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# *Strategic communication of a global enterprise: A case study of Pirelli*

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## Table of contents

Introduction.....	1
1. History and evolution of strategic communication.....	8
1.1 The history of communication: from traditional media to the digital age	8
1.2 Fundamental elements .....	10
1.3 The strategic role of communication within the enterprise .....	18
2. A global enterprise.....	23
2.1 Between the first and second globalization .....	27
2.2 An ambitious pioneer and his dream .....	30
2.3 The protagonist of internationalization.....	38
2.4 The good entrepreneur .....	46
2.5 The turnaround manager .....	53
2.6 Business to Consumer.....	60
3. Pirelli's strategic communication.....	64
3.1 The birth of an international brand .....	65
3.2 The Cal.....	73
3.3 Communicating corporate culture .....	76
3.3.1 Pirelli magazine.....	76
3.3.2 International relations studies and business memory: ISPI, the HangarBicocca and Pirelli Foundations .....	78
3.3.3 University collaborations .....	82
3.3.4 Between art and music .....	83
3.4 To the heart of the fan: sports sponsorships .....	85
3.5 Corporate Social Responsibility.....	88
3.6 Sustainability.....	94
3.7 Towards new frontiers: digital marketing.....	99
Conclusions.....	104

References.....	109
Web references .....	116
Summary	

## **Introduction**

The economic and managerial world has always been subject to continuous evolutions and changes. Especially with the advent of globalization, the ways and means by which the company approaches the customer and satisfies it have changed; at the same time, the consumer has also changed. In fact, each company must be able to predict the latter's choices and therefore the needs, functions and quality that it wishes to find in a specific product. Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that today, through the development of new technologies, the consumer is an attentive customer, who has vast opportunities to choose and who in turn can confront and influence other consumers. In such an atmosphere, communication becomes of fundamental importance, since it manages to create a contact between the company and the consumer in order to be able to create a dialogue and establish a relationship, including trust, for market research purposes, which aims to conquer the end customer with its product. As we will see during this study, communication intersects with other systems of business activities and consequently realizing a communication strategy is not only useful for creating a distinctive image, but above all it has the purpose of generating for the company a defensible competitive advantage in the long run.

Business communication is divided into four areas, which are commercial communication, institutional, managerial and economic-financial communication; therefore, the following work aims to study communication within the company and analyse its strategic aspect in full. Furthermore, it will be underlined how the evolution of society and markets has influenced communication, making it more and more innovative, to the point that it is no longer considered exclusively as an advertising medium, but capable of defining not only reliability, image, the values and ethics but also the economies of scale of the company. To do this, the strategic communication of the multinational Pirelli S.p.a. was taken into analysis, which fully reflects what, was previously described, and which has always been a fundamental pillar for the Company, guaranteeing it a great success.

In the first chapter the history of strategic communication will be retraced starting from traditional means, such as the evolution of writing, the advent of printing, that of

television and radio, up to new technologies, the so-called "digital era". It will be highlighted the development of the web that grants and guarantees the interaction between people and the connection between information, providing a highly functional tool for businesses. Subsequently the communication will be analysed from a theoretical point of view. First analysing its etymology, in order to understand not only its most intimate meaning but also the communication purposes and the importance that communication has in everyday life, later, the two main currents of thought regarding the communication models studied by linguists over the years will be identified and studied in depth: the linear model and the circular model. The first one carries out a communication of the unidirectional type, while the second one of the bidirectional type. During this study, the function of the target was highlighted, important because it defines the language to be used when you want to communicate something to someone.

In addition, the concept of feedback will be introduced, developed within the circular model, according to which the target in turn can respond positively or negatively to the message received, in order to improve the communication activity of the company, therefore to enhance your communication strategy. As for the linear model, the mathematical model of Shannon and Weaver and the Transactional model of Barnlund will be cited and explained. This one is a reinterpretation of the aforementioned model; as regards the circular model, Austin's Theory of linguistic acts and the Theory of the five axioms of communication by Paul Watzlawick and colleagues from the Palo Alto school will be taken into consideration. Attention will then be paid to the main characteristic of communication, i.e. its being multi-channel. In this regard, verbal, non-verbal and visual communication will be studied, indicating their peculiarities and their uses in various types of contexts.

Moreover, the role of strategic communication within the company will be identified, also paying attention to the figure of the strategic planner and contextualizing strategic communication within a landscape in continuous technological growth. It will be demonstrated how the use of increasingly diversified communication channels is an essential resource for companies seeking to guarantee their image by focusing on the message and stakeholders as recipients. The latter are generally divided into three categories, based on the type of communication intended for them, namely: internal, external and co-makers. New technologies, combined with previous ones already in use,

have meant that modern global corporate communication was managed, on the one hand, by analog communication, which develops push strategy communication and, on the other, by digital communication to stimulate pull strategy communication.

Finally, in order to understand the subsequent topics, the main levers of effective strategic communication such as that of Pirelli Spa will be identified, including internationalization and joint venture, an agreement that provides partners with the context to facilitate the cooperative learning and generates collaborative know-how. Cooperative experience allows an organization to obtain both tangible advantages such as an increase in market share and intangible advantages such as the acquisition and generation of knowledge; it also ensures future alliances. In addition to visual communication and sponsorships, considered essential to reach a specific target, attention has been paid to ethics and social responsibility. The business world is constantly changing and social commitment has become one of the fundamental strategic elements to compete on the market with a long-term perspective. Social responsibility is a renewed conception of the relationship between company and society; it originates from the increasingly consolidated awareness of the recent transposition from an industrial economy to an economy based on information and knowledge. In this sense, social responsibility is not conceived as a cost but on the contrary, as an investment.

In the second chapter, attention will be focused on the “global enterprise”. Initially, the change brought about by globalization was analysed, which favoured the interdependence between the economies of the countries, through trade, the movement of the workforce, the exchange of information and technologies, productive investments and flows of financial capital. It has changed the corporate culture and this, in turn, changes strategies, organizations and social relationships within the factories. In this context, the internationalization strategy, together with that of product diversification, are considered of fundamental importance. The causes and methods for which a company decides to invest abroad and thus become multinational will be highlighted. Public policies to support internationalization can be classified into two types: financial services and real services such as market information, product promotion, trade fair initiatives, consultancy and training of specialized personnel. More and more multinational companies face challenges for global integration and local reactivity; to meet this challenge, international society must be managed as a coordinated network. The drivers of internationalization,

the determinants of the position and the management processes are unique for each activity.

After introducing the concepts of first and second globalization, the history of the Pirelli Company will be analysed, characterized by the spirit of a technological and innovative soul, always ready for new challenges, which will lead Pirelli to achieve great strategic objectives, united by an engine main that has always distinguished the company: internationalization. In particular, the continuous link with England and the United States will be highlighted, considered immediately strategic objectives of the company. It not only bears the name of the family that conceived it abroad and created it in Italy, but shares its ethics and ambitions. The Pirelli Company represents a paradigm of cooperative corporate industrial relations, which has repeatedly been opposed to the conflictual one of other Italian industrial groups. The company has engaged in profound transformations as a result of the constantly growing competitive pressures determined by technological and organizational change, the evolution of markets, the globalization of the economy.

It is one of the few large private groups that have made the industrial history of Italy and managed to meet the challenge of globalization. In fact, the birth of the company in 1872 was immediately characterized by the desire of its founder, Giovanni Battista Pirelli, to explore a new sector, that of rubber, unknown in Italy before then. During the following years Pirelli will be led by Alberto Pirelli, Leopoldo Pirelli and Marco Tronchetti Provera, who will develop an entrepreneurial activity based on the concept of stakeholder vision, or on the conflict between the company and its competitors on the global market. In the course of the following work, it will be possible to observe how the soul of the Company is therefore constituted by the character and ambitions of each of its leaders.

The Pirelli Group has historically operated in the production and marketing of tires, in particular in the industrial segment, which refers to trucks and vehicles intended for agricultural use, and in the consumer segment, which instead regards cars and motorcycles, with a distinctive positioning on the segment high value. It is an iconic brand recognized globally. a reorganization process that led to the separation of the industrial business and the focus on the Consumer business, enriched with new skills also through the creation of new departments and businesses. The business model on which Pirelli is based relies on the development of tires on a constant collaboration with the



manufacturers of Auto Prestige and Premium, which allows carrying out an integrated process that goes from the car manufacturer to the end customer, to obtain products that best meet the needs and tastes of the consumer. This is made possible by the fundamental role that Pirelli attributes to R&D activities, which represent the cornerstone of Pirelli's ability to meet the demands of car manufacturers and to support the evolution of technological trends and consumer habits. Pirelli can thus plan its production activities and short and medium-term investments, especially in R&D activities. Furthermore, thanks to continuous monitoring of the trends in the world car and motorbike market, Pirelli is able to make a medium and long-term forecast with respect to production, especially in the field of equipment. In addition, constant monitoring of the evolution of the legislative and regulatory landscape allows to anticipate possible developments in the regulations of the markets in which Pirelli presides, in order to seize potential market opportunities determined by the change in the regulatory framework.

Finally, in the last chapter, this thesis will focus on Pirelli's strategic communication, which has always represented an exemplary case of great vision in the relationship between business and culture, through advertising campaigns, project responsibility, sense of institutional communication, up to get to the new languages of advertising. Therefore, Pirelli continues its path of innovation also in communication, from the birth of its long P, to sketches, advertising posters, promotional catalogues for fashion, the Pirelli brand becomes international. The calendar becomes a tool consistent with the Company's mission, which anticipates themes and topics. The classic and modern beauty of the woman's body, from real to mythological forms, represents a highly effective advertising campaign, which immediately attracts the attention of consumers for the products and the brand.

Moreover, the different settings of the Calendar also take on a meaning of attention to the specific characteristics and peculiarities of the various local communities of the places where society is present. In fact, Pirelli wants to approach the public through an immediate language, which through the exaltation of the female figure interprets the transformations of society, such as the evolution of customs and style. In particular, the connection between business history and corporate storytelling, defined as storytelling, aimed at persuasive communication will be explored. Within the company, great value is given to culture and varieties of channels are used to promote it. Determined to undertake

this dialogue with culture, she publishes the Pirelli magazine for technical information, establishes the Institute for international political studies and the HangerBicocca and Pirelli foundations. In addition, it develops university collaborations and fits into artistic and musical contexts. Sport represents an opportunity for the industry to experiment with new products during demanding competitions in order to target the results to a wider audience. The same core of Pirelli moves the company to be present in sport, thus approaching the millions of people who follow it. With sponsorships, the brand is defined and the public is involved, for this reason Pirelli gives rise to a record of presence of over 110 years in sports competitions, consolidating important sponsorships, experimenting and developing new technologies. Business ethics are good for the brand, both from an economic and an image point of view. The importance of corporate social responsibility therefore favors profits and at the same time contributes to social well-being. Precisely for the aforementioned reasons, in recent years, Pirelli's corporate social responsibility is among the most prosperous communication strategies for the company. It promotes social initiatives to improve the lives of both employees and their families and citizens of the world.

Today, investors are drawn to Environmental Social Governance (ESG) business investments. In particular, young investors want to be sure that the companies they support meet high ESG standards, which can also represent a solid defensive strategy in times of difficulty. ESG opportunities are reflected in the growing diffusion of market indices that replicate the performance of the sector but above all, in the fast evolution of the world, which in recent years has placed interest in renewable energy sources. To communicate environmental protection and increase its strategic power, Pirelli decides to focus in particular on two problems, namely the reduction of water consumption and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, following global warming. The goal of environmental sustainability thus becomes the focal point of new investments. Sustainability does not only concern the environment, but must lay the necessary conditions to foster the interaction between the company's business model, the external and competitive context, strategy, risk management and corporate governance. To fulfil the duties of a sustainable company, the tire manufacturer develops systems for the use of new renewable materials for the production of its products, implementing the Sustainable Natural Rubber Policy. The Pirelli sustainability plan is based on 12

objectives that identify with the areas in which it is possible to make more significant initiatives, based on the respective sectors of activity, business and development strategies. Pirelli has always been committed to the search for innovative products, which can live up to or even exceed its largest competitors; all this is certainly due to the unstoppable desire to stay constantly in step with the times, managing to foresee not only changes in the technological world but above all consumer choices in this context. Precisely for this reason, in recent years the world of digitalization has become the centre of innovation and corporate communication. It is present in both the innovation, sustainability, employer branding and advertising plans. In addition, the Company decides to start digital training for both tire specialists and sales staff. Therefore, it can be said that communication takes on a strategic role in the most innovative companies, where digital communication is particularly important, as it supports internal collaboration and promotes the improvement of the work environment.

# 1. History and evolution of strategic communication

Nowadays communication is the motive force of all human and social reality. No goal can be achieved without communication. It is the common thread that unites the world; in fact, through communication we can make needs, desires, ideas and feelings known. If you are good at communicating, you have the chance to realize your hopes and dreams.<sup>1</sup> According to Lasswell, communicating is a characteristic that belongs to all living beings since their birth.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter, the importance of strategic communication will be underlined by retracing the fundamental stages of its evolution. Therefore, the historical events that have allowed the dissemination of communication until the present day and the application of the main theoretical models within formal and informal contexts will be analysed. Finally, it will turn the attention to the role of strategic communication within the enterprise by highlighting and examining some of the fundamental communication strategies used for the development of a multinational corporation.

## 1.1 The history of communication: from traditional media to the digital age

Since ancient times, man has used communication to satisfy commercial exchanges. Writing is humanity's main technology for collecting, manipulating, archiving, retrieving, communicating and disseminating information. Its evolution from tokens to pictography, to the syllabary and to the Phoenician and then to the Greek alphabet, illustrates the development of information processing to manage large amounts of data and a better organization of society.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Alessandra, T., Hunsaker, P., *Communication at Work*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1993, p.

<sup>2</sup> Lasswell, H. D., "The structure and function of communication in society", in *The Communication of Ideas*, Vol.37, ed. Bryson L., New York, Institute for Religious and Social Studies, 1948, pp. 37-51.

<sup>3</sup> Powell, B. B., *Writing: Theory and History of the Technology of Civilization*, Chichester, West Sussex, UK, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

The invention of printing, developed further in Europe in the fifteenth century by Johannes Gutenberg,<sup>4</sup> revolutionizes the way of communicating. Printed materials were used to share ideas quickly and efficiently in order to inform large numbers of people about current events, business opportunities, cultural and religious practices and for educational purposes.<sup>5</sup> The press helped to promote social progress by facilitating communication between men. Subsequently, the transition from an agricultural economy to an industrial one made urbanization possible, the birth of mass society and the advertising industry.<sup>6</sup>

The modern advertising industry has its roots in the 1800s, when advances in photography, magazines, telegraphs and other technologies led to national communication, mass production and marketing.<sup>7</sup> During this period, advertising came to the fore as a form of communication to promote a product highlighting a precise benefit.<sup>8</sup> Volney Palmer, a Philadelphia businessperson, formed the first advertising agency in the United States in the 1840s when he began buying large pieces of advertising space from newspapers and reselling them to customers at a higher price.<sup>9</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, advertising agencies had shifted from the mere intermediation of sales to the creation of advertising content. The industry became more professional and more persuasive. In the 1920s, advertising expanded with the growth of radio.

In fact, the advertising companies supported radio programs and with the advent of television in the 1940s, advertising was transformed again. Advertisers went from supporting entire programs to buying blocks of one or two minutes. The advertising industry reached creative highs in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>10</sup> The important advertising companies, in the seventies and eighties, were merged or acquired by the competition. The advertising sector was thus dominated by large companies such as Publicis Groupe and Omnicom. By 1990, the advertising industry had lost 25% of its share of the

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<sup>4</sup>Gibson, R., *The Four Lenses of Innovation: A Power Tool for Creative Thinking*, Hoboken, New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons, 2015.

<sup>5</sup>Meltzer, M., *The Printing Press*, New York, Benchmark Books, 2004.

<sup>6</sup>Codeluppi, V., *La sfida della pubblicità*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1995, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Arens, W. F., Schaefer, D. H., Weigold, M., *Essentials of Contemporary Advertising*, New York, McGraw-Hill Irwin, 2008, p. 13.

