

clear-cut OBJECTIVES

A business organization for mainly medium-sized industrial enterprises, AMEC facilitates internationalization and innovation to help companies compete in the global market.

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What is your assessment of the current international atmosphere of the business world?

At present, profound changes are happening, such as the trade war between China and the US. Industrial companies should think not only about the present but also the future. This brings us to the concept of VUCA. The concept of VUCA was coined by the US military in the first Gulf War because they were in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous environment. They developed a methodology of action that had not been previously established and required prospective and rapid action. Some theorists of management, specifically Charles Edouard Bouée, developed a theory called Live Footprint. This inspires us to contribute as an organization to visualize the future and to contribute with tools that allow companies to act quickly. This military concept has been translated into the world of management. In terms of sustainability, one big issue is the use of plastics. We have manufacturers that turn plastic into packaging materials. We must do our best to predict future trends so we can prepare in advance. Notably, a group called Business Round Table in the US, which brings together approximately 120 CEOs from all the major US companies, made a statement that Western capitalism must change because it has almost exclusively considered the shareholder's interests as the only objective.

Why do you think internationalization has become so urgent?

AMEC was established around 50 years ago and it has been operating in foreign markets for a long time, but the difference now is that changes occur faster than before. The geopolitical changes that are taking place are accompanied by profound technological changes. AMEC is focused on internationalization and the development of talent, a scarce commodity. In one of our forums, we invited Juan Carlos Cubeiro, an international expert in talent, leadership, and coaching, and according to him, we are in the Human Age 4.0 and one asset we are all competing for is talent. So far, we have competed for the market in terms of financing. Technology and talent have a big impact on internationalization. Technology and innovation can have a double impact on trade flows. For example, 3D printing will reduce international trade, but digitalization will facilitate it.

How can this challenge be solved?

There is no easy solution, but I do have a recommendation. First, you have to set a milestone and take small steps. Second, it is important for companies to share their experiences. Companies who have encountered similar situations should communicate and cooperate. They should try to face problems or challenges collaboratively. The knowledge exists,

the key is to act in an orderly and organized fashion. For example, recently an associated company complained about how one of its containers is stuck in Algeria due to regulatory changes. Any European body there could have known about this change. If it had been shared, the company would not have sent the container. At AMEC, we have a unit that has many online and physical contact points in the world. The job of this unit is to detect changes in regulations and send alerts to the relevant companies. Companies must do some of this independently, but there is a part that can be done collaboratively through the association. This is where we come in.

What makes the Barcelona brand so strong in terms of attracting investment?

Barcelona is a recognized brand in the world. The beginning of the brand was the "Barcelona Get Pretty" campaign. The goal was for the people of Barcelona to feel proud of their city. I recently read a paper by the foreign investment collection agency of the Madrid city council and found out that the Barcelona brand is stronger than the Spain and Catalonia brands. The Barcelona brand is positioned well, but we have to continue managing it well in order to maintain it. This means expanding the tourist offerings beyond Barcelona and distributing tourism activity across different neighborhoods. ✖