be hoped that in future one can reach complete success by following the philosophical empowerment approach.

Empowered is not a person, an organization or a company who has reached all its goals, but someone (or something) capable of facing life and its challenges. Capable of coping with both success and failure.

Towards the weaker parts of population, an approach based on empowerment provides action for support and proposals of new social opportunities following three directions: creating power to generate alternatives to what already exists, knowing how and where to access the resources, increasing self-esteem and motivation. At the same time it provides self-conscious help which the subject in difficulty handles to improve the situation.

Such psychological action could also be used as a support for victims of physical and psychological violence who have lost their self-esteem and cannot escape their victimization.

Empowerment could also help these victims retake control of their lives, creating solutions to be more responsible for their own «destiny».

Empowerment in business management

Within companies, the old model of work management was based on hierarchy, «cascade» directives,

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the attitude of avoiding responsibilities by handing them to others and the general frustration and alienation of workers. There was often great competition.

The model based on *empowerment* promotes the participation of all members. It spreads self-esteem and reliability, cooperation and general improvement.

With this kind of organization, the individual is more aware of his strength. He does not fear sudden changes, but instead learns to manage them. He is capable of taking risks, recognizes his own mistakes without fearing other people's judgement. He socializes with his information and takes positive action.

With these objectives, *empowerment* represents a revolution in the traditional organizational relationship.

One of the focus of this change is *leadership*. This has to include the sharing of decisions, the induction to independence and sense of responsibility. The search for the individual and/or company's needs (formative, relational and existential), helping professional growth through the application of empowerment.

Above all, an *empowering leadership* has to be capable of delegating and promoting the formation of independent working teams that can arrange times and organizational models, relationships with other teams, work shifts and meetings, even within the shared strategy.

Empowerment of the individual subsequently becomes the empowerment of the organization, with all its consequential economic advantages, and much more!

Empowerment is strictly connected to the concept of change.

Change can sometimes be difficult as it can turn into renunciation, in the form of abandoning established procedures and/or approaches, and prevent the demolishing of cultural resistance to the new necessary procedures.

The strength of *empowerment* is that even if it proposes new alternatives, it does not force one to forget what is "already known". These alternatives can be added among all the known ones that we could choose from, not once and for all, but any time we want.

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EMPOWERMENT, SUPPLY CHAIN AND NETWORKS: INSTRUMENTS TO IMPROVE OUR OWN BUSINESS THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE.

As we have already seen, empowerment is an epistemological concept. It uses techniques and/or instruments to create a new operative approach in various fields of application.

In order to confront continuous changes due to the multiple necessities present in evolving environmental conditions, a flexible organizational approach is needed.

Taking for granted that the characterising factors of today's business environment are globalisation, fast rhythms of change, a significant level of uncertainty and the need for flexibility.

Philip Kotler⁷ writes: *“Traditionally, companies preferred buying from a variety of suppliers, in order to cause competition between them and by doing so to achieve better concessions and discounts.*

However companies were missing the high expenses caused by this system: it was necessary to monitor each supplier, the quality of products/services was variable from one supplier to the other, and none of them was ready to make substantial investments, knowing he could have risk exclusion at any time.

Nowadays companies have finally started to recognise the benefits of relying on fewer but better suppliers, capable of sharing the operational management through inter-functional teams, capable of controlling processes relying on their own specialisation and their core business.

Therefore, suppliers have turned into partners willing to make more investments, to participate at the production phases of products or services, to be ready and reliable even in difficult moments or to handle possible emergencies.

This way, day by day, Networks are rapidly increasing.

Michael Porter⁸ stimulates companies who want to be successful on the market to **develop sustainable competitive advantages.**

In literature, competitive advantages are classified in three macro-areas:

Cost Leadership: *a company chooses to become the producer with the lowest expenses in its sector. Mostly this is obtained in scale economies. It is usually a disaster for all companies, if more of them choose to become low budget*

⁷ full professor of economy at the Kellogg School of Management - Northwestern University, who, between 1967 and 1971, determined the structure of “marketing” as a scientific discipline

⁸ full professor at Harvard Business School

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producers.