<sup>8</sup> Codeluppi, V., *Verso la marca relazionale*, convegno "Le tendenze del marketing in Europa", Università Cà Foscari Venezia, 2000, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Holland, D. R., "Volney B. Palmer: The Nation's First Advertising Agency Man", in *The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 98, No. 3 (July 1974), pp. 353-381.

<sup>10</sup> Arens, W. F., Schaefer, D. H., Weigold, M., *Essentials of Contemporary Advertising*, p. 16.

corporate marketing budget, as businesses had started to rely more on other forms of marketing communications.<sup>11</sup> By the mid-1990s, advertising budgets were again growing at double-digit rates. In recent years, new companies have focused on digital advertising and marketing.<sup>12</sup>

However, the most interesting change for communication comes in a second phase of the digital revolution, or with the introduction of web 2.0 which O'Reilly defines as "the commercial revolution in the IT industry caused by the transformation of the Internet into a platform and the attempt to understand the rules for success with it."<sup>13</sup>

Web 2.0 is not a new technology but the creative use and grouping of existing technologies have allowed a greater level of sharing, participation and online collaboration. Examples of web 2.0 applications are social network websites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, which have become crucial tools for holdings of all sizes.<sup>14</sup> Web 3.0 creates a semantic and quantitative knowledge and information base, providing an essential tool for the acceptance and functionality of corporate advertising.<sup>15</sup> In this system, computers can read information such as humans, intelligently generate and distribute useful content tailored to users' needs. While web 2.0 uses Internet to establish connections between people, web 3.0 will use Internet to establish connections between information. An example of web 3.0 is Tivo, a digital video recorder that through its recording program can search the Web and read what it finds based on the preferences requested.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.2 Fundamental elements

The meaning of the term derives from the Latin *communicatio* -onis or a complex relationship between people, cognitive, spiritual, emotional and functional, which

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<sup>11</sup> Ivi, pp. 13-16.

<sup>12</sup> Borrell Associates, *Economics of Search Marketing*, 2009, <https://www.borrelassociates.com/industry-papers/papers/economics-of-search-marketing-jun-09-detail>

<sup>13</sup> Dini, A., *Web 2.0*, Il Sole 24 Ore, [https://st.ilsole24ore.com/art/SoleOnLine4/100-parole/Tecnologia/W/Web-2-0.shtml?uuid=2bf1d422-8b13-11dd-953b-4eca81469376&DocRulesView=Libero&refresh\\_ce=1](https://st.ilsole24ore.com/art/SoleOnLine4/100-parole/Tecnologia/W/Web-2-0.shtml?uuid=2bf1d422-8b13-11dd-953b-4eca81469376&DocRulesView=Libero&refresh_ce=1)

<sup>14</sup> Wienclaw, R. A., *Use of Web 2.0 in Business*, Salem Press Encyclopedia, 2019.

<sup>15</sup> Küster I., Hernández, A., *From Web 2.0 to Web 3.0: Antecedents and consequences of the attitude and use intention of social networking in the semantic Web*, *Universia Business Review*. 2013, Issue 37, p104-119.

<sup>16</sup> Mazzei, M., *Web 1.0*, Salem Press Encyclopedia, 2020.

establishes between them dependence, participation and understanding, unilateral or reciprocal.<sup>17</sup> It is therefore an interaction involving two or more participants, in which the information is transmitted, with the intention of an issuer to change the recipient's state of knowledge. The communicative act is carried out when the mental representations of the participants are aligned.<sup>18</sup>

However, there is no definition of the term unanimously shared within the scientific community. In fact, this study is a new scientific field, with respect to which different approaches have been put in place according to the linguistic, sociological, pragmatic, semiotic and psychological disciplines.<sup>19</sup> The study of communication examines how messages generate meanings within and across various contexts, cultures, channels and media.<sup>20</sup> The observations on the models that allow us to understand the communication process find their expression in two lines of thought. The first concerns the transmissivity aspect of the communication activity, which gives rise to the linear type model, the second concerns reciprocity and information sharing, fundamental elements in the circular or interactive model.<sup>21</sup>

One of the most famous linear models is based on Shannon and Weaver's "Mathematical Theory of Communication". It suggests that a sender, a source of information, encode and send a message, through a specific channel, to a recipient.

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<sup>17</sup> Treccani, Il vocabolario della lingua italiana, 2014, <http://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/comunicazione>

<sup>18</sup> Grice, H. P., "Utterer's Meaning and Intention", in *The Philosophical Review*, Vol. 78, No. 2, Durham, North Carolina, Duke University Press, pp. 147-177.

<sup>19</sup> Rigotti, E., Gigada, S., "Verso un modello della comunicazione verbale", in *La comunicazione verbale*, Milano, APOGEO, 2004, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup> National Communication Association, *What is Communication?*, Washington, 2014-2015, <https://www.natcom.org/discipline/>

<sup>21</sup> Viganò, D., *I sentieri della comunicazione: storia e teorie*, Soveria Mannelli (CZ), Rubbettino Editore, 2003, pp. 50-68.

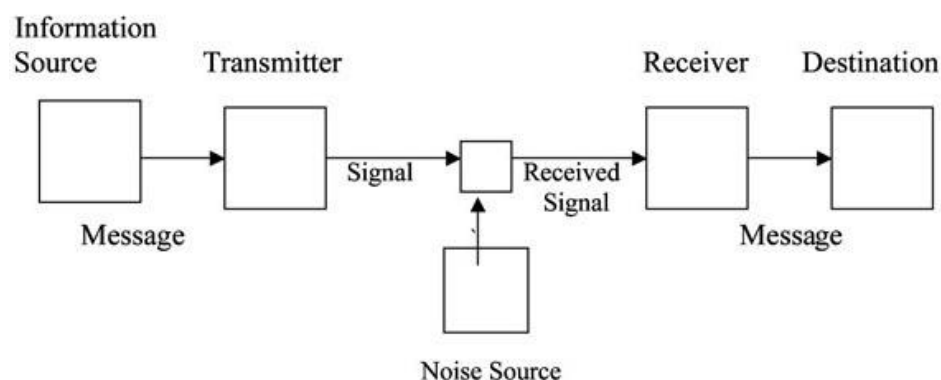


Figure 1, *The Mathematical Theory of communication.*

Source: Weaver, W., *The Rockefeller Foundation*, "Recent contributions to the mathematical theory of communication", in *A mathematical model of communication*, ed. Shannon C., Weaver W., Urbana (IL), University of Illinois Press, 1949.

The sender is the initiator of the communication,<sup>22</sup> while the recipient must decode the intrinsic messages of meaning.<sup>23</sup> In strategic communication, the term target group is generally used to refer to the recipient; however, according to some scholars, the use of this term is ambiguous and it is therefore preferable to make a distinction between target population and recipient group. The first indicates the set of subjects whose behaviour, attitude and state of knowledge are influenced, directly or indirectly; the second denotes the group to which a specific message is intended.<sup>24</sup> Message means the particular meaning or content that the sender wants the recipient to understand. The message can be intentional or unintended, written or spoken, verbal or non-verbal or any combination of these. A channel is the method used by the sender to send a message to the recipient.

The most common channels used by humans are verbal and non-verbal communications. Noise may occur within this system, that is, anything that interferes or changes the original meaning of the message.<sup>25</sup>

The aforementioned model implies the idea that the issuer manages and controls the communication process and that the recipient exercises a minimum power such as to

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>24</sup> Windhal, S., Signitzer, B., Olson, J. T., *Progettare la comunicazione strategica*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1998, p. 36.

<sup>25</sup> Shannon, C., Weaver, W., "La teoria matematica delle comunicazioni", ... pp.2-37.



be considered an objective, therefore the result is a one-way communication flow. It also does not demonstrate how context or personal experiences influence communication.<sup>26</sup>

Given the limitations of the linear model, Barnlund has revisited the paradigm to represent in a more complete way what happens in most exchanges of human communications.

The "Transactional Model" shows that the participants in the communication act both as issuers and as recipients, coding and decoding the message at the same time. Thus, communication is not a simple one-way transmission of a message in which the participants' personal experiences affect each exchange of communication.<sup>27</sup> The transfer of information in which the processing takes place through communication systems, where both the sender and the recipient are actively involved; moreover, the quality of communications is variable, therefore characterizes communication.<sup>28</sup>

During the mid-1950s, hypotheses developed that lead towards an approach to circular communication flow, in which social variables are introduced, therefore communication becomes bidirectional and guarantees interpersonal continuity.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Weaver, W., The Rockefeller Foundation, "Recent contributions to the mathematical theory of communication", in *A mathematical model of communication*, ed. Shannon C., Weaver W., Urbana (IL), University of Illinois Press, 1949, p. 7.

<sup>27</sup>Barnlund, D. C., "A transactional model of communication", in *Foundations of Communication Theory*, ed. Sereno K.K., Mortensen C.D., New York, Harper and Row, 1970, pp. 83-103.

<sup>28</sup>Losee, R. M., "Communication Defined as Complementary Informative Processes", in *Journal of Information, Communication, and Library Science*, Chapel Hill (NC), University of North Carolina- Chapel Hill, 1999, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup>Viganò, D., "I sentieri della comunicazione: storia e teorie", ... p. 59-60.

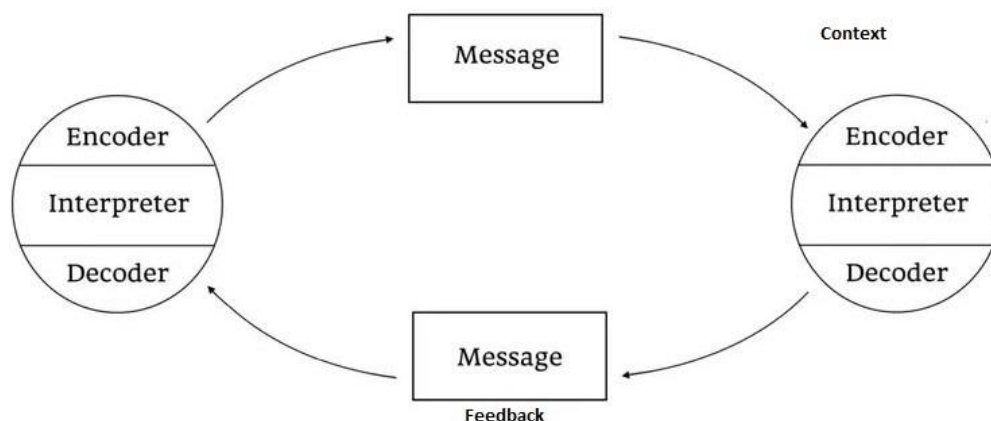


Figure 2, *The circular model of communication*

Source: Barnlund, D. C., "A transactional model of communication", in *Foundations of Communication Theory*, ed. Sereno K.K., Mortensen C.D., New York, Harper and Row, 1970.

In this context, Austin's studies on the "Theory of linguistic acts" and those on the pragmatics of human communication of the Palo Alto school are born.<sup>30</sup> The theory of linguistic acts, which will then be published in *How to do things with words*, considers the act of communicating as an action rather than a means of transmitting information and expressing sensations.<sup>31</sup> The linguistic acts concern the activities that although not necessary, can be carried out by communicating the action that is actually being carried out.<sup>32</sup> On this conception, resigning, promising, affirming and asking are all linguistic acts, while convincing and insulting are not. In addition, Austin divides linguistic acts into three different categories:

1. Locutionary act: the act of saying something; it represents what the speaker says and has an understandable meaning to convey or express.
2. Illocutionary act: the communicative intention of the speaker. The illocutionary expression has its own strength and certain tones, attitudes, feelings or emotions and is often used as a warning tone.
3. Perlocutionary act: normally creates a sense of consequential effects on the public. Effects can be thoughts, imaginations, feelings or emotions. The effect on the recipient is the main characteristic of perlocutionary expressions.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Zani, B., Selleri, P., David, D., *La comunicazione. Modelli teorici e contesti sociali*, Roma, Carocci, 1994, p. 21.

<sup>31</sup> Austin, J. L., *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1962.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*.

In 1967, the psychologist Paul Watzlawick and his colleagues formulate the "Five axioms of communication", in which they argue that language has behavioural consequences in the contexts in which man acts; this function takes place within verbal and non-verbal communication:<sup>34</sup>

1. It is impossible not to communicate. Any perceptible behaviour, including the absence of action has the potential to be interpreted by other people as having some meaning.<sup>35</sup>
2. Each communication has a level of content and relationship. The first refers to the real meaning of the message, the second to the type of relationship you want to establish with the person you are addressing. In this second axiom the concept of feedback is introduced<sup>36</sup> which Antonello Goi describes as:

reazioni generate del ricevente e reattive al ricevimento dei messaggi inviati dall'emittente. L'azione del feedback può essere volontaria, involontaria o richiesta e consente il compimento del flusso comunicazionale verso l'emittente che ha in questo modo la possibilità di controllare e governare l'efficacia della sua comunicazione. [...] La comunicazione e il feedback devono lavorare con sinergia per dare alle persone le informazioni necessarie a migliorare le performance.<sup>37</sup>

3. The variations in communication flows within a communication are regulated by the punctuation used by the subjects who communicate. The axiom underlines how punctuation can sometimes significantly alter the meaning of the message.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Verrastro, V., *Psicologia della comunicazione. Un manuale introduttivo*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2007, p. 28.

<sup>35</sup>Watzlawick, P., Bavelas, J. B., Jackson, D. D., "*Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies and Paradoxes*", New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 2011, pp. 29-32.

<sup>36</sup>Ceriani, A., Tosetti, V., *Lo specchio magico. Manuale del moderno formatore*, Roma, Armando Editore, 2005, p. 144.

<sup>37</sup> Goi A., "*Il percorso strategico della comunicazione: guida comparata alla comunicazione scritta e verbale*", Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2004, p. 32-33.

<sup>38</sup> Watzlawick, P., Bavelas, J. B., Jackson, D. D., "*Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies and Paradoxes*", pp. 35-40.

4. Human communication involves both digital and analogic modality. The digital term is used in this axiom to refer to the proper meaning of the words that take place within the communication; analogic means everything that has to do with how something is said, including non-verbal signs.<sup>39</sup>
5. Interhuman communication procedures are symmetric or complementary, depending on whether the participants' relationship is based on differences or equal power, such as the relationship between parent and child or boss and employee.<sup>40</sup>

The main characteristic of communication is its being multi-channel, that is commonly involves many sources of information. Communicators who make use of these sources must have the necessary knowledge to interpret them; in fact, because of this we distinguish visual, verbal and non-verbal codes.<sup>41</sup>

Visual communication is the ability to transmit information by graphically representing it through symbols and images.<sup>42</sup> Its characteristic is universality, as individuals who do not speak the same language can also understand its message. That is why the definition of content marketing success today includes visual communication. This type of communication is suitable for a company or campaign and varies according to the objectives you intend to achieve and the type of audience you want to meet. Visual communication is believed to be the type on which individuals rely most.<sup>43</sup>

Verbal communication concerns the use of words to share information through a system of symbols governed by rules. These symbols are arbitrary, ambiguous and abstract.

This communication refers to both spoken and written communication, since the rules that dictate the use and understanding of symbols include phonology, semantics, syntactics and pragmatics.<sup>44</sup> Being able to communicate effectively through verbal

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<sup>39</sup> Ivi, pp. 41-44.

<sup>40</sup> Ivi, pp. 45-49.

<sup>41</sup>Morelli, M., *“L'immagine dell'impresa. Le leve strategiche della comunicazione nell'epoca del cambiamento”*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2002, p. 47.

<sup>42</sup>White, D., *What Is Visual Communication? Definition, History, Theory & Examples*, in *Effective Communication in the Workplace: Help and Review*, Study.com <https://study.com/academy/lesson/what-is-visual-communication-definition-history-theory-examples.html#transcriptHeader>

<sup>43</sup> Machin, D., *Visual Communication*, Berlino, De Gruyter Mouton, 2014.

<sup>44</sup>Rocci, A., De Saussure, L., *“Verbal Communication”*, Berlino, De Gruyter Mouton, 2016, p. 6.

communication is extremely important; therefore, the success of communication depends not only on an individual's ability to speak but also on his or her listening and interpretation skills.<sup>45</sup>

Non-verbal communication is defined as any meaning transmitted through sounds, behaviours and artefacts other than words. Such communication can be used unconsciously. Unlike verbal communications, some non-verbal communications are recognized in all cultures.<sup>46</sup> Boorgon, Buller Woodall declare that non-verbal behaviours are "typically sent with an intent, are used regularly among members of a social community, are generally interpreted as intentional and interpretations are consensually recognized."<sup>47</sup> Studies on non-verbal communication include kinesics, haptic perception, proxemics, paralinguistics and chronemics:<sup>48</sup>

- Kinesics is the study of body movement, posture, gestures and facial expressions through which expressions are communicated.<sup>49</sup>
- Haptic perception is the study of touch. This is the first type of non-verbal communication that experiences the human being and is vital for its development.<sup>50</sup>
- Proxemics studies the way in which the use of space influences the way social relationships take place. In this regard, the anthropologist Edward Hall has developed a model that defines interpersonal distances. The intimate distance goes from zero to 45 cm and includes people with whom you have a very intimate and affective relationship, such as a family member or partner; the personal distance from 45 to 120 cm represents the ideal distance for most interactions and coincides with the distance necessary for a handshake. Usually it indicates that between the two interlocutors there is a relationship of friendship and trust. The social distance from 120 to 300 cm is used in the presence of a formal relationship, while the

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>46</sup> Sooriya, P., "Non Verbal Communication", Solapur, Maharashtra, India, Laxmi Book Publication, 2017, p. 1-2.

<sup>47</sup> Burgoon, J. K., Buller, D. B., Woodall W. G, *Nonverbal communication: The unspoken dialogue*, New York: Harper & Row, 1996, p. 113.

<sup>48</sup> Burgoon, J. K., Guerrero, L. K., Floyd, K., *Nonverbal Communication*, Londra, Routledge, 2016, p. 20.

<sup>49</sup> De Sario, P., *Non solo parole. Gli strumenti della comunicazione ecologica*, Milan, FrancoAngeli, 2002, p. 39.

<sup>50</sup> Dolin, D. J., Booth-Butterfield, M., *Reach out and touch someone: Analysis of nonverbal comforting responses*, *Communication Quarterly*, Vol. 41(4), 1993, pp. 383-393.

public distance, over 3 meters is adopted in public conversations where it is impossible to interact with the individual.<sup>51</sup>

- Paralinguistics is the term used to describe vocal qualities such as tone, volume, inflection, speed of speech and rhythm.<sup>52</sup>
- The chronemic studies the use of time. Levine believes that the use of time communicates a variety of meanings to interlocutors, as well as for other types of non-verbal communication, context plays an important role in interpreting the meaning of silence.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, silence can convey the flow of our conversations.

### 1.3 The strategic role of communication within the enterprise

In the world of profit, strategic communication is defined by Hallahan as "the intentional use of communication by an organization to fulfil its mission".<sup>54</sup> It contributes positively and directly to the success of all the operations, missions and activities of an organization through its ability to raise awareness and understand public opinion, objectives and organizational mechanisms.<sup>55</sup> In particular, Micelli states that:

“Dalla qualità e dall’intensità della comunicazione dipendono in larga misura la brand identity, la profondità e l’ampiezza della brand awareness, la forza, la positività e l’unicità delle associazioni che definiscono la brand image, le percezioni in merito al valore utilità e al valore equità della marca, i significati individuali e sociali evocati dal suo acquisto e consumo.”<sup>56</sup>

The work of the strategic planner has been defined by Busacca, Ostilio and Zaminga as:

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<sup>51</sup>Hall, E. T., *La dimensione nascosta*, Milano, Bompiani, 1968, p. 147.

<sup>52</sup>Trager, G. L., “The typology of paralanguage”, in *The Trustees of Indiana University on behalf of Anthropological Linguistics*, Vol. 3 (1), 1961, pp. 17–21.

<sup>53</sup> Volli, U., *Il nuovo libro della comunicazione. Che cosa significa comunicare: idee, tecnologie, strumenti, modelli*, Milano, il Saggiatore, 2010, p. 112.

<sup>54</sup> Hallahan K., Holtzhausen D. R., Sriramesh Krishnamurthy, A. van Ruler A., Verčičč, Dejan, “Defining Strategic Communication”, in *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, Londra, Routledge Publisher, 2007, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> Brîndușa M. P., “Strategic Communication”, in *Journal of Defense Resources Management*, Vol. 10. (19), Brasov, Romania, 2019, p. 174.

<sup>56</sup> Micelli, S., “Il consumo postfordista: dalla cultura della delega alla cultura dell’interazione”, in Rullani E., Romano L., *Il Postfordismo. Idee per il capitalismo prossimo venturo*, , Milano, EtasLibri, 1998, pp.106-127.

“la creatività prima della creatività, perché deve rinvenire nel contesto sociale gli spunti di comunicazione e adattarli razionalmente al messaggio che l’azienda vuole divulgare. Lo *strategic planner* è il rappresentante del consumatore all’interno dell’agenzia, per il compito assegnatogli di conoscere a fondo non solo i mercati, modalità con cui i consumatori si comportano, i bisogni di fondo e quelli emergenti, le tendenze e le mode. La sua visione d’insieme, affiancata alla sua azione strategica, rende tale figura professionale la più adatta all’individuazione delle modalità gestionali idonee a favorire la creazione e l’accrescimento del valore della marca, conoscendo, meglio di ogni altro, le connessioni tra marca, pubblicità e consumatore.”<sup>57</sup>

The role of strategic communication, in such a rapid evolution of the technological landscape, is increasingly important. The communication channels are increasingly diversified for companies seeking to guarantee their image by focusing on the message and stakeholders as recipients.<sup>58</sup> In recent years, digital communication has radically changed the relationship between business and market, cancelling the spatial constraints of relationships and influencing time management within the competition. Modern global corporate communication is managed, on the one hand, by analog communication, which develops push strategy communication and on the other, by digital communication to stimulate the pull strategy communication.<sup>59</sup> New technologies have therefore made it possible to overcome the spatial boundaries of competition, so that the receiver and transmitter of communication flows no longer have to be simultaneously present in the same physical position. The elimination of spatial constraints has drastically modified the management of space in relations with the market, so that it is even easier to reach the crucial stakeholders wherever they are, without difficulty in transmitting the message at lower costs, at any time and with growing combined tools. This allows to offer new channels and tools to communicate effectively; an example is the acquisition of the competitive advantage by monitoring, in real time, the reaction of the target to which the

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<sup>57</sup> Busacca, B., Ostilio, M. V., Zaminga, I., “La gestione strategica della marca nella prospettiva delle agenzie di comunicazione”, in  *Mercati e Competitività*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1/2005, p. 107.

<sup>58</sup> “Key elements of strategic communication: An inclusive approach”, *Strategic Direction*, Vol. 34 No. 10, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018, p. 19. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SD-06-2018-0135>

<sup>59</sup> Brondoni, S. M., “Ouverture de ‘Communication and Global Markets’”, in *Symphonya Emerging Issues in Management*, n. 2, 2006, p.1.

flow of information is sent.<sup>60</sup> The priority recipients of communications by global companies can generally be divided into three categories: internal, external and co-makers, which allow us to outline the various communication strategies used.<sup>61</sup>

Internal communication is transmitted by a system of channels that support the company's organizational structure, such as meetings, personal letters, conversations and interviews, internal press releases, orders and service procedures, preparation, updating, training and corporate publications programs.<sup>62</sup>

Communication to targets outside the company, i.e. customers, suppliers, financial market, public authorities, associations and lobbies, media, opinion makers and opinion leaders, mainly aims to establish a defined corporate or brand identity and for this purpose can draw on a wide range of personal, non-personal and telematics communication tools. With the various tools available, companies turn substantially to the outside world with news, events and symbolic elements that together try to affect positively the response expected by the outside world on what the company has to offer.<sup>63</sup>

Global companies recognize another target audience, which is defined as a co-maker, specifically identifying selected economic and social operators, both private and public, with which a company maintains highly privileged relationships.<sup>64</sup> The main characteristic of a co-maker is to provide the sharing of corporate risks and the continuous contribution to the achievement of medium or long-term objectives, with preferential or even exclusive involvement. In particular, it is advantageous to have recourse to strategic collaborations and the creation of networks, born from the necessity of individual companies to expand through communication in partnership.<sup>65</sup> At the basis of a well-coordinated and functional network there is a contract that defines the collaboration between the partnerships and the management of corporate know-how, that is the deposit of technical skills, knowledge and methodologies conceived, perfected and tested by the affiliated entity to market its products for the purpose of innovating and increasing the

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<sup>60</sup> Ivi, p. 3.

<sup>61</sup> Brondoni, S. M., "Corporate Communication and Global Markets", in *Symphonya Emerging Issues in Management*, n. 2, 2006, pp. 17- 21.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>64</sup> Brondoni, S. M., "Comunicazione integrata d'impresa e 'nuove sfide' competitive", in AA.VV., *Progettare e gestire l'impresa innovativa*, Etas Libri, Milan, 1992.

<sup>65</sup> Silvio M. Brondoni, "Corporate Communication and Global Markets", in *Symphonya Emerging Issues in Management*, pp. 17- 21.



business.<sup>66</sup> A contract of this type is the joint venture, an organization with its own legal identity, which refers to a partnership between two or more independent organizations that share the decision-making processes, benefits and risks of the new organization in proportion to the contribution of each partner.<sup>67</sup> When at least one of the partners is based outside the country in which the joint venture operates, or when a significant part of its operations are carried out in another country, the joint venture is defined as international. This agreement provides partners with the context to facilitate cooperative learning and generates collaborative know-how. Cooperative experience allows an organization to obtain both tangible advantages such as an increase in market share and intangible advantages such as the acquisition and generation of knowledge; it also ensures future alliances.<sup>68</sup> The various communication initiatives of the company can be integrated, as in the case of the sponsorship of cultural programs or some sports sponsorships, which, thanks to their multiple effects, can simultaneously concern external and internal objectives and co-makers.<sup>69</sup>

Although strategic and visual communication are considered different disciplines, some scholars believe that greater attention should be paid to the intersection of the two fields and the communicative role that the same can play for organizations. The relationship between design, aesthetics and innovation is a competitive advantage and is used as a strategic resource.<sup>70</sup> In fact, visual communication is present in all specialist areas of strategic communication and therefore in management communication, marketing communication, public relations, technical communication campaigns, political communication and social marketing. The visual strategy is a guideline for a desirable, credible and accurate communication for the organization; it concerns the different facets with which an organization visually communicates to all stakeholders and

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<sup>66</sup> Schiavone, F., "Postfordismo e terziario: il caso di una impresa di comunicazione a 'rete'", in *Economia e Diritto del Terziario*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, n. 1, 2006, p. 153.

<sup>67</sup> Harrigan, K.R., "Joint Ventures: Linking for a Leap Forward", in *Planning Review*, 14(4), 1986, 10-15.

<sup>68</sup> Ribeiro-Soriano, D., Benavides-Espinosa M. del M., Mohedano-Suanes A., "Cooperative Learning and Learning of Knowledge through a Joint Venture: A Study from the Entrepreneurial Firm Perspective", in *Revista de Economía Mundial*, n. 35, 2013, p. 69-70.

<sup>69</sup> Brondoni, S. M. "Corporate Communication and Global Markets", in *Symphonya Emerging Issues in Management*, pp. 17- 21.

<sup>70</sup> Goransson K., Fagerholm, A., "Towards visual strategic communications: An innovative interdisciplinary perspective on visual dimensions within the strategic communications field", in *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 22 No. 1, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018, pp. 46-66.

investors in an attempt to attract them and fulfil its mission by creating strategic visual communication tailored to specific target groups.<sup>71</sup>

The business world is constantly changing and social commitment has become one of the fundamental strategic elements to compete on the market with a long-term perspective. The companies have sensed that the achievement of their earnings lies in obtaining the respect of their customers especially as individuals and that; therefore, alongside economic responsibility it is necessary to combine social responsibility. Social responsibility is a renewed conception of the relationship between company and society; it originates from the increasingly consolidated awareness of the recent transposition from an industrial economy to an economy based on information and knowledge.<sup>72</sup> In this sense, social responsibility is not conceived as a cost but on the contrary, as an investment. The code of ethics, based on reliability and validity in terms of the real social contribution of the initiatives, is a tool that supports the company's reputation in order to create trust. Therefore, a company that shows attention to social issues is perceived as a positive entity by the reference environment and has the opportunity to arouse incentives and inspiration both outside and within the organization itself.<sup>73</sup>

In this paragraph the fundamental factors for an effective communication strategy have been examined; in the following chapters it will be shown how these were the main drivers of growth and development in such a way that Pirelli S.p.a. became a global company known all over the world.

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>72</sup> Orsi, R., “Responsabilità sociale d’impresa. Crescono le iniziative, si sviluppa la comunicazione.”, in *Rivista italiana di comunicazione pubblica*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, n. 20, 2004, pp. 140-144.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem.*

## 2. A global enterprise

Globalization supports interdependence between the economies of countries, through the trade, the movement of the labour force, the exchange of information and technologies, productive investments and flows of financial capital. It changes the corporate culture and this, in turn, changes strategies, organizations and social relationships within the factories. Thus, it happens that globalization, innovation, competition and imitation mechanisms are the cause of a change that gives rise to global companies in specific territories, which, while feeding on their culture and relying on local partners, look to the world to join very large networks. As Brondoni and Corniani state:

“Quando la globalizzazione ha toccato nel profondo la cultura d’impresa dei singoli Paesi, i global network hanno modificato notevolmente i confini competitivi di innovazione e di imitazione ed inoltre hanno trasformato la posizione competitiva di numerosi Stati Nazionale e le relazioni tra imprese globali e aziende locali.”<sup>74</sup>

Culture has to deal with the decisive reduction of the innovation leadership of the main European countries such as United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and United States. In order to change the economic approach and the way of meaning the entrepreneur of these countries, corporate cultures must leave room for other ones defined by the authors as with a very high propensity for innovation, but also capable of taking advantage of favourable market conditions and great imitation skills.<sup>75</sup>

Innovation arises from a set of conditions and moods, circumstances and moments, which are not always predictable and cannot be framed in engineering schemes; right here comes the need to observe carefully the situations and conditions in which

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<sup>74</sup> Brondoni, S., M., “Network globali e partner locali. I processi di imitazione e di innovazione nello sviluppo delle imprese globali di USA, Cina, Giappone e Sud Corea”, in *Reti, nuovi settori e sostenibilità. Prospettive per l’analisi e le politiche regionali*, eds. F. Mazzola, D. Musolino, V. Provenzano, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2014, p. 103.

<sup>75</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Locale, multinazionale, globale. Com’è cambiata la cultura d’impresa?”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/cultura-dimpresa/locale-multinazionale-globale-come-cambiata-la-cultura-dimpresa/>

innovation occurs. The research starts from the urge for companies to keep up with the times of competition and markets.<sup>76</sup>

Internationalization strategies, together with product diversification strategies, have been the main response of the most important part of the Italian production system to the long economic stagnation; as confirmed by the Ministry for Economic Development, which defines essential the role played by the international projection of companies at a time of serious contraction in domestic consumption.<sup>77</sup> These strategies are classified into:

- resource seeking, selected when a company intends to invest everything in the supply of raw materials;
- market seeking, used to expand its market;
- greenfield, which added the introduction by the company to build new units;
- brownfield, investments created in existing units.<sup>78</sup>

Over the years, economic literature has tried to give various explanations of a company's decision to "go abroad" instead of simply producing and exporting in its own country. This study shows that the companies that enjoy competitive advantages over indigenous competitors become multinationals, thanks to the possession of specific assets such as technologies or brands. The latter can be exploited efficiently even by multiplying the manufacturing plants and, which for their intrinsic characteristics or for market imperfections, it is better to keep within the company perimeter.<sup>79</sup>

In particular, the transition from trade to production by international economic actors is identified as fundamental for the consolidation of modern multinationals. Furthermore, according to the 1937 Ronald Coase model, the merit of the company's growth must be given to transaction costs. Following this theory, the origin of the formation of multinationals lies in the possibility of the company to use the raw materials available abroad and to create specific structures outside national borders, thus

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<sup>76</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Ambiente innovatore", in *Cultura d'impresa*,

<https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/cultura-dimpresa/ambiente-innovatore/>

<sup>77</sup> Cristadoro, R., Federico, S., "L'Internazionalizzazione Del Sistema Produttivo Italiano", in *Bank of Italy Occasional Paper*, no. 260, 2015, p. 6.