Differentiation: a company tries to be unique in its sector basing on factors that are widely and simply appreciated by its clients. A differentiation strategy cannot underestimate expenses. For each area excluded from its own differentiation, the company has to lower expenses in order to keep earnings from trademark acknowledgement.

Focus on specialisation: a company chooses to be the best in one or many sectors.

A competitive strategy aimed at gaining a life-long duration, has to be sustainable.

Therefore it has to:

- build **barriers against competitors** to make the imitation process harder;
- make investments aimed to **innovating the production processes of products and services**, in order to continuously improve its position **for the innovation of the product/service, ensuring the quality and the satisfying client management**;
- constantly observing the **sector's evolution**.

According to Porter (1980), a company can develop a sustainable competitive advantage based on expense levels, on differentiation and on focus, working dynamically on all three factors.

The development of a sustainable competitive advantage can be obtained through a careful analysis of the value chain. It is possible to control the Competitive Advantage in the following ways:

- ✓ **Protecting** those activities aimed at creating value and which are needed to succeed in the factors they compete for;
- ✓ **Holding or cancelling** those activities that can be a risk for the value, causing expenses that will not be covered by the final buyer;
- ✓ **Reconfiguring the chain of values**, innovating processes or internalising/externalising some activities.

A competitive advantage often derives from connections between various activities, but also from individual activities.

A sustainable competitive advantage also derives from having a work team distinguished for its uniqueness and

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originality, made by different human resources each one of them leading its operative field and capable of an inter-functional cooperation. It is clear that an effective management and training of human resources has to be a primary feature for the company.

Training is the link between the company and the work force, as it is the main instrument for the workers' professional and personal growth. This leads to a consequential enrichment of necessary competences needed for adaptation to a competitive environment.

[...]

Major economists link empowerment in new companies to the utility of new instruments and methodologies of strategic business management, as the right feature to use in companies that aim to renew themselves. The strategies can either be networking, supply chain or lean production, and companies are here understood as small or large, as long as they have understood the changes in all sectors of the economy.

Thanks to the growing availability and speed of information, companies can obtain a real time a precise view of the general demand. They can then be tuned with the markets knowing precisely how to use their offer depending on the demand.

Information has replaced material stock, causing a renovation of the supply chain (2000, P. Kotler, D. C.Jain, S. Maesincee).

New opportunities have made possible the substitution of vertical integration with a *virtual integration*.

A virtual exchange of information saves time and staff expenses necessary to complete transactions of activity coordination for internal and external operators.

Therefore, a **Network** is created by the Client Company and by *stakeholders* (those who share the company's interests) with whom it has started a profitable business relationship. In *new economy*, competition happens less between single companies and more between Networks; the company creating a better network will always be more successful.

There is an increase in the number of industrial and service compartments that base themselves on the concept of **supply chain**. The concept of **supply chain management** is also becoming

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increasingly popular in today's global business.

As Harrison suggests, “*companies are currently competing through supply chains*”, while Gattorna states that “*supply chains are the business!*”

But what makes supply chains so important?

Partner companies **join and make a productive critical mass system** based on the concept of a *Cooperative Networking Environment*. They can now fully engage in what they specialise in, each one of them working in their own confined sector. By doing so, they will be capable of competing for projects they previously couldn't afford to compete for.

Each partner's approach is aimed to creating a system based on the concept of *blockmodeling* (White, Boorman & Breiger, 1976). This is to highlight in a network the creation of sub-groups with their own characterised features, placed in a structural position similar to the knots of a network. It is intended as a “role” covered by subjects who, though not connecting with each other, are distinguished by having a similar structural relationship.

Such a structure is about the relationship of these subjects with all the other knots in the network (Lorrain & White, 1971) and consequentially with the main Network, which acts with **the same behaviour in its “relationship projection” with the “external world”: the Objective Market.**

As seen, in the 21st century industry the competition on particular markets can be sustained through the adoption of evolved logistic-productive systems. Today's drastic increase of the environmental complexity obliged the companies to morph their competitive approach and to find new referring paradigms. The manufacturing companies, in fact, faced the revolutionary changings, brought from the increasing capacities of IT, which reduced the distances and broke down the boundaries between markets and gave management very effective instruments for control/planning, design and customer care. While all of this was happening, the structure of big multinational companies was starting to disintegrate towards reticular forms; due to competitive pressure, the big enterprises preferred in fact to dedicate to their core business externalizing all the rest.

In addition, the pressure made from the regional markets pushed the enterprises to reorganize and

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create, produce and distribute goods and services for the single geo-cultural areas. The result of this has been the increase of the supply chains and the dependence of the companies to these. International literature reports different tendencies to which the companies' logistic-productive system had to and will adapt (Frederix, 2004; Gou, Luh e Kyoya, 1998; Nagel e Dove, 1991; Suda 1989 e 1990) :

- *The productive system is crossing a changing period of the paradigm of mass production to “semi-personalized” production to the aim of meeting increasing differences of the demand;*
- *The tendency to “home-make” is gradually changing towards a new opening to the collaboration with other subjects finalized to speed up of the developing processes of products and production*
- *The effective and efficient capacity of cooperating becomes a critical factor for the following success of the company inside the networks; the control centralized from the different entities with different information, experiences, decisional authority and objectives is almost impossible. Efficient and effective cooperation became a key challenge for those organizations that want to flourish in more and more competitive environments.*

To compete, supply chains have to be:

- ✓ Agile, meaning capable of response to the short-period changes of demand or supply and manage easily the external turbulences
- ✓ Adaptable, capable of adjusting their structure to meet the change of the market, so capable of modifying the structure of the networks of the supply chain in function of strategie, technologies and/or products;
- ✓ Aligned, through a system of uniform incentive, finalized to the constant reaching of the common objectives.

The internal characteristics of some compartments of economy like the one in the digital industry in particular, impose the choice of organizing solutions capable of easing the continuous improvements throughout continuous change.

The will of Rebel Alliance to apply this vision for implementing a modern and agile productive system is focused towards the holistic productive approach.

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REBEL ALLIANCE EMPOWERING AS AN HOLONIC SYSTEM: A MODEL FOR THE BUILDING OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL, MULTI-DISCIPLINARY COOPERATIVE VIRTUAL ENTERPRISE TO COMPETE IN THE DIGITAL CONTENTS INDUSTRY.

The industrial company today has to face the problems relative to speed and efficacy of processes' gestation, in presence of frequent disturbs and changings in the production orders. The management of the Supply Chain (SCM) has to keep in mind the these tendencies and find an organizational-mamagerial paradigm capable of giving to the company agility and the capability of synchronizing the logistic-productive system with new characteristics of the market.

Neither the *hierarchic* systems nor the *heterarchical* ones are capable of satisfying these requirements, having a lack of the necessary agility the first and a lack of capability of granting the necessary predictability to synchronization the second.

The idea of an **Holonic System** (Koestler, 1967), developed to describe certain structures widespread in the world of Nature, can be applied to the world of the companies as a model to describe a systematic configuring which is highly flexible, reactive and adaptive.

The end of the last century has seen the evolution and the affirmation of new technical, economic and social contexts in which enterprises are operating today. The stiff model of Ford-Taylor like structures, starting from the 70's, has found to be no longer applicable.

Mass production, which demonstrated to have a positive response to situations of stability and constant growth, started to show it's failures in unstable and morphing contexts.

The hierarchical organization model, based on the mass production system, forecasted, in fact, the constancy of social, economic and technologic factors. Starting from the 80's the business and productive success of Japanese manufacturing companies, especially in automotive, lead to a turning point in the whole management philosophies and production techniques which were then renamed as "lean" or "slim"

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However, as Taichi Ohno⁹ predicted, the “Just In Time” approach showed his application difficulty outside of the Japanese archipelago (Monden 1998), or anyway not enough to accept the challenges of the competition arena of the 21st century. The diffusion of the Internet, from the 90’s, made possible the use, by the companies, of a worldwide informational structure which is low cost and highly efficient, which is still now promoting development. This development, together with the social transformations which marked the end of the past century, lead to today’s levels of complexity of the socio-economic environment, so of the markets and supply chains.

The increase of complexity identifies with the increase of variety, of morphing and of the non-predictability of the phenomena which characterized the environment in which the company operates.

The lines of growth of complexity are grouped in three categories: economy, technique and socio-psychology (Merli and Saccani, 1994). From the first, the factors of changing in the scope of relations which involve the economic actors as the increase of dimension of business, low increasing rate, high inflation rates, the “service-industry-wiseness” (the society that moves towards the service industry) and the heterogeneity of demand.

REBEL ALLIANCE AS AN HOLARCHY

The Holonic¹⁰ approach is the second of the concepts (after the empowerment) from which we got inspired for the definition of the Rebel Alliance management & production model.

⁹ Creator of Toyota’s “Just In Time” philosophy

¹⁰ The idea of Holonic approach comes from the principles postulated from Arthur Koestler in his book “The Ghost in the Machine” of 1967. Koestler’s intuition is clear: in the analysis of the universe, biologically and physically, we have to keep in mind the relation between the whole and the parts of the entities which are the objects of observation. To comprehend the functioning of the world we don’t have to limit to study atoms, molecules, cells, systems or individuals as autonomous and independent entities but we always have to consider that each of these units as simultaneously a whole themselves and as a part of a bigger whole: this is an HOLONE. The term holone is a combination of the Greek “ὅλος”, meaning “all”, with the suffix “ῶν” that means entity or part; so, the whole is formed by “parts” which, in distinguish with atoms, are entities themselves. For Koestler, the holone is intended as a whole which is part of a bigger whole and which comprehends, simultaneously, elements or “sub-parts” which build it and gives it a structural and functional significance. Holons act as autonomous entities and, at the same time, they cooperate to the structure of hierarchies (called HOLARCHIES), apparently self-constructing, of systems and sub-systems. An holarchy can be defined as: a hierarchy of self-regulating holons which work as autonomous, pre-commanded wholes in relation to their parts or as dependent parts in subordination to the control of the upper levels and anyway always coordinated with their environment. So, the holon do not match with any other observed or hypothesized structure, it is not the structure but it is the a part of the structure as its center of relations with other component and composed ones.

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Rebel Alliance is an Holarchy!

which is a global entity organized in cross-relations between operative units with a high rate of self-regulation and capable of cooperating one another, keeping their autonomy, visiting shared results and common aims¹¹.



REBEL ALLIANCE EMPOWERING, BUSINESS MODEL PHILOSOPHY: SURFING IN A BLUE OCEAN IS BETTER THAN COMPETING IN A RED OCEAN¹²

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“Surfing in a blue ocean is better than competing in a red ocean”¹³.

¹¹ Recent studies showed that the human brain is organized in an Holonic System for the elaboration of information to the aim of responding with an action to external stimulus. Brain's structure is stratified in multiple levels, every one of which is built from networks of elementary units (neurons). The elaboration of information is played by the cross-connection system in the different levels of the structure. Every group of neurons is specialized to treat different types of information and play specific functions, relatively independent from the surrounding neurons. The brain is even an open system, in continuous interaction with environment and, as so, it holds systems of feedback and feed-forwards for the regulation of the exchanges with the outside, which insures the maintain of performances in the predefined standards. In difference with other opened systems, the human brain does not have a system to fix its parameters in default standards; it updates continuously to respond to the environmental changings.

¹² Some quotes and concepts drawn from Blue Oceans strategy (2005, W. Kim & R. Mauborgne, Ocean Blu Strategy, Harward Business Review Press)

¹³ Using the methapora Red and Blue Oceans, the theorists W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne have defined the competitive arena where firms compete, with theirs new theory they suggest us that an organization should create new demand in an uncontested market space, or a "Blue Ocean", rather than compete head-to-head with other suppliers in an existing industry.

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With the adoption of this organization model there's an ease regarding the definition and application of a new business model: based on the theory of "reconstituting strategy" ... "in which is the same strategy to define the business's structure while the competitive strategies are based on a structural theories where the form, the same structure are the definitions of the strategy".

For a long time, businesses have been moving a battle head-to-head with the rivalry, seeking for a constant and a profitable growth.

Firms have been fighting for the achievement of the competitive advantage and the piece of market, and are fighting for the differentiation.

However, in the industries/markets, which are now overcrowded, fighting a frontal battle with competition has, as a consequence, the need of competing in a bloody "red ocean", full of rivals which fight for a profit potential which is lower and lower.

Although many agencies tend to compete in such "red oceans" – this is no longer going to represent a future growth engine.

For this reason the Rebel Alliance Empowering system is self-determining on the markets, seeking a new type of positioning defining a strategy inspired to a reconstructive view of business.

"don't compete with the rivals, make them irrelevant!"

A reconstructive view of the strategy.

Regarding the relation between the structure of a segment and the strategic operations of the player belonging to it, there exist, fundamentally, two different views.

The structural view of the strategy is built on the economic theory of the *Industrial Organization [IO]*¹⁴.

¹⁴ The structuralist school of the economic theory called IO goes back to the paradigm structure-behavior-performance, introduced by Joe S. Bain. Basing on the cross-segment empiric framework, Bain focuses especially on the impact which structure has over performance.

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The model of the IO analysis is based on the paradigm “structure-direction-performance”¹⁵, which suggests the existence of a random flow which goes from the market’s structure to the business direction and then to the performance.

Market’s structure, determined from the conditions imposed by supply and demand, influence directly the direction of the sellers and the buyers which determines itself the final performance. The changings on the system are induced by factors which are external if related to the market’s structure. For example a fundamental change of the basic economic conditions or a technologic turn.

The reconstructive view, on the other hand, is based on the theory of the endogenous growth.

This theory dates back to the initial observation made by Joseph A. Schumpeter according to which the forces which lead the change of the economic structure and the sector’s scenario can have birth inside the same system.

Schumpeter supposes that the **innovation can have its origin from an endogenous process and that its principal source is the Creative entrepreneur.**

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Innovation for Schumpeter, however, remains a “*black box*” because it’s the same product of the entrepreneur and it cannot be reproduced systematically.

Recently, the new theory of growth had several forward-steps on this front, showing that innovation can be reproducible endogenously through the comprehension of model o formulas which create its foundations.

Essentially, this theoretical development deleted the innovation formula – or the model relative to the knowledge and the ideas that underlie it – from the hands of Schumpeter’s “*lonely entrepreneur*”, opening the way to the systematic reproduction of innovation.

¹⁵ F.M. Scherer bases his work on Bain’s and tries to explain in detail the rout which goes from “structure” to “performance”, using behavior as a middle variable.

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Despite this important development, however, what we need now is the understanding of which are these formulas or these models.

In absence of this, the knowledge and the ideas cannot be transmitted to actions to produce innovation and growth on the single enterprise.

The theory of the “**reconstructionist view**”¹⁶ (1997-2009, Chan Kim e Renée Mauborgne) moves from the point in which the “**new growth theory**” stopped.

Basing on it, the *reconstructionist view* shows how the new knowledge are applied, to produce an exogenous growth for the benefit of the business.

Specifically, it suggests that this process of creation can happen in every organization and in every moment, rebuilding on a cognitive basis the existing data and the elements of the market in a totally new way.

These two views – structural and reconstructive – involve a whole lot of implications, important for the approach of the enterprise to the strategy.

The structural view (also known as “environmental determinism”) leads often to a strategic way of **competition-based thinking**, based on completion obviously.

Taking as given the market’s structure, it leads the enterprise to try to gain a defensible position in

¹⁶ Cfr. : 1997. "Value Innovation - The Strategic Logic of High Growth". Harvard Business Review 75, January–February, 103-112. - 1998. "Procedural Justice, Strategic Decision Making and the Knowledge Economy." Strategic Management Journal, April. - 1999. "Creating New Market Space." Harvard Business Review 77, January–February, 83-93. - 1999. "Strategy, Value Innovation, and the Knowledge Economy." Sloan Management Review 40, no.3, Spring. - 2000. "Knowing a Winning Business Idea When You See One." Harvard Business Review 78, September–October, 129-141. - 2002. "Charting Your Company's Future." Harvard Business Review 80, June, 76-85. - 2003. "Tipping Point Leadership." Harvard Business Review 81, April, 60-69. - 2004. "Blue Ocean Strategy." Harvard Business Review, October, 76-85. - 2009. "How Strategy Shapes Structure." Harvard Business Review, September, p73-80.

Reconstructionist View [from: Blue Ocean Strategy]

Reconstructionist View recognizes that market boundaries and industry structures are not set and can be cognitively reconstructed in a fundamentally new way. As industry structure and market boundaries exist only in managers’ minds, the reconstructionist view asserts that existing market structures should not limit one’s thinking. In this worldview, extra demand is out there. The problem is how to create it. Therefore, under the reconstructionist view, attention shifts from supply to demand, from a focus on competing to a focus on value innovation—that is, the creation of innovative value to unlock new demand. With this new focus in mind, it is possible to systematically look across established boundaries of competition and reconstruct existing elements in different markets to create all new market space where a higher level of demand is generated.

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the existing market space.

To grant a sustainability on the market, the responsible of the strategy focus on the aim of gaining an advance on the concurrency, generally analyzing the moves the competitors and struggling to do better than them.

In this view, the conquer of a bigger piece of market is seen as a “zero-product game, in which the profit of an enterprise is the loss of another one”.

Form this we obtain concurrency as itself, as the side of the equation corresponding to the demand, which becomes the determining variable of the strategy.

This strategic view leads the enterprise to divide the segments in “attractive” and “non-attractive”, to choose, afterwards, if it’s the case or not to get in them.

After entering a segment, the enterprise chooses a distinctive positioning basing on costs or differentiation, the one that adapts better to its internal capacity and/or systems.

In this case, expenses and values of a company are considered as trade-offs. As the level of the total profit of the segment is determined exogenously from structural factors, the company tries basically to conquer and redistribute the wealth instead of creating it.

It focuses on the division of the business in “market shares”, which as said, the metaphor of the “red ocean”, the winning of a competition is just the loss of other competitors.

To the eyes of a reconstructionist, instead, the strategic challenge appears totally in a different way. Recognizing that the structure and the boundaries of the market exist only in the mind of management, the makers of the strategy that follow this view don’t permit that the not-existing market structure restricts their thinking.

For these managers, outside of their companies, there’s an additional demand, which is ready to use. The crux of the problem is how to look for it.

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This, itself, requires a moving of attention from the supply to the demand, from a focus on concurrency to a focus on the innovation of value: the creation of an innovative value, the aim of unlocking a new demand.

With a focus of this type kept in mind, the company can hope to reach the right innovation, looking systematically further than the consolidated boundaries of concurrency and rearranging the elements which nowadays belong to different markets to the point of rebuilding inside a new market space, capable of generating a new type of demand.

In the reconstructivist view it's hard that a sector can be attractive or non-attractive itself, because the level of attraction of the segment could be altered with a conscious effort of the company, tended exactly to the reconstruction.

In the process of reconstruction, as the morphing of the market's structures, there's the changing in the "game rules" previously considered as best practices.

Stimulating the part of the businesses' economy connected to the demand, the strategy of the innovation of the value expands existent markets and creates some new.

Basically, who introduces an innovation of values creates new richness instead of subtracting them from the concurrent, as the orthodox tradition of the managing sciences, that today become old in almost all of the cases.

This type of strategy permit's the company to start a process which is fundamentally different from the "zero-result" method.

Where's the difference, so, between the reconstruction and the "combination" and "re-combination" so often discussed in literature relative to innovation?

Schumpeter, for example, sees the innovation as a *"new combination of productive ways"*.

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An example of reconstructive strategy¹⁷ is the one defined from the Cirque du Soleil, where the focus is aimed on the relative side of the demand; the other vision instead proposes to recombine technologies and/or the existing productive means, often focusing on the relative side of the supply.

The elementary components of the reconstruction are the elements connected to the value offered to the customer, which reside transversely on the boundaries of existing sectors.

We're not talking about technologies, not even about production means.

Focusing on the relative side of the supply, recombination tends to create an unseen solution to an existing problem.

Looking, instead, to the relative side of the demand, reconstruction goes out of the cognition limits defined by the actual competitive rules and focuses on the final aim of redefining the same problem.

Cirque du Soleil doesn't have the purpose, in fact, of offering a better Circus recombining the knowledge or the existence technologies regarding shows or performances.

Somewhat, there's the purpose of rebuilding the existing elements connected to the values given to the buyers, to create a new form of entertainment which offers entertainment and thrill of circus together with the intellectual refinement of theater.

One other important example of "re-constructionism" is defined and adopted by Apple for the service/product iTunes .

Redefining the problem generally creates a change inside the whole system, where the recombination can aim to find new solutions for the activities of the different subsystems, which have the only function to reinforce the existing strategic positioning.

Reconstruction gives new outline to boundaries and to the structures and looks to a blue ocean, which is a new market space.

Recombination, on the other hand, tries to maximize the opportunities given from technologies

¹⁷ As reported in: "Blue Ocean Strategy" (2005, W. Kim & R. Mauborgne)

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leading to discover innovative solutions.

Embracing, so, the theory of the **“constructive destruction”** given by Schumpeter and the reconstructive-strategic one by **Richard Normann, W. Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne**, Rebel Alliance Empowering business model aims to the renovation of the distinctive capabilities through which the capacity of the whole Organizing System for the creation of the value together with the costumer (and not FOR the costumer), redefining the boundaries of the market and of the single companies (or of the single professionals) which belong to it.

Rebel Alliance Empowering is, so, outlining a new concept of competitive strategy which leans toward the reconfiguration of a total business, through the identification of new market competitive factors and through the usage of dynamic relations of actors which find themselves interacting and integrating one another in a bigger system in the **“constellation of value”**.

CONCLUSIONS

The analogy between the **“holonic organization”** and the **“human brain”** highlights the organization principles of structure and of the process network which, in front of environmental stimulus, **create in a system the capability of the storage/transfer of knowledge, flexibility and response quickness.**

This capability of the human brain are desirable even **in the form of virtual company, to the aim of responding adequately to the complexity of the environment in which it operates.**

Once clarified nature’s analogy with the general functioning of an Holonic system it’s possible for us to determine its basic characteristics:

- the system of shared heritage
- the distributed network of information system
- the distributed autonomic hierarchy

The system of shared heritage has the function of making possible the interaction, continuous and

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spontaneous, between groups of people far from each other and not connected from strict law bonds, to the aim of allowing the usage of the advantages of cooperation which promote the balance of the System.

The shared heritage are outlined from the union of interests of the organization, as example there are some elements of the “lean” production as the continuous (Kaizen) improvement and the working orientation in the team which are often expressed explicitly in the vision of the company’s mission.

The distributed network of the information system is the sub-system which supports the operative units in the real time distribution of useful info for obtaining the maximum income from business opportunities that come facing.

It can operate due to the “ad hoc” created infrastructures to grant the fast connection between its parts. To grant this speed, the structure has to be compatible with the system interface of the network system, so to allow communication due to “ad hoc” created software to promote the destruction of information transmission/reception boundaries.

The autonomous distributed hierarchy consists in the capability, of each decisional centers, to take the head of the group in every moment, depending on the different strains which cause the disturbance in the referring environment.

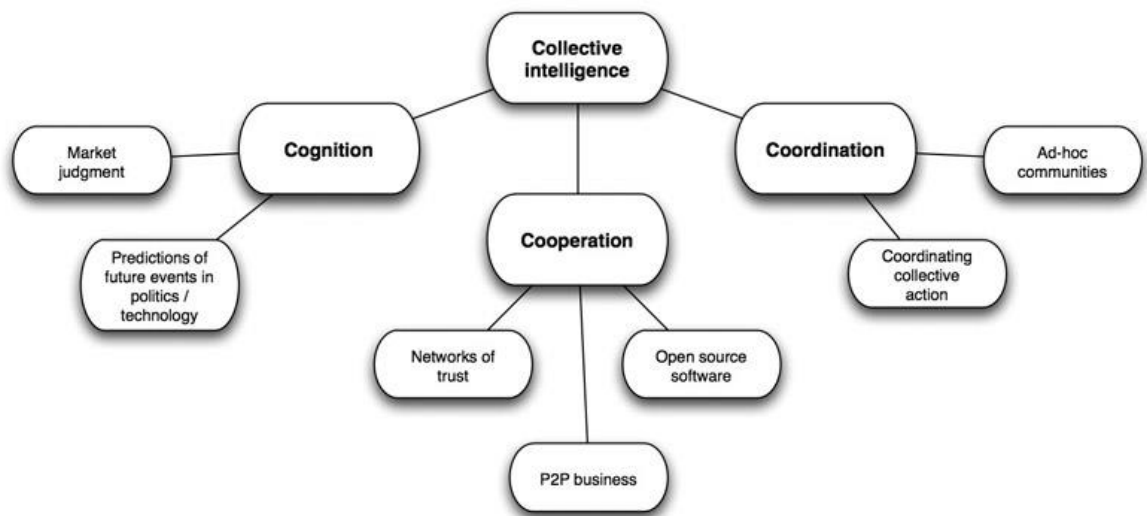
Each activity is capable of interacting with each other part straightly and in a non-mediate way. In an Holonic system all of the Holons have the same importance and the same responsibilities; the involving of an Holon as an operative unit is indicated from its knowledge and skills, NOT from a origin-determined leadership role.

So, what distinguishes the holonic approach to which Rebel Alliance is inspired, is a marked focus on the learning capacity of the single and so on the possibility of getting forward competitively on the market accumulating an “Aggregation of Knowledge” over its whole system, which total results is **much more** than the simple sum of the knowledge which characterize the single holons that build up the System.

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This “Aggregation of Knowledge” is managed by the System as form of a “**Collective Intelligence**”¹⁸, allowing the System to evolve to answer not only reactively, but even pro-actively to the continuous strains of the market in a coherent way with the constant technologic Innovation.



Inside the Rebel Alliance holarchy, the holons can dynamically create and change the hierarchies and participate to different hierarchies at the same time; this, as we'll see, make the holonic system an high-performance system in turbulent environments as the one that characterizes today's referring industry.

¹⁸ This concept which describes a sort of associative life of men starts to emerge also in other fields, other than the ones commonly recognized as the one which is own of the Scientific Community.

These new communities are capable of developing the forms of Shared Intelligence (which we might associate by analogy, as studied in ethology, to some animal's collective behaviors, such as the ones of ants and bees) capable of solving problems which the single individual, alone, would not be able to solve as with the same efficiency. Starting from the studies of W. Wheeler and E. Durkeim (beginning of the last century), which were reviewed by Douglas Hofstadter whom elaborated some thesis about shared creativity, and this concept started to gain weight in the scientific community as a study topic in many disciplines such as: sociology, economy, communication and telematics. Some of the scientists which majorly have been acknowledged for treating this topic are: P. Russel, D. Engelbart, T. Szuba, H. Jenkins, T. Berners-Lee, V. Turchin, D. De Kerckhove, Levi and many more in the academic fields in which they belong.

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In the holonic vision of Rebel Alliance Empowering's *Ad-hocratic Inter-Organizational System*, each individual/company is an Holon, characterized by its own structure and autonomous decisions, belonging to an holarchy which fixes, in a functional way, to reach the main Rebel Alliance aim: **satisfaction of the costumer.**

[...]



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