<sup>78</sup> Bertilorenzi, M., "L'impresa globale. Multinazionali, investimenti esteri e istituzioni (secoli XIX-XX)", in *Storia economica globale del mondo contemporaneo*, eds. Fiuman C., Giuntini A., Roma, Carocci editore, 2019, pp. 119-145.

<sup>79</sup> Ivi, p. 8.

eliminating intermediaries and suppliers.<sup>80</sup> Instead, Vernon focuses on the product cycle, in other words he observes how the multinationals, after implementing other internationalization strategies, are moving towards a productive expansion.<sup>81</sup>

According to the Dunning process, there are different reasons why a company decides to invest abroad. A first reason is given by the research for advantages in terms of production costs, deriving from the availability of cheap labour. The direct investments that respond to this motivation are aimed at placing production phases in other countries, in order to exploit the opportunities offered by a different endowment of factors and involve a vertical disintegration of the production process.

A second reason is given by the possibility of bypassing customs barriers, reducing transport costs and approaching customers in foreign markets. These investments are called horizontal direct because they are stimulated by the potential offered by the recipient country's market and tend to replicate the entire production process in a plant located abroad; in other cases, they focus on the downstream phases of the value chain to directly favour exports with a more stable presence in the foreign market.

A third type of investment is aimed at ensuring the supply of raw material or resources scarcely available in your own country. Finally, a fourth reason is the investment aimed at acquiring patents, technologies, knowledge usually through mergers and acquisitions.<sup>82</sup> The most recent literature has shifted attention to the characteristics of companies that internationalise.

Public policies to support internationalization can be classified into two types: financial services, such as the provision of subsidized credit and export- credit insurance or the acquisition of ownership shares of foreign subsidiaries, and real services such as market information, product promotion, trade fairs, consultancy and training of specialized staff.

More and more multinational companies face challenges for global integration and local reactivity; to face this challenge, international society must be managed as a coordinated network. This model consists in the relevance of an international innovation

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<sup>80</sup> Bertilorenzi, M., "L'impresa globale. Multinazionali, investimenti esteri e istituzioni (secoli XIX-XX)", in *Storia economica globale del mondo contemporaneo*, ... pp. 119-145.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>82</sup> Ivi, pp. 8-9.

network, in the global management of technology and in the ability to exploit the optimal elements of each location for global benefit. This implies that companies are increasingly dispersing their research and development structures in different countries. An R&D facility must be designed to perform three main tasks: development of the constituent technology, product development and technical support for other functions. The drivers of internationalization, the determinants of the position and the management processes are unique for each activity.<sup>83</sup>

Multinational corporations can be classified according to their investments and activities. The company that is commonly called Multinational Enterprise (MNE) makes direct foreign investments, which are managed from the main office; instead, the companies defined as Transnational Enterprise no longer have their country as the main reference market, due to the many foreign investments. Within the Global Enterprise, one's nationality is completely obscured by the global dimension of its business.<sup>84</sup>

The Pirelli Company represents a paradigm of cooperative corporate industrial relations, which has repeatedly been opposed to the conflictual one of other Italian industrial groups. The company is committed in profound transformations as a result of the competitive pressures, constantly growing, determined by technological and organizational change, the evolution of markets, the globalization of the economy. It is one of the few large private groups that have made Italy's industrial history and managed to meet the challenge of globalization.

This chapter will tell the story of the Pirelli Company, characterized by the spirit of a technological and innovative soul, always ready for new challenges, which will lead Pirelli to achieve great strategic objectives, united by a main engine that has always distinguished the company: the internationalization. In particular, the ongoing link with England and the United States will be analysed, immediately considered strategic goals of the company. It not only bears the name of the family that conceived it abroad and created it in Italy, but shares its ethics and ambitions.

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<sup>83</sup>Chiesa, V., "Strategies for Global R&D", in *Research-Technology Management*, Vol. 39, no. 5, 1996, pp. 19-25. DOI: [10.1080/08956308.1996.11671085](https://doi.org/10.1080/08956308.1996.11671085)

<sup>84</sup> Fitzgerald, R., *The Rise of the Global Company: Multinationals and the Making of the Modern World*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016, p. 13.

## 2.1 Between the first and second globalization

Towards the end of the eighteenth century countries such as England and the United States were advanced countries in certain sectors,<sup>85</sup> however it should not be forgotten that the industrial process was a complex one and each country had its own rhythms and methods of development, including Europe.<sup>86</sup> What characterizes these countries an economic financial system based on the exchange of goods, services or capital. Years later Alberto Pirelli will write:

“Il processo di industrializzazione si è svolto mentre altre nazioni già avevano preceduto l’Italia; già avevano superato le «malattie dell’infanzia»; già – almeno talune di esse – si erano formate un impero coloniale; già dominavano i mercati mondiali con una organizzazione commerciale, bancaria, assicurativa e di marina mercantile. Giovava anche alle industrie già sviluppate in altri Paesi l’esistenza locale di industrie complementari, l’utilizzazione dei sottoprodotti, la disponibilità di grandi laboratori di ricerche, la formazione di maestranze molto specializzate.”<sup>87</sup>

After the abrogation of the Corn Laws, which imposed duties on the import of cereals, the European average tariffs continued to fall throughout the fifties of the nineteenth century. In January 1860, France and the United Kingdom signed the Cobden-Chevalier treaty, which, through the "most favoured nation" clause, paved the way for further reductions on import duties across Europe.<sup>88</sup> Especially since the seventies, a great growth in international trade is achieved, also due to the great improvements in international transport achieved by trains and steamships thanks to the progressive use of steam and then of the oil. The commercial expansion, stimulated by the free movement of goods, is accompanied by massive migratory flows, also favoured by innovations in

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<sup>85</sup> Amatori, F., Colli, A., (eds.), *Il mondo globale. Una storia economica*, Torino, Giappichelli Editore, 2017

<sup>86</sup> Fontana, G.L., “Lo sviluppo economico nell’Europa del XIX secolo”, in A. Di Vittorio (ed), *Dall’espansione allo sviluppo. Una storia economica d’Europa*, Torino, Giappichelli Editore, 2011, pp. 225-329.

<sup>87</sup> Pirelli, A., “Alcuni aspetti dell’economia italiana dal 1870 al 1950”, in *Racconti e immagini della Rivista Pirelli*, no. 6, 1950.

<sup>88</sup> Toniolo, G., “La crescita economica italiana, 1861-2011”, in *L’Italia e l’economia mondiale dall’Unità a oggi*, ed. Toniolo, G., Collana storica Banca d’Italia, Marsilio Editori, p. 14.

transport.<sup>89</sup> Despite these conditions, for about thirty-five years the Kingdom of Italy does not benefit from an acceleration in growth.<sup>90</sup> The period from 1870 to 1914 is characterized both by imperialism, in which historians emphasize the connection between international trade, multinational companies and colonization. Moreover, they also emphasize a connection with the first globalization, in fact, around twenty million Europeans emigrate to the Americas and the integration process in the world economy produces, in the countries included in the global market, first a levelling of commodity prices and then also a convergence of wages.<sup>91</sup> As a result, high customs barriers are imposed, initially for agricultural products, then also for industrial products that lead to customs wars. Only free trade remains in England, while protectionism, which is the result of economic nationalism, prevails in continental Europe and the United States. In immigration countries, the birth of xenophobic movements favours racist attitudes among local workers penalized by competition from immigrants. Immigration containment measures have been introduced since the early twentieth century. Its moves from economic nationalism to political nationalism in which the idea that one's nation is superior to all the others spreads.

The wide diffusion of strongly nationalistic ideas is fuelled by the clash-taking place for colonial conquests and in particular for the partition of Africa among the various European powers, including Italy.<sup>92</sup> All this requires a rapid adaptation, cultural first, by entrepreneurs, workers and politicians, since not many European countries are ready to bring about this change.<sup>93</sup> Piketty points out how between the end of the nineteenth century and 1914, blind faith in the self-regulation of markets led to inequalities, social tensions, the rise of nationalisms, until the World War. Later, especially in the post-war period, there was a historical phase in which western governments launched social and fiscal reforms, putting a brake on disparities.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Moroni, M., "Prima e seconda globalizzazione: effetti, reazioni, prospettive", in *Bene Comune*, 2017, p.1.

<sup>90</sup> Toniolo, G., "La crescita economica italiana, 1861-2011", in *L'Italia e l'economia mondiale dall'Unità a oggi*, ... p. 41.

<sup>91</sup> Bertilorenzi, M., "L'impresa globale. Multinazionali, investimenti esteri e istituzioni (secoli XIX-XX)", in *Storia economica globale del mondo contemporaneo*, ... pp. 119-145.

<sup>92</sup> Moroni, M., "Prima e seconda globalizzazione: effetti, reazioni, prospettive", in *Bene Comune*, p.2.

<sup>93</sup> Toniolo, G., "La crescita economica italiana, 1861-2011", in *L'Italia e l'economia mondiale dall'Unità a oggi*, p. 41.

<sup>94</sup> Moroni, M., "Prima e seconda globalizzazione: effetti, reazioni, prospettive", in *Bene Comune*, ..., p. 4.



In this context, according to Fitzgerald, the new global economy is made up of two worlds that determine the emergence of the modern multinational enterprise as an economic agent. The first includes Europe and the United States where industrial production technology, consumer society and modern industrial organization reside; the second consists of non-industrialized and economically undeveloped territories, devoid of relevant markets, technologies, capital know-how and market economy institutions useful for accessing the exchanges generated by the globalization process of the markets.<sup>95</sup>

With reference to globalization, in the period between the two World Wars (1915-1945) what is called the backlash of globalization is placed, or "the sum of three setbacks, that in the 1930s led to a de-globalization. All of this led to a contraction in demand, prompting companies to adopt market control and production management strategies that lead to forms of anti-competitive organizations, such as international cartels. Later, between 1946 and 1973 thanks to the technological revolution connected to information technology and telematics that put the old Fordist system in crisis, what will be called the second globalization developed. The Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade are set up through the Bretton Woods Conference to recreate a level of economic integration by acting on currencies, tariffs and movements of capital and goods.<sup>96</sup>

The second globalization is initiated by the deregulation of Nixon and Thatcher, which remove any restrictions on the freedom of movement of capital. The transformations of the productive world and the free movement of capital, goods and services lead to an acceleration of European integration, with the consequent creation of the Monetary Union and the irreversible emergence of two large countries, namely China and India as main players in the international economy.<sup>97</sup> Businesses move freely where labor costs are lower or where workers have no legislative or trade union protection. In a global market, not only the large multinationals, but also the large and medium-sized national companies decide to relocate production abroad by competing the wages of emerging countries with the workers of the most industrialized countries. Having

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<sup>95</sup> Fitzgerald R., *The Rise of the Global Company: Multinationals and the Making of the Modern World*, ... p.15.

<sup>96</sup> Bertilorenzi, M., "L'impresa globale. Multinazionali, investimenti esteri e istituzioni (secoli XIX-XX)", in *Storia economica globale del mondo contemporaneo*, ... pp. 119-145.

<sup>97</sup> Moroni, M., "Prima e seconda globalizzazione: effetti, reazioni, prospettive", in *Bene Comune*, ... p. 4.

available a large number of migrants from less developed countries has enabled entrepreneurs to exert strong downward pressure on wages, working conditions and social protection systems for American and European workers. In this period, therefore, the global economy is therefore characterized by American hegemony, by political powers, by the strategic-military logics of the Cold War, by production expansions, which have helped to bring out the multinationals as important economic actors within the global economy.<sup>98</sup>

According to Colli, the M-form is the specific form of enterprise that in the period following the Second World War has perfectly adapted to the transnational business. In fact, a company can divide its business on a territorial basis to better implement its strategies on the various regional and national markets of the global economy. In particular, Goodyear, after the Second World War, decided to increase its foreign investments, pushing the company to create an international division. Thus was born the Goodyear International Corporation, created to expand in different countries and compete in the tire market.<sup>99</sup>

To respond to the new challenges of the global and deregulated economy, multinationals use changes in strategies but there is no lack of a return to previous ones, such as joint ventures and acquisitions or mergers, through which foreign technologies are obtained.<sup>100</sup>

## **2.2 An ambitious pioneer and his dream**

After the formation of the kingdom in 1861, Italy became a nation, encouraging a single market within the peninsula; in the meantime, technicians and capital arrive from abroad, which allow the birth of a national industry. In this scenario, the city most likely to welcome such progress is Milan. Even the figure of the entrepreneur reflects the Risorgimento period; he was born with the national State and the fate of his company depends on the success of the national company. Furthermore, he possesses ideal

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<sup>98</sup> Bertilorenzi, M., "L'impresa globale. Multinazionali, investimenti esteri e istituzioni (secoli XIX-XX)", in *Storia economica globale del mondo contemporaneo*, ... pp. 119-145.

<sup>99</sup> Colli A., *Dynamics of International Business: Comparative Perspectives of Firms, Markets and Entrepreneurship*, New York, Routledge, 2016.

<sup>100</sup> Bertilorenzi, M., "L'impresa globale. Multinazionali, investimenti esteri e istituzioni (secoli XIX-XX)", in *Storia economica globale del mondo contemporaneo*, ... pp. 119-145.

motivations, economic interests and a patriotic inclination due to cultural formation.<sup>101</sup> These peculiarities are fully found in the young engineer Giovanni Battista Pirelli, as well as the future founder of the company of the same name, with the aim of transforming reality, improving his country through industry and helping the conditions of the less fortunate classes.<sup>102</sup>

Giovanni Battista Pirelli was born in Varenna on 27 December 1848 from a modest family. First, he attended a technical school in Varenna, later he studied at the Royal Lower Technical Institute of Milan. In 1865, he enrolled in the Mathematics Faculty of the University of Pavia. At the age of seventeen, he participated as a Garibaldi volunteer in the Third War of Independence and in the unfortunate expedition to Rome. After completing this experience at the age of eighteen, he enrolled at the Polytechnic of Milan, where he completed his studies becoming one of the first graduate engineers of the university institute.<sup>103</sup>

After graduating in 1870, he won the Kramer Berra scholarship and went on a trip to Europe to learn about the most important industrial experiences of the time. While traveling in the Swiss valleys, he notes in his diary some parts of the country he is visiting:

“Istituzioni e indole del popolo s'accordano a proteggere e far progredire il lavoro. Il fabbricante, il direttore, è attivo, assiduo e amico dell'operaio, questi intelligente, operoso, maneggevole. L'accordo tra il capitale e il lavoro è pienamente ottenuto. L'armonia, l'amore, e l'aiuto reciproco ne è la benefica conseguenza. Nelle istituzioni c'è molto da imparare in quei Paesi ed io auguro al mio che industrialmente gli possa un giorno assomigliare.”<sup>104</sup>

In his diary the engineer notes sketches of unknown machinery used in weaving, meticulous descriptions of the production process of locomotives, layout of cutting-edge plants for the time. The visit that proved to be decisive for his future as an entrepreneur

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<sup>101</sup>Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997, p. 68

<sup>102</sup>Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “1872- 1910. Il futuro della gomma”, in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio I, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>103</sup>Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 21.

<sup>104</sup>Fondazione Pirelli, “La nascita di un'azienda internazionale”, in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/la-nascita-di-unazienda-internazionale/>

took place on May 12, 1871, when Giovanni Battista visited the Voigt and Winde caoutchouc factory in Berlin. His joy is evident from the words written in a letter to his friend:

“Finalmente la gomma! Dopo averle fatto la corte in tutti i modi possibili son finalmente riuscito a farmi presentare a quella ritrosa madamigella che è l'industria in caoutchouc. Ciò è successo a Mannheim. Presentazione – quattro parole – un giro nelle sale, e poi la m'è scappata. Spero di rivederla a Berlino.”<sup>105</sup>

In addition, after Berlin here is Gustave Luyckx's factory for caoutchouc articles in Brussels and then that of Mr. Casassa in Charenton in France.<sup>106</sup>

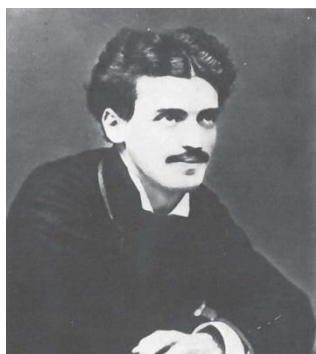


Figure 2, Giovanni Battista Pirelli in 1872.  
Source: Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.

His program is to study the nascent rubber articles industry and to take possess of the basic technologies for processing the latter.<sup>107</sup> This interest arises because, the day before graduation, a news event occurs that intrigues the young Giovanni Battista: the ship "Affondatore" lies on its side between Ancona and Falconara and, since it does not have the necessary rubber pipes for suction pumps, it cannot be lifted. The story will only be resolved thanks to the intervention of France.<sup>108</sup>

The rector Giuseppe Colombo and Professor Brioschi encourage him to follow the rubber road to satisfy his curiosity.<sup>109</sup> So in 1872, on the initiative of the engineer, the company G.B in Milan Pirelli & C. for the manufacture and sale of elastic rubber items was founded.<sup>110</sup>

In 1873, in the current via Fabio Filzi at number 21, business began in the first Pirelli factory, the "Sevesetto", so called because of the name of the river that flowed in front of the factory entrance. The rectangular walls, surrounded by the countryside,

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<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibidem.*

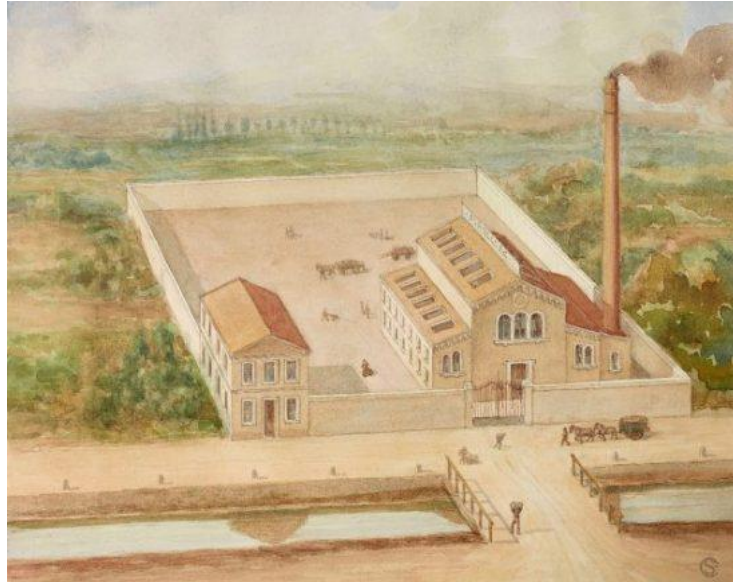
<sup>107</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 22.

<sup>108</sup> Gennarini, P. E., “Nel cervello di uno studente romantico il progetto di un'industria nuova”, in *Pirelli. Rivista di informazione e di tecnica*, n. 1, 1949, p. 50.

<sup>109</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “1872- 1910. Il futuro della gomma”, in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio I, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>110</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 21.

circumscribe the office building, the three-nave factory, the high cylinder of the chimney and a steam engine in a thousand square meters. Forty workers and five employees work there.<sup>111</sup>



*Figure 3, the first Pirelli factory in 1872.*

*Source: Vergani, G., "La storia", in Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997*

Pirelli represents the top of the productive forces that begin to detach Italy from its agricultural vocation:

“Si comprende così facilmente come l’agricoltura italiana, nonostante l’intensificazione della produzione agricola, non sia stata in grado di assorbire parte alcuna dell’aumento di popolazione negli ultimi ottant’anni. Tale aumento ha trovato uno sbocco, oltreché nell’emigrazione, nei servizi pubblici e privati, nel commercio, nelle banche e soprattutto nell’industria, pur lasciando un grosso saldo di disoccupati. Lo sviluppo industriale le ha permesso di far salire nell’ottantennio il numero degli addetti a questo settore da circa un

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<sup>111</sup>Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 23.

milione e mezzo a quasi sette milioni, e all'Italia di diventare da Paese prevalentemente agricolo un Paese a larga base industriale.”<sup>112</sup>

The first times for the company are not simple, in fact, Giovanni Battista Pirelli says that the workforce is disordered, a part of the capital is lost and a fraction of the clientele is alienated.<sup>113</sup> The company encountered the first managerial difficulties in 1874. To face these problems, the role of technical director was entrusted to the French Goulard.<sup>114</sup> The entrepreneur Pirelli soon realized that he had made an unfortunate choice, as Goulard did not prove to be up to the job, so he was fired. From this moment on, Giovanni Battista pays close attention to training, making Pirelli one of the most excellent managerial schools in the country. Corporate governance is indeed one of the cornerstones for the long-term success and for the development of all business activities, which operates in a competitive environment.<sup>115</sup>

In the spring of 1875, there was a recovery, so much so that Pirelli was awarded an order of military genius for 1600 troughs of hardened rubber for telegraphic batteries. It realizes that with rubber you can do anything, in fact through chemical and mechanical processes it is transformed into objects of vast use and known on the market with the name of rubber or elastic rubber items, such as pipes, belts and objects health. According to Giovanni Battista Pirelli:

“I mescolativi costituiscono il vero nodo gordiano dei preparati in caoutchou. [...] Poiché non essendoci scuole per essa e ben poche cose che riguardano l'argomento, si è sempre nella necessità di rivolgersi alle fabbriche e tentare di capirvi, malgrado la rigorosa sorveglianza, le ricette dei difficili procedimenti.”<sup>116</sup>

Until now, in Italy no one is aware of the rubber processing techniques, as it is not easy to find out how they are used by industries abroad. The Pirelli Company is the first

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<sup>112</sup> “Leopoldo Pirelli. Impegno industriale e cultura civile”, in *Documentario prodotto dalla Fondazione Pirelli*, <https://vimeo.com/294392714>

<sup>113</sup> Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 26.

<sup>114</sup> Ivi, p. 27.

<sup>115</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 36.

<sup>116</sup> Colombo U., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 83.

in Italy to be active in the sector, thanks to its founder who quickly moves from idea to facts and is aware of the importance of technology for the new company.<sup>117</sup>



Figure 4, *Hevea brasiliensis*, The rubber tree. Source: Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997

Abroad the rubber industry originated in 1844 when the vulcanization process was discovered, that is the association of sulfur with rubber exposed to a high temperature. When synthetic rubber begins to spread, the raw material is natural rubber, the product of the coagulation of latex of natural tall trees, originally from the Amazon rainforest and then subject to extensive plantations

especially in Malaysia. Before vulcanization developed in France and England, there were some factories for the production of few rubber items and for waterproofing fabrics. In this period it is not easy to find information on industrial processes implemented by leading companies, therefore it is necessary that new entrants commit themselves to learn them.<sup>118</sup> When Pirelli was born, the vulcanization process underwent innovations that lead to great advantages but only through the adoption of strict work discipline, acquiring and consolidating a corporate know-how.

The engineer Giovanni Battista Pirelli immediately focuses his attention on this, in fact, he works to find out more about it, he even tries to get hired by cutting-edge industries but with poor results; despite this he manages at least to recover the news he needs to persuade the Italian capitalists. From England, he buys machinery including purifier, mixer, chewing machine, calandra and imports most of the rubber from London and Liverpool.<sup>119</sup> In this regard, it is necessary to underline how, starting from this moment, Anglophilia and the English mark will always be cultivated in the Pirelli family. In fact, the sense of Pirelli's presence in England, also as a company, is to bring customs

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<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>118</sup> Ivi, pp. 83-93.

<sup>119</sup> Gennarini, P. E., “Nel cervello di uno studente romantico il progetto di un’industria nuova”, in *Pirelli. Rivista di informazione e di tecnica*, n. 1, 1949, pp. 50-53.

and values of an industrialization like the English one in a city like that of Milan, which is still provincial.<sup>120</sup>

In 1879, the first production of insulated wires to conduct electrical conduits took place. A few years later, he supplied Edison with the cables for the internal lighting network of the *Teatro alla Scala di Milano*. After about ten years, the production of tires begins which together with the cables soon become the main pillars of Pirelli production.<sup>121</sup>

In 1886, as the entrepreneur believes that the future lies in telecommunications, he builds a branch for the manufacture of submarine cables in La Spezia. At the same time, the Thompson shipyards in Sunderland deal with the construction of a cable laying ship called "La Città di Milano", which is anchored in La Spezia. The Pirelli submarine cords connect Puglia to the Tremiti islands, Mazara del Vallo with Pantelleria, the Egadi islands with the continent, with Sardinia, with Egypt, with Spain, with the Iberian peninsula and up to the Red Sea.<sup>122</sup> Being a large company and therefore based on the economy, Pirelli cannot be only national but must broaden its horizons towards an international market to support the challenge of competition. The low cost of labour of the Italian industry favours its exports and the most promising markets are those that have the same economic conditions as Italy.<sup>123</sup> With the construction of a telegraph cable, commissioned by the Spanish government, between the island of Ibiza, in the Balearic Islands, and Javea on the mainland coast, the company enters the international market for the first time<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>Bassetti, P. "Leopoldo Pirelli. Impegno industriale e cultura civile", in *Documentario prodotto dalla Fondazione Pirelli*, <https://vimeo.com/294392714>

<sup>121</sup>Colombo, U., "La tecnologia", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 86.

<sup>122</sup>Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, "1872- 1910. Il futuro della gomma", in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio I, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>123</sup>Romano, S., "L'internazionalizzazione", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 68.

<sup>124</sup>Colombo, U., "La tecnologia", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 100.





Figure 5, John Boyd Dunlop.  
Source: Vergani, G., "La storia", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.*

In 1890 Pirelli put bicycle tires into production, invented in 1888 by the Scottish veterinarian John Boyd Dunlop, perfecting them with a series of technological innovations. In the first productions, Pirelli concentrated on how to keep the tire on the wheel and how to make it easily removable. In 1894 he patented a manufacturing process which in addition to perfecting the bead anchoring system already in use, gives the tire greater flexibility by halving its weight. The new system, named Milan, will have considerable success on foreign markets, originally intended for velocipedes, it is also mounted on motorized cars.<sup>125</sup>

With the rise of the first Italian automotive industry, Pirelli patented his first car tire in 1905 called Ercole. In the meantime, he devoted himself to the study of the problem of overheating due to the friction of the plies between them, the main problem in the construction of tires. The technological evolution used by the company will allow solving the problem using new materials, such as cord fabric, machinery and control systems.<sup>126</sup> Tires represent sacrifices and delays, as the company founder says:

“Il ramo dei pneumatici esige lungo e costoso avviamento [...] è un ramo in cui non abbiamo ancora finito di seminare, perché le grandi spese ad esso inerenti e la concorrenza asprissima che i fabbricanti vanno facendosi nei prezzi ne rendono poco remunerativa la vendita su piccola scala.”<sup>127</sup>

The design and manufacture of tires for cars and heavy vehicles proves to be a technical and commercial challenge of great difficulty due to the continuous evolution of car models such as speed, acceleration and weight. Furthermore, from a commercial point of view, there is limited national demand for tire consumers since up to the beginning of the 20th century the product was identified only with some foreign brands, supported by intense advertising activity. Pirelli solves this problem by implementing advertising

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<sup>125</sup> Ivi, p. 87.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>127</sup> Vergani, G., "La storia", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese, ...* p. 32-33.

campaigns and a communication that leaves its mark, even on international exhibitions.<sup>128</sup> As rubber becomes a strategic asset, starting from 1902 Pirelli expands the company creating new factories in the major European cities. The Spanish factory in Villaneuva y Geltrù, a few kilometers south of Barcelona, represents the real turning point of the Milan Company, because it marks the start of its internationalization process.

In 1904 Alberto Pirelli, the entrepreneur's son, left New York to embark on his entrepreneurial training journey. Before leaving, he receives letters from his father in which Alberto identifies the way for the future of the company, as can be seen from these words: “Non vedrai con dispiacere l’occasione di una missione ardua e larga degna di un giovane che vuol fare strada. Buon viaggio, papà.”<sup>129</sup>

In the first thirty years of the twentieth century, New York was a fixed point in Pirelli's history. It is precisely here that the long P brand was born which accompanies the company still today and it is in 1929 that it will be listed on the New York Stock Exchange, becoming the first Italian company with securities traded on the US market.<sup>130</sup>

### **2.3 The protagonist of internationalization**

An industry determined not to lose contact with the major companies in its sector needs to study rich markets, drawing every possible lesson. Like his father, Alberto also develops an internationalist mentality, which plays a decisive role in the multinational development of the group, in the tendency to focus on moving around the world and on cooperation. Since its entrepreneurial activity, Pirelli has developed a stakeholder’s vision, according to which the conflict should not be between the different stakeholders that are part of the company, but between the company and its competitors on the global market.<sup>131</sup>

Regarding the international collaboration, Alberto claims that “l’ideale di una vigorosa espansione individualistica delle singole nazioni non può significare il disconoscimento dell’interdipendenza degli interessi di tutte le nazioni.”<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 43.

<sup>129</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “1905-1930. Come nasce un brand”, in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio II, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>130</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>131</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 129.

<sup>132</sup> *Ivi*, p. 134.

Consequently, Pirelli chooses its most feared competitor that is England. When in 1909 Alberto founded Pirelli Limited in London with the aim of coordinating the various sales organizations in the United Kingdom, Great Britain is no longer the largest industrial and financial power in the world but is overwhelmed by Germany. Despite this, London always remains the capital of the world economy and finance but above all, the place where a very young Italian company can update its knowledge and verify its international maturity.<sup>133</sup> Between 1870 and 1914 worldwide, there was a great economic and financial growth due to the classic gold standard monetary system. This together with a long period of peace and the role of the United Kingdom as the leading country of the world economy favour trade and the emergence of a prosperous capital market.<sup>134</sup>

The corporate and production reorganization of the 1920s leads to development strategies that strengthen the Company's presence internationally, create an operating entity and provide for the company's financial needs. In other words, all the operations necessary to achieve an expansion strategy.

The internationalization of the company is described in three phases, which follow one another gradually, and without the direct establishment of production companies controlled or affiliated abroad. In the first phase, Pirelli also decided to set up foreign sales branches such as those in London, Brussels and Paris in the form of a company. In the second phase, it builds other factories abroad. Finally, in the third phase it implements an expansion policy by acquiring stakes in companies, such as Electricidad's Sociedad Italo-Argentina, a provider of public services in Buenos Aires. In 1920, Pirelli established the Compagnie Internationale Pirelli in Brussels and later the Volta Company in Zurich and Pirelli Holding in Basel, the parent company of the entire foreign organization of the group. The reasons for the internationalization of society are due to the increasingly global nature of the products put on the market, the continuous search for economies of scale and to the favourable economic and political climate, which characterizes the period between the beginning of the century and the first war world.<sup>135</sup>

Being familiar with the Anglo-Saxon world, on both sides of the Atlantic, Pirelli has a clear understanding of the immense economic, financial and military possibilities

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<sup>133</sup> Romano, S., "L'internazionalizzazione", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 72.

<sup>134</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 48.

<sup>135</sup> Ivi, 2015, p. 47.

of the United Kingdom and especially of the United States. Precisely for this reason, during the first years of the conflict, Alberto Pirelli, to ensure that the Company is excluded from the blacklist of hostile companies, undertakes with substantial concessions to establish a direct relationship with the British authorities.<sup>136</sup> The British respect this agreement while the Americans are more suspicious. It can therefore be said that during the war period Pirelli enjoys a strategic position; in London reside the committees that manage the distribution of raw materials and on which the industrial programs of the Allies depend.<sup>137</sup>

In 1913, Pirelli and General Electric Company joined the company and created Pirelli-General Cable Works Ltd, which built the first of the underground cable and electrical conductor plants in Southampton, and the second in Eastleigh in 1922. In this period the fact that a successful Italian company constitutes a factory in what is the most industrialized nation in the world, confers prestige on the image of the company.



*Figure 6, The Pirelli factory in Southampton.*

*Source: Romano, S., "L'internazionalizzazione", in Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.*

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<sup>136</sup>Ivi, p. 87.

<sup>137</sup> Romano, S., "L'internazionalizzazione", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 74.

Furthermore, to strengthen its presence in the United Kingdom, with not only the production of cables but also with that of tires, in 1928, the factory for car covers and rubber shoes will be built in Burton-on-Trent. The latter will be a strategic move in that England will decide to raise prohibitive customs barriers against rubber products manufactured abroad but the outbreak of the First World War interrupts internationalization and world trade.<sup>138</sup>

Alberto speaking of the city states: “Burton-on-Trent è una cittadina sita nella zona industriale al nord dell’Inghilterra ed è nota come sede delle maggiori fabbriche inglesi di birra che i bevitori chiamano l’acqua di Burton.”<sup>139</sup> Instead, referring to cable factories in England he says: “Essi hanno costruito in singoli anni assai più cavi ad olio fluido ad altissime tensioni di quanto non ne abbia fabbricato Milano in tutta la sua vita.”<sup>140</sup>

From 1927 to 1929, Alberto leads the international chamber of commerce to which he assigns the task of gathering all businessmen from all over the world. The main goals were to study the problems connected with the development and improvement of economic activities, to eliminate the difficulties that hinder this development, to prevent and contain the conflicts of interests between the various nations, and to restore well-being among peoples.<sup>141</sup>

Arthur Balfour Lord Riverdale, head of British Confindustria, referring to Alberto says “Senza mai risparmiarsi ha viaggiato e parlato in tutta Europa e ha fatto quanto più poteva perché gli uomini si comprendano meglio tra loro, in modo che più facili e molteplici diventino gli scambi fra le nazioni.”<sup>142</sup>

The Superflex, a low-pressure tire, lighter and more comfortable, is able to work alongside international competitors. With the introduction of new technologies, the Stella Bianca tire put on the market in 1927 encompasses all the experiences of previous years, and is particularly valuable for the sophisticated tread design, so much, so that it became the most famous tire of the 1930s.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Ivi, p. 72-73.

<sup>139</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 77.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>141</sup> Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 49.

<sup>142</sup> Ivi, p. 50.

<sup>143</sup> Colombo, U., “La tecnologia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 93.

Therefore, until the great crisis, the company worked internationally to defend and develop the position it had gained in previous years and was particularly active in the United States where it found orders and funding. Alberto, in collaboration with his brother Piero, was awarded a large part of the contracts relating to the cables for the electrical interconnection of the New York and Chicago plants, obtaining American capital that allowed the extension of the Milan plants in the Bicocca area.<sup>144</sup>

On 20 October 1932, the death of Giovanni Battista Pirelli marks the end of a very important chapter for the entire society. Alberto commemorates it with the following words:

“L’ho visto competere arduamente e tenacemente nel campo industriale e posso dire che tutto il merito del definitivo affermarsi in Italia e all’estero della nostra impresa è dovuto alla perizia e all’accortezza del nostro indimenticabile scomparso Giovanni Battista Pirelli.”<sup>145</sup>

Now everything is in the hands of the two brothers; Piero becomes president while Alberto holds the position of vice-president. In the same year in Civitavecchia Pirelli built the longest submarine cable in the world 270 km long.<sup>146</sup>

After the outbreak of the African War, in 1935, Pirelli decided to sell part of the shares of the Compagnie Internationale Pirelli to a friendly company in Swiss, in exchange for investments in Italian electro-telephone companies. A strategic choice that has the aim of not losing the continuity of the Pirelli brand's affirmations on foreign markets, even if the sanctions should prevent exports of Italian products.<sup>147</sup> What allows the company to be found intact is the capital of foreign investments, which becomes Swiss while the management remains Italian.

The factory in 1938 works a particular rayon cotton yarn, ideal for large tires, which, together with synthetic rubber, is able to resist the heat.<sup>148</sup>

Pirelli conducts research on polybutadiene-based rubber and on the production of butadiene (obtained from the raw material of ethyl alcohol and alternatively of the

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<sup>144</sup> Romano, S., “L’internazionalizzazione”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, p. 76.

<sup>145</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “1905-1930. Come nasce un brand”, in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio II, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>146</sup> Romano, S., “L’internazionalizzazione”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 80.

<sup>147</sup> Ivi, p. 76.

<sup>148</sup> Colombo, U., “La tecnologia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ... p. 94.

calcium carbide-acetylene chain). After the second half of the 1930s, inside the laboratories of the Milan Bicocca plant, the development of technologies and the training of technicians took place, which would then have to put into operation the first industrial plant for synthetic rubber. For these researches, Pirelli makes use of the advice of Professor Natta who in 1963 won the Nobel Prize for the discovery of polypropylene. It can be said that Italy, thanks to Pirelli, is one of the first countries that, together with Germany, Russia and the United States, have ventured into the development of synthetic rubber, a sector defined as the most complex of the large organic chemical industries.<sup>149</sup> The only disadvantage concerns the production costs, which are duplicated, compared to those of natural rubber. In this regard, Alberto Pirelli writes:

“[...] Allo stadio naturale della tecnica la gomma sintetica è di qualità inferiore a quella naturale e risulta, in Italia, molto più cara. [...] Per essere noi, sia pure indirettamente e parzialmente, interessati in piantagioni di gomma, non avevamo, come industriali consumatori di gomma, alcun interesse; avevamo anzi un interesse contrario al sorgere di questa industria in Italia, industria d'altronde bisognosa di grandi investimenti di capitali. [...] Ma già la produzione della gomma sintetica era stata sviluppata in Russia e Germania e i nostri Ministri militari, poi anche altri Dicasteri, giudicavano indispensabile che pure nel nostro Paese si passasse alla fase industriale. Ritenemmo allora di dover partecipare all'impresa anche perché altri era pronto a dar seguito al programma governativo. [...] Se l'industria doveva impiantarsi, la Pirelli non poteva restare estranea.”<sup>150</sup>

Without any doubt, Pirelli technology has been the main source of success thanks to its diversification and internationalization. The innovations culminate after the Second World War and in this regard Leopoldo Pirelli writes:

“Non vi è dubbio che negli anni susseguenti l'ultimo grande conflitto mondiale, noi abbiamo assistito a un rapido ed eccezionale sviluppo del commercio internazionale, come probabilmente non si era mai verificato in precedenza. Naturalmente tale sviluppo non è stato

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<sup>149</sup> Giulio Natta, *Il problema della gomma in Italia*, in *Gomma*, Milano, Vol. VII, no. 3, 1942, pp. 153-171.

<sup>150</sup> Pirelli, A., *La Pirelli. Vita di un'azienda industriale*, Milano, 1946, p. 53.

omogeneo ovunque, risultando più accentuato fra certi Paesi e gruppi di Paesi piuttosto che in altri, ma si può certamente dire che esso ha interessato tutto il mondo civile con intensità crescente. Il suddetto sviluppo può essere attribuito a due ordini di cause, il primo a carattere prevalentemente economico, l'altro a carattere prevalentemente politico. [...] Fra le cause economiche vi è senz'altro da porre in prima linea la crescente e diversificata domanda di beni da parte delle varie collettività, conseguente all'evoluzione dei sistemi economici verso quelle «società del benessere» caratterizzate da elevati livelli di vita individuale e collettiva. [...] Di gran rilievo sono anche le ragioni politiche che hanno dato impulso agli scambi internazionali e che derivano dalla convinzione, prevalsa nella maggior parte dei Paesi del mondo, che il miglioramento dei rapporti fra le varie nazioni fosse strettamente legato all'intensificazione delle relazioni commerciali. [...] Le linee di sviluppo del commercio internazionale possono essere distinte secondo tre direttrici: gli scambi fra mercati ad alto livello di industrializzazione, i rapporti con i mercati a commercio di Stato, le relazioni con i Paesi in via di sviluppo.”<sup>151</sup>

The development of the *Cinturato* tire marks the beginning of Pirelli radial technology. The success is evidenced by the opening of a factory dedicated to these productions in the city of Turin. Motor racing has played a primary role in strengthening the technological innovation of tires towards performance at ever-higher safety levels. The popularity of the *Cinturato* is confirmed by the appearance in an advertisement:<sup>152</sup> “Oltre a impartire una eccezionale sicurezza, ha durata più che doppia rispetto alle normali coperture. La cintura sotto il battistrada rinserra saldamente la carcassa opponendosi agli effetti della forza centrifuga e aumenta la durata di tutto il pneumatico.”<sup>153</sup>

On August 7, 1956, Piero, the company's second pillar, passed away. Alberto assumes the position of president and is flanked by his son Leopoldo who plays the role of vice president. In the same year, a collaboration began with the American Anaconda for the distribution of cables in Mexico.

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<sup>151</sup> Pirelli, L., “Le prospettive dei mercati”, in *Racconti e immagini della Rivista Pirelli*, no.3, 1967.

<sup>152</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 106.

<sup>153</sup> Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 22.





Figure 7, The Pirellone. Source Source: Romano, S., “L’internazionalizzazione”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.

Alberto wants to commemorate the place of the first production plant by building an edifice, the Pirellone, with monumental characteristics and at the same time sober and elegant, symbol of a city that has the maximum of modernity and all the social attentions that are connected to it. In 1960 the company's offices are brought back where they were until the bombing of 1943, in front of the first plant.



Figure 8, Piero and Alberto Pirelli on the roof of the Pirellone during the construction. Source: Romano, S., “L’internazionalizzazione”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.

The skyscraper, commissioned by Alberto and Piero to Gio Ponti, represents for the family the strength of a vision, of a horizon without borders.<sup>154</sup>

In 1966 Alberto at the age of 83, resigned and Leopoldo became the executive president. The manager has always held important managerial roles on the Board, participating in the development of new products in the *Cinturato* line.

From 1965 to 1969, he modernized and strengthened the English group with new plants. In Eastleigh, it increases the

<sup>154</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “Metà ’50- Inizio ’70. La gomma è pop”, in *Pirelli, un’italiana nel mondo*, Episodio III, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

production of cables for energy; in Bishop stoke that of telephone cables, while in Carlisle it creates a new plant for the production of tires. From the mid-sixties to mid-eighties, the foreign investment in the cable sector is well distributed mainly because of the purchase of General Cable and the construction of a new submarine cable factory in Southampton in England.<sup>155</sup>

Five years later Alberto dies. Thus began the thirty-year period of Leopold.

## 2.4 The good entrepreneur

At the age of eighteen Leopoldo learns that his brother Giovanni does not want to take over the company and therefore the helm of the company will pass into his hands. After graduating from the Polytechnic of Milan, in 1951 he joined Pirelli and immediately began his internship in the various sectors of activity in Italy and abroad, because at that time Pirelli was already a large multinational, probably the first Italian multinational since the early years of the last century.<sup>156</sup> From the moment he is in command, he is defined as a person fascinated by novelties and transformations<sup>157</sup> and with a deep sense of duty that made him feel responsible because he had inherited a role and had to give back something that fate had given him as a gift.<sup>158</sup> Leopoldo is among the first to predict globalization and therefore the need to expand internationally only by increasing business volumes, in fact, it can invests in research. Its intent is to create a company consisting of a managerial environment. In this regard, he declares:

“In relazione al mutamento dei problemi devono essere mutate le caratteristiche dell’imprenditore. Le caratteristiche umane, morali devono essere oggi quelle che erano allora, invece le caratteristiche funzionali, penso che siano profondamente cambiate perché da una direzione strettamente personale in cui il fondatore, mio nonno, mio padre, facevano tutto il presidente, vicepresidente l’amministratore delegato e anche dei compiti più modesti e facevano un po’ tutto

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<sup>155</sup> Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 30.

<sup>156</sup> Claudia Ferrario, “Leopoldo Pirelli. Impegno industriale e cultura civile”, Documentario prodotto dalla Fondazione Pirelli, <https://vimeo.com/294392714>

<sup>157</sup> Antonio Calabrò, “Leopoldo Pirelli. Impegno industriale e cultura civile”, Documentario prodotto dalla Fondazione Pirelli, <https://vimeo.com/294392714>

<sup>158</sup> Tronchetti Provera. M., “Leopoldo Pirelli. Impegno industriale e cultura civile”, Documentario prodotto dalla Fondazione Pirelli, <https://vimeo.com/294392714>

nell'azienda, oggi invece c'è un decentramento delle responsabilità per cui ciascuno ha i suoi compiti, ben chiariti, ben delineati e il limite delle sue responsabilità e deve decentrare sui quadri molta parte del suo lavoro.”<sup>159</sup>

In addition, continuing in the wake of its predecessors, he says:

“[...] Soprattutto la Pirelli aveva una tradizione che delineava, come un sicuro binario, il percorso del futuro. L'internazionalità per esempio, l'andare per il mondo è una vocazione Pirelli. [...] I miei vecchi, mio padre Alberto, mio zio Piero non si sono mai accontentati del piccolo cabotaggio di essere sovrani in casa propria. Hanno costantemente intrapreso iniziative all'estero perché il mercato interno era asfittico, non aveva dimensioni che permettessero di produrre a costi competitivi rispetto a concorrenti che potevano invece contare su mercati nazionali di gran lunga più vasti e sviluppati. Le stesse esportazioni erano soggette agli inasprimenti delle tariffe doganali, alle chiusure protezionistiche. Nel 1959 le nostre imprese estere, controllate dalla Società Internazionale Pirelli, erano ormai 29 fra unità produttive e organizzazioni commerciali, dislocate in undici Paesi d'Europa e del continente americano, con 14 mila dipendenti. Ho continuato su quella strada, con l'obiettivo, proprio della nuova fase dello sviluppo, di occupare posizioni strategiche nei Paesi e mercati emergenti.<sup>160</sup> Sono 12 i Paesi in cui operiamo sono 73 stabilimenti nel complesso per un fatturato di circa 300 miliardi/ 320 miliardi con un numero totale di dipendenti di circa 60 mila unità 150 mila persone la cui vita economica è legata alle fortune del nostro Gruppo.”<sup>161</sup>

Leopoldo, together with Gianni Agnelli, represents the progressive entrepreneur mentioned in the 1960s.

In 1967, the two began working on a commission that had the task of rejuvenating the statute of Confindustria dating back to 1910; Leopoldo chairs the group. The report drawn up by Pirelli suggests that large private companies should have not only their

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<sup>159</sup> Pirelli, L., in “Capitani d'industria”, Documentario di Giulio Natta, 1963.

<sup>160</sup> Vergani, G., “La storia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 60.

<sup>161</sup> Pirelli, L., in “Capitani d'industria”, Documentario di Giulio Natta, 1963.

success at heart but also the overall progress of the country that should dialogue with smaller companies, institutions and social forces. In fact, according to Douglas North, institutions are the "rules of the game" of the global economy. In this approach, there must be a specific dialectic between organizations and institutions aimed at leading organizations with more success to adapt to institutional conditions, in order to become more appropriate to their strategies.<sup>162</sup> The principle on which the text is based will be fulfilled later but in the Pirelli factories, it is already present. In fact, in the Bicocca plant, corporate welfare is integrated with services such as cinemas, employee homes and company kindergarten. La Bicocca at the end of the sixties has 14,000 employees, and is a renowned training place. Inside the factory you can breathe the deep ethics of the Pirelli family, which as Marco Tronchetti Provera says "si basava sull'etica del lavoro, sul rapporto fra il dipendente e l'imprenditore. Rapporto che nasce dal piccolo, dal rapporto diretto tra le persone e che viene tramandato di generazione in generazione come un dovere verso gli altri che lavorano con te."<sup>163</sup>

From the summer of 1968 the workers' protests became increasingly heated, it is he himself who pushed the Pirelli board of directors in March 1969 to approve a unilateral measure to accept some of the workers' claims, including the working week of five days for all workers and the reduction of weekly working hours for equal pay. The measure, known as "decretone", which represents not only an opening towards workers in the tense Italian trade union landscape of the "autunno caldo", but also Pirelli's sensitivity, is however rejected by the workers' unions, as seen as an attempt by management to override the union forces themselves.<sup>164</sup> Furthermore, following the aforementioned proposal, the red brigades storm the company by sabotaging its production. To all this is added the imminent difficulty of the seventies in which the oil crises generate a drop in automotive demand and its related activities.

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<sup>162</sup> North, D. C. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

<sup>163</sup> Tronchetti Provera. M., "Leopoldo Pirelli. Impegno industriale e cultura civile", in Documentario prodotto dalla Fondazione Pirelli, <https://vimeo.com/294392714>

<sup>164</sup> Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali per il turismo, "Pirelli, Leopoldo", in *Archivi d'impresa*, [http://imprese.san.beniculturali.it/web/imprese/protagonisti/scheda-protagonista?p\\_p\\_id=56\\_INSTANCE\\_6uZ0&groupId=18701&articleId=131524&p\\_p\\_lifecycle=1&p\\_p\\_state=normal&viewMode=normal&articleIdPadre=131514](http://imprese.san.beniculturali.it/web/imprese/protagonisti/scheda-protagonista?p_p_id=56_INSTANCE_6uZ0&groupId=18701&articleId=131524&p_p_lifecycle=1&p_p_state=normal&viewMode=normal&articleIdPadre=131514)

For Pirelli, research and innovation are constant values for international expansion.<sup>165</sup> The economic future of the world depends on a close collaboration of all forces, while exclusivism would be at the expense of those who practiced it. To safeguard the group's competitiveness in the sector, an expansion of the market share is necessary and considering this Leopoldo chooses the path of integration in a union with the English multinational Dunlop in 1970.<sup>166</sup>

Over the years, Leopoldo and Reay Geddes, president of Dunlop, have established an excellent relationship.<sup>167</sup> The alliance between the two aims to contain the costs of the technological revolution towards the radial tire, but it also has a second goal, that is to try to integrate it with one of the three major tire manufacturers. All this is due to the wealth of know-how and innovative ability that give Pirelli contractual strength, also allowing it to conquer space on a market dominated by oligopoly. Pirelli is committed to a policy aimed at pursuing the technological update that underlies its development. Therefore research is considered the fundamental resource.

In view of a business combination, the factors leading to entering into negotiations are attributable to the fact that from a dimensional point of view in terms of both turnover and number of employees and factories Dunlop boasts a slightly higher position than Pirelli, except for profitability. In light of this, the industrial activities of the two groups are complementary. At the commodity level, Dunlop is not present on the cable market but had concentrated its production on the segment of tires and diversified products. Geographically, Pirelli is present in Europe and Latin America, while Dunlop occupies Asia, Africa, North America and Oceania. From this integration, a company called Union, which would have won third place in the world rubber market, was born. Pirelli's is a strategic aggregation formula that does not envisage the merger of the two companies but their independence as financial holding companies.<sup>168</sup>

If on the one hand the formulation of the Union would have favored the establishment of an international group, with futuristic traits, at the same time it would have left unresolved the issues concerning industrial management. In addition, Dunlop has revealed itself over time as a technologically more backward company with a lower

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<sup>165</sup> Vergani, G., "La storia", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 23.

<sup>166</sup> Vergani, G., "La storia", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ..., p. 62.

<sup>167</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015, p. 134.

<sup>168</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 135.

propensity for innovation than Pirelli. In fact, in 1981 by mutual agreement they decided to cease negotiations.<sup>169</sup>

In this regard, twelve years later Leopoldo affirms: “ Sembrava un unione ideale, ma purtroppo non resse perché nonostante la stima e l’amicizia fra gli uomini Pirelli e Dunlop, una direzione bicefala non poteva funzionare.”<sup>170</sup>

As evidence of his strategic propensity in the eighties, he tries to acquire Firestone, one of the world's major competitors in the tire sector, but this time with poor results. The failure with Firestone does not give up Leopoldo who continues to seek a global role for Pirelli achievable only through a significant acquisition or merger operation that allows it to operate in conditions more similar than those of its most qualified aggressive competitors do.<sup>171</sup>

On April 19, 1988, he completed the acquisition of 80% of the capital of the American tire company: Armtek Armstrong Tire, a diversified rubber products company based in New Haven, Connecticut, which boasts 2,700 employees. In addition, represents a marginal share in the American market.<sup>172</sup> The only purpose of this step is the opportunity to have a production base in the United States, as can be seen from the article written in 1987 by *Il Sole 24 Ore*:

“La conclusione di un accordo con la Armtek farebbe debuttare Pirelli sul mercato americano dei pneumatici. Al momento infatti il Gruppo possiede oltre oceano soltanto impianti nei cavi. Nei pneumatici la sfida lanciata da Pirelli sui mercati internazionali tocca soprattutto gli Stati Uniti. È infatti su questo mercato che si gioca lo sviluppo delle imprese europee per le quali ormai non sono più sufficienti i rispettivi mercati regionali.”<sup>173</sup>

Pirelli, in fact, before acquiring Armstrong Tires had considered the possibility of obtaining some shares of General Tire in 1987, but was overtaken by Continental, which had already made a tempting proposal. Leopoldo's determination pushed him in the nineties to try to acquire Continental too and even if he failed in his intent, the

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<sup>169</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2015, ...p. 156.

<sup>170</sup> *Il Sole 24 Ore*, 1986.

<sup>171</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 183.

<sup>172</sup> *Ivi*, p. 184.

<sup>173</sup> *Il Sole 24 Ore*, 1987.

expansionist spirit intrinsic to the Pirelli family will distinguish him forever; Leopoldo effectively expresses his way of understanding the management of a company through what he himself simplifies in ten rules.<sup>174</sup> On 3 October 1986, on the awarding of the medal of honorary member of the college of engineers, Leopoldo reads “Il decalogo del buon imprenditore”:

1. Sono sempre stato convinto che la libera impresa privata sia pilastro importante di un libero sistema e mezzo insostituibile di progresso sociale.
2. Ho sempre creduto che un chief executive officer, che anche azionista, debba privilegiare la prima qualificazione, quella di chief executive officer, rispetto alla seconda, perché i suoi doveri non sono solo verso i suoi azionisti, ma anche verso tutti coloro che lavorano in azienda, verso le comunità che la circondano, verso i Paesi (nel caso della Pirelli ben 16) in cui il gruppo operante di un libero sistema e mezzo insostituibile di progresso sociale.
3. Qualunque sia il grado di delega, il chief executive officer rimane responsabile di tutto quello che succede nel gruppo, perché è lui che ha scelto gli uomini e dato le deleghe e, quindi, li copre sempre e comunque
4. Sono convinto che fra i primi compiti del chief executive officer vi sia la continua cura della preparazione dei quadri futuri, dalla sua successione a quella dei suoi collaboratori più vicini, preoccupandosi che questi a loro volta diano al problema la stessa importanza, e così via, giù per la piramide.
5. Pur essendo il capo, il chief executive officer deve cercare di capire il personaggio umano che sta nei suoi colleghi, coi suoi problemi personali di salute o economici o familiari e deve sempre ricordarsi che, se un collega non si dimostra all'altezza dei compiti affidatigli, e lui, il chief executive officer, che ha sbagliato per primo affidandoglieli.
6. Sono convinto che un imprenditore debba essere onesto nel senso più lato della parola (non basta cioè che non rubi e non dia falsa testimonianza). Parlando di onestà in senso lato, penso ad un determinato comportamento verso azionisti e dipendenti, ma anche verso clienti, fornitori, concorrenti, fisco, partiti e mondo

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<sup>174</sup> Panato, A., A., “Le dieci regole del buon imprenditore secondo Leopoldo Pirelli”, in Il Sole 24 Ore, 2017. <https://www.econopoly.ilsole24ore.com/2017/03/26/le-dieci-regole-del-buon-imprenditore-ricordo-di-leopoldo-pirelli/>

politico. Penso che — a parte ogni principio morale — l'essere onesto paghi, sia l'imprenditore come persona sia l'azienda che egli dirige.

7. Ho la convinzione che il chief executive officer deve saper evolvere coi tempi, pur tenendo fede ai «sacri principi» cui ho appena accennato.
8. È mia opinione che l'imprenditore non debba rimpiangere decisioni prese nella convinzione di essere nel giusto e che invece nel tempo si sono dimostrate sbagliate. Mi riferisco alla unione Pirelli – Dunlop nata nel 1970 con lo scopo di far raggiungere alle rispettive attività pneumatici, una volta riunite, dimensioni comparabili a quelle dei tre grandi del settore: Goodyear, Michelin, Firestone. Sembrava un'unione ideale ma purtroppo, nonostante la stima e l'amicizia fra gli uomini Pirelli e Dunlop e in particolare fra i due presidenti, il matrimonio fallì: forse non fu in realtà mai consumato. E ciò per un insieme di ragioni: crisi Pirelli in Italia negli anni 70, poi crisi Dunlop in Inghilterra; impossibilità di gestire unitariamente; difficoltà di compenetrazione di mentalità anglo-sassone con mentalità latine. Forse un po' di sfortuna. Comunque fallì e si arrivò al divorzio. Fu per Pirelli (e anche per Dunlop) una grossa esperienza negativa: me ne sento pienamente responsabile, ma se tornassi al 1969/70, risposerei Dunlop. Non rimpiango, quindi, la decisione presa allora, anche se cercherei di consumare il matrimonio la sera delle nozze o forse — per essere à la page con i giovani d'oggi — anche qualche tempo prima.
9. Credo che l'imprenditore non debba vantare meriti che spesso non sono individuali ma collettivi. Io, se devo attribuirmi un merito, scelgo quello di essere rimasto calmo e sereno al timone nei momenti in cui la barca era in difficoltà, in cui lo scafo stesso sembrava dar segni di cedimento. Ma non sono certo stato solo nel portare la barca fuori dalla burrasca: mentre io restavo al timone, altri hanno issato nuovamente le vele e insieme abbiamo ripreso a navigare. Meglio di prima; forse benigno; perché non dire, oggi, niente male.
10. Chiudo, ricordando per ultima la prima qualità che un imprenditore deve sempre avere: cercare, cercare con tutte le sue forze, di chiudere dei buoni bilanci. Se non ci riesce una volta, riprovare. Se non ci riesce più volte, andarsene. E se ci riesce, non credersi un padreterno, ma semplicemente uno che, dato il mestiere che ha scelto, ha fatto il suo dovere.



With the unfortunate outcome of the Continental affair, a long cycle dominated by a large strategic project ends for Pirelli, winning a position of prime importance in the sector of traditional presence in the Group, that of tires.

The generational change of management brings with it the redefinition of the strategic objectives that is the definitive sunset of the ambitions of global competitors in favour of the simple consolidation of the position that Pirelli had achieved in the medium-high range of products since the end of the seventies. The strategy that focuses on the quality product, although it allows Pirelli to maintain sufficient profit margins, proves to be critical in that it brings with it a competitive disadvantage towards larger competing groups that can count on much larger sales volumes for support expensive investment in research and development.<sup>175</sup>

## 2.5 The turnaround manager

Marco Tronchetti Provera in 1992 takes over the helm of the company. Its strategy envisages technological leadership on which to set the new corporate path. His desire to revolutionize Pirelli is immediately noticeable: as soon as he takes office he notes a poster with the words "We have to be an intelligent follower", which he does not like at all; in fact, he firmly believes that in order to grow, Pirelli must follow the innovative spirit that has always accompanied it. The new CEO comes into contact with the branches around the world and unites them in a single group strategy, reorganizing the management structure.<sup>176</sup> In this regard, Provera declares:

“Negli anni bui, abbiamo ristrutturato per tornare a competere, abbiamo tagliato per rilanciarci. Il messaggio è stato capito all’interno dell’azienda e all’esterno, in Italia e là dove nel mondo, Pirelli, ha fabbriche e detiene fette di mercato. Mentre operavamo di bisturi, ci attrezzavamo tecnologicamente per riprendere la sfida, ci imponevamo tempi brevi per la convalescenza.”<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Zanetti, M., A., *I lavoratori dell’impresa globale. Le relazioni di lavoro in Pirelli tra strategie globali e destini locali*, Milano FrancoAngeli, 2003, p. 31-32.

<sup>176</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “1990-2000. Al cuore dell’innovazione”, in *Pirelli, un’italiana nel mondo*, Episodio IV, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>177</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 220.



Figure 9, Marco Tronchetti Provera and Leopoldo Pirelli.

Source: Romano, S., "L'internazionalizzazione", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.

From 1991 to 1994, the reorganization went down in history as a turnaround, overcoming the old balances and creating a constant financial balance aimed at embracing the whole reality of companies. For the group it is necessary to better focus the objectives and quickly achieve better coordination between Italian and foreign activities. Provera is preparing

to welcome Leopoldo Pirelli's legacy in a moment of great challenge but also of great opportunity.

One of the focal points of the strategy envisages that competition does not play at the dimensional level of companies but on the ability to create value and therefore on productivity.<sup>178</sup> All this determines the requalification of the product by addressing it to high-end cars and consequently positioning high-end spare parts on the equipment market.<sup>179</sup> Furthermore, managerial cohesion makes it possible to restore the company.<sup>180</sup>

In this regard, the strategy developed is the second brand. Pirelli introduces second and third brands to be launched on the European market, so that they can be positioned on a lower end of the market, made up of subjects that have demand elasticity with respect to price. An example is the agreement entered into with the United States, through the subsidiary Armstrong, by Pirelli with Sears & Roebuck, which is a main sales channel on the American market. The same thing happens with Courier in the UK.<sup>181</sup>

To verify the degree of achievement and satisfaction of all categories of stakeholders, attention to efficiency and productivity, continuous monitoring of the financial structure, communication skills and the search for corporate governance solutions functional to the strategies of the company are important. All this represents the legacy of the thought of its founder.<sup>182</sup> In this regard Marco Tronchetti Provera states:

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<sup>178</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>179</sup> *Ivi*, p. 221.

<sup>180</sup> *Ivi*, p. 223.

<sup>181</sup> *Ivi*, p. 236.

<sup>182</sup> *Ivi*, p. 244.

“La velocità di sviluppo dei mercati impone innovazione già in fase di ristrutturazione per recuperare competitività, cosa che il Gruppo oggi è riuscito a fare. Innovazione significa guardare al mercato ed ai concorrenti ed immaginare che cosa il mercato chiederà domani e porsi di conseguenza in una posizione di leadership che per un’azienda globale come la nostra è determinante. Così nei pneumatici dove resistiamo comunque produttori globali, punteremo l’accento sull’alto di gamma. Nel settore dei cavi gli sviluppi saranno le telecomunicazioni con la fotonica e nell’energia con i superconduttori.”<sup>183</sup>

Pirelli focuses its energies on the tire sector by developing the PZero line and introducing cutting-edge products such as the p6000 on the market, considered the first intelligent tire generated entirely by the computer, the protagonist of the most important sports competitions. The company is aware of the quality and technological content of the product and therefore relaunches on innovation, on the development of new processes and on the commercial drive. The cable sector is also being modernized by replacing copper with new optical technologies. The diversified activities are sold to concentrate on the core business. Confirming the prestige of the Pirelli Company is the presence of Marco Tronchetti Provera at the G7 meeting on information highways in 1995 relating to the changes that are imminent in the technological revolution.<sup>184</sup> Following an extract from his speech:

“The Pirelli Group fully agrees with the objective of creating a worldwide integrated telecommunication system, open to competition and based on common standards ensuring its interoperability. The European industry thus must get prepared to operate in a more dynamic and increasingly competitive market.”<sup>185</sup>

Pirelli wants to assert its avant-garde soul to be a protagonist in a world that is constantly evolving from a technological point of view, opening up to new ambitious challenges. First of all, a research consortium on new photonic technologies was founded

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<sup>183</sup> Il Sole 24 Ore, 1995

<sup>184</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “1990-2000. Al cuore dell’innovazione”, in *Pirelli, un’italiana nel mondo*, Episodio IV, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>185</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*,... p. 270.

in collaboration with the Polytechnic of Milan, then Pirelli acquired the cables and energy division of Siemens and the British group Bicc, specialized in cables for utilities, becoming a world leader in the sector. The latter operation highlights Pirelli's presence in the submarine cable market, a segment in which BICC has cutting-edge technology. Also in 1999, he signed an important agreement with the American company Cooper Tire, the eighth largest tire manufacturer in the world. Cooper tire opens its commercial channel in the United States to Pirelli and Pirelli, in turn, offers its partner its consolidated experience and its establishment in South America. This alliance is of major importance in the tire sector. Pirelli does not limit itself to conquering only the western world, but also expands to the Far East by carrying out important infrastructure projects.<sup>186</sup> In light of this, it is undeniable that internationality and multinationalism are peculiarities of Pirelli, which are not reflected in the history of Italian entrepreneurship.

Being an innovative company, Pirelli is dedicated to the implementation of new productions. During the mid-1990s, the company built lead insulated underground cables for electricity grids, a booming business due to the high demand for lighting in urban centers and for telephone networks, especially in the United States. The Group endeavours to constantly monitor the activities present on world markets, through study and business trips, with visits to factories of competing industries, which boast the largest markets in the natural rubber industry, such as Europe, the United States, South America and Far East.<sup>187</sup>

Significant is the interest in the growth of the cable sector with attention to the optical fibre sector, which represents a key point in the evolution of telecommunications. The restructuring foreseen by the turnaround consists in the implementation of acquisition policies especially in the United States and the United Kingdom, where the optical fibre sector has already started. Turning to tires, Pirelli looks with inferiority towards the two international players, which are the American Goodyear and the French Michelin, as if they were unattainable targets in terms of market share. In the mid-nineties Pirelli returned to the place where the founder had made his first study experiences, or in Asia. This time, however, the aim is no longer to be interested in rubber plantations but to

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<sup>186</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, "1990-2000. Al cuore dell'innovazione", in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio IV, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>187</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ... p. 38.

observe the extraordinary Chinese and Indonesian development to carry out projects in the tire and cable industry.<sup>188</sup>

Pirelli focuses in South America, particularly in Brazil, on tires for motorcycles, trucks, buses and agricultural machinery. The company continues to focus on quality products with significant technological content and this is how the flexi system is developed, dedicated to high-end cars.<sup>189</sup> The bike sector is also experiencing great development, thanks to the launch of the p5000 tregon, which has full control even on wet and snowy surfaces. Thanks to this, Pirelli is able to recover approvals in BMW, Mercedes, Porsche and Audi.<sup>190</sup>

In the 2000s, Pirelli consolidated itself as a brand known worldwide for the production of premium tires, present in sports competitions and a protagonist in diversified economic sectors.<sup>191</sup>

The constant technological research activity allows starting, in 2001, the production with MIRS (Modular Integrated Robotized System) technology, destined to modify substantially the tire manufacturing processes, and, in 2003, the mixing room with CCM technology (Continuous Compound Mixing) intended for the testing of innovative compounds and materials.<sup>192</sup>

As previously pointed out, the history of the Pirelli Group has always been based on innovation. In fact, thanks to the experience already gained in the cable sector, it wants to widen the boundaries of its telecommunications activities; this will be the reason that will push him to enter as reference shareholder in Olivetti, which owns the main stake in Telecom. Pirelli's strategy is to develop new markets and revenue sources for Telecom through the integration between telephony and content that is part of our daily lives, but this will be an ambitious goal destined not to be achieved.<sup>193</sup>

After having sold the Pirelli Broadband Solutions activities and the separation from the group of the Pirelli & C. Real Estate real estate activities, the company matures

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<sup>188</sup> Romano, S., "L'internazionalizzazione", in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 80.

<sup>189</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, "1990- 2000. Al cuore dell'innovazione", in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio IV, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>190</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, p. 283.

<sup>191</sup> Ivi, p. 289.

<sup>192</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Storia di Pirelli*, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/aboutus/storia>

<sup>193</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, "2000-2015. E il viaggio continua", in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio V, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

the decision to focus on the core business that is the tire sector thus becoming a pure tire company. The main characteristics of the core change and concern technological, commercial and economic aspects.<sup>194</sup>

Prove on the core business and the restructuring just implemented declares:

“The endgame is to have an efficient real estate arm, to be a part of the consolidation of the sector. For us it is not key to have the majority stake in a real estate company. The core activity is the tyre business. We cut 15% of our presence in Western Europe. We are increasing our position around the world where we see growth coming in the next few years.”<sup>195</sup>

It is necessary to keep up with the evolution of new technologies inherent in the automobile industry, starting from the processing methods of the raw material. Synthetic rubbers make it necessary to have high-level chemical skills, developed by Pirelli since the 1990s. The company's new goal is to create tires for sport utility vehicles with performance comparable to that of sports cars. In parallel, it also engages in the superbike championship and in over 400 motorsport championships.<sup>196</sup> Pirelli's core business and managerial action transform the company's performance. As proof of this, Pirelli will return to Formula 1 in the 2011-2013 three-year period as the sole tire supplier<sup>197</sup>

In 2008, Francesco Gori, CEO of Pirelli Tire declares: “Ora la priorità sono i mercati in rapido sviluppo dove stiamo creando nuova capacità produttiva. È necessario focalizzare l'attenzione sui Paesi in forte espansione, come ad esempio la Russia che offre interessanti opportunità.”<sup>198</sup> From this point of view, Russia is an ideal place for a diversification strategy, a potential market for the Winter range.<sup>199</sup> August 4, 2008 marks an important date as Pirelli signs an agreement with Russian Technologies Corporation for the establishment of a joint venture with the aim of locally producing approximately 4.2 million tires for cars and industrial vehicles with an estimated investment of about 250 million euros.<sup>200</sup> Referring to this joint venture Marco Tronchetti Provera declares:

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<sup>194</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 539.

<sup>195</sup> Ivi, p. 551.

<sup>196</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, “2000-2015. E il viaggio continua”, in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio V, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

<sup>197</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 651.

<sup>198</sup> Il Sole 24 Ore, 2008.

<sup>199</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 546.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibidem*

“La combinazione delle nostre tecnologie e del nostro know-how industriale con il prestigio e il radicamento di un partner come Russian Technologies può consentirci di dare vita a un modello che si è dimostrato vincente anche in altri Paesi. La lettera di intenti è un primo passo per stabilire un’importante presenza industriale di Pirelli in Russia. Un Paese nel quale abbiamo una lunga tradizione commerciale e che diventerà nei prossimi anni uno dei più grandi mercati mondiali del settore automotive.”<sup>201</sup>

Similarly, the company thinks well to move even further to the East and from 2014 it is interested in China National Tire & Rubber, controlled by Chemchina, declaring that it has chosen this company since there is no overlap and allows direct access to the Chinese market of giant tires.<sup>202</sup> Provera continues by affirming: “La nostra intenzione era di stabilizzare il segmento industriale che in Pirelli ha una dimensione non ottimale. Il futuro per questo mercato, e non solo, è l’Asia ed è lì che stavamo guardando. Pirelli ha la tecnologia, prodotti competitivi e una redditività che potrà dare valore.[...]”<sup>203</sup>

At the same time, the President of Chemchina Ren Jianxin is very happy in view of the prospect of an agreement and in this regard comments: “Siamo molto lieti di diventare partner di Marco Tronchetti Provera e del suo team per continuare a costruire insieme un gruppo di portata mondiale e un leader di mercato nell’industria globale del pneumatico.”<sup>204</sup>

Pirelli's US plant is located in Rome, Georgia. The city truly has seven hills as the much older and well-known city from which it takes its name. It was precisely because of the geographical similarities between the two cities that European settlers called it Rome. It has turned into a trading center and is now the largest city in the north-west area of the state. The link between the United States and Italy continues with the arrival of the Pirelli factory which produces the first tire in 2002, continuing to focus on the large Premium tires aimed at high-end North American cars and, in particular, the SUV market. . The factory is currently supported by the production of the new Pirelli plant in Guanajuato, Mexico. Pirelli chooses to locate its own factory in Rome because, in the

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<sup>201</sup> Il Sole 24 Ore, 2008

<sup>202</sup> De Rosa, F., “L’intervista a marco tronchetti provera. ChemChina renderà Pirelli globale L’Italia deve attrarre investimenti”, in *Corriere della Sera*, 2015

<sup>203</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>204</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 590.

meantime, a number of its major customers decide to transfer their production in turn to the southeast area of the United States; those in the area include BMW, Audi, Porsche and Mercedes, Benz and Cadillac. About 70% of the production is destined for the latter Premium producers and a significant part of the rest is destined for export outside the US market. Just as the demand from the Americans for these prestigious European brands has grown, the local production of Pirelli tires has also grown, which are made to be the same in all the structures of the world.

The Rome factory produces around 450,000 pieces per year.<sup>205</sup> In 2016 Pirelli communicates the next plans for the commercial truck and bus markets in the United States and Canada through Technical Petroleum Solutions LLC, a new company whose president is Cliff Armstrong. According to this project, Armstrong, who has twenty years of experience and responsibility roles in the Continental Tire truck tire division, will have to operate directly from Pirelli's US headquarters in Rome, Georgia. The plan is part of a global growth strategy with the aim of penetrating the US and Canadian markets. According to Cliff Armstrong, this is an excellent opportunity to introduce the historic Pirelli brand and its technological vision in the Premium truck tire segment in North America, the largest in the world. The intent is to start from the Pirelli heritage, made up of high quality products, to provide customized solutions able to meet the specific needs of North American fleets:

“Nella nostra sede di Milano ci sono team eccezionali, sia coloro che gestiscono la divisione pneumatici Truck, sia i colleghi del dipartimento R&D, sia il Marketing, a supportare i colleghi nei vari uffici e stabilimenti. È quindi attraverso un approccio integrato che intendiamo creare uno sviluppo commerciale per i prodotti negli Stati Uniti e in Canada, destinato ad un successo duraturo.”<sup>206</sup>

## 2.6 Business to Consumer

The Pirelli Group has historically operated in the production and marketing of tires, in particular in the industrial segment, which refers to trucks and vehicles intended

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<sup>205</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Produzione pneumatici SUV: il primato è a Rome, Georgia* <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/rome-georgia-southern-barbecue-e-suv-sui-sette-colti>

<sup>206</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Oltre 140 anni di performance eccellenti sbarcano in America*, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/oltre-140-anni-di-performance-eccellenti-sbarcano-in-america>



for agricultural use, and in the consumer segment, which instead regards cars and motorcycles, with a distinctive positioning on the segment high value. It is an iconic brand globally recognized.

Pirelli returns to the Stock Exchange on October 4, 2017, following a reorganization process that has led to the separation of the industrial business and the focus on the Consumer business, enriched with new skills also through the creation of new departments and businesses. The success of this decision is made known both by the letter addressed to the stakeholders of President Ning Gaoning:<sup>207</sup>

“Cari Stakeholder, Nel competitivo contesto del 2018, che ha visto il settore automotive non immune alle incertezze dell’economia globale, Pirelli ha dimostrato un’eccezionale resilienza rispetto ai competitor, confermando la validità della sua strategia, elaborata negli ultimi anni, focalizzata sui prodotti High Value per auto di alta gamma, moto e biciclette. La scelta di diventare l’unico produttore di pneumatici dedicati esclusivamente al segmento Consumer si è quindi rivelata vincente e ha consentito di capitalizzare il grande patrimonio industriale dell’azienda, migliorando la forza di un brand già prestigioso e rafforzandone la leadership tecnologica. Il posizionamento di Pirelli ai vertici del mercato non può prescindere dal suo costante impegno nell’innovazione tecnologica. L’azienda vanta, infatti, uno dei più elevati livelli di investimento del settore in Ricerca e Sviluppo ed è all’avanguardia nella tecnologia legata ai pneumatici connessi. [...] L’efficacia del modello di business e la cultura di impresa di Pirelli hanno alla base un modello di governance ispirato alle best practice internazionali.”<sup>208</sup>

Moreover, from the letter addressed to the same interlocutors as Vice-President Marco Tronchetti Provera:

“Cari Stakeholder, nel 2018 l’unicità del nostro modello di business, focalizzato sul segmento High Value, ci ha consentito di rispettare i

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<sup>207</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Storia di Pirelli*, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/aboutus/storia>

<sup>208</sup> *Annual Report 2018 – Lettera del presidente*, Pirelli & C. S.p.A., Milano, p. 7.

nostri target di profittabilità nonostante il rallentamento del mercato automobilistico. A sostegno della redditività del gruppo, infatti, siamo intervenuti accelerando la focalizzazione sull'High Value, che rappresenta il 64% del fatturato (57,5% nel 2017) e l'83% della profittabilità, segmento meno esposto ai cicli economici.”<sup>209</sup>

The business model on which Pirelli is based relies on tire development on constant collaboration with the manufacturers of Auto Prestige and Premium, which allows for an integrated process that goes from the car manufacturer to the end customer, to obtain products that best meet the needs and tastes of the consumer. This is made possible by the fundamental role that Pirelli attributes to R&D activities, which represent the cornerstone of Pirelli's ability to meet the demands of car manufacturers and to support the evolution of technological trends and consumer habits. The partnerships with the manufacturers allow Pirelli to have a wide-ranging and complete vision of the technological innovations that these companies intend to introduce in their products, before they are launched on the market.<sup>210</sup> Therefore, Pirelli can thus plan its production activities and short and medium-term investments, especially in R&D activities. Parallel to the product development activities, careful and constant monitoring of the performance of the world car and motorbike market is carried out, focusing above all on the trend of new vehicle registrations, usually directly linked to the rate of growth of the economy in the various countries.<sup>211</sup>

In addition, Pirelli is able to make a medium and long-term forecast with respect to production in the original equipment sector, which must be consistent with the development cycles of new cars and with the trend of registrations.<sup>212</sup> A good corporate culture, in fact, also feeds on the information that comes from outside the company, such as stresses, provocations, attentions, pushes and brakes that constitute for the company as many food for thought and innovation, data useful for better production management, for a higher relationship with the staff.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>209</sup> *Annual Report 2018 – Lettera del Vice Presidente Esecutivo e CEO*, Pirelli & C. S.p.A., Milano, p. 11

<sup>210</sup> *Annual Report 2017 - Relazione degli amministratori sulla gestione*, Pirelli & C. S.p.A., Milano, pp. 49-50.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>212</sup> Documento di Registrazione Pirelli & C. S.p.A., 2017, pp. 219-220

<sup>213</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Segnali dal mondo per una buona cultura d’impresa”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/cultura-dimpresa/segnali-dal-mondo-per-una-buona-cultura-dimpresa/>

In addition, constant monitoring of the evolution of the legislative and regulatory landscape allows to anticipate possible developments in the regulations of the markets in which Pirelli presides and the product development activities, in order to seize potential market opportunities determined by the change in regulatory regulations. All this allows satisfying the needs of the manufacturers and, ultimately, the end customer, by launching several new product lines every year or improving existing ones on an incremental basis. All of this allows the Group to be among the market leaders with an offer of innovative tires and represent an effective barrier to the entry of new competitors into the High Value tire market.<sup>214</sup>

In conclusion, over the years Pirelli has achieved a distinctive positioning and today holds a leading position in the Prestige tire sector, with a share of more than one third of the global market in terms of volumes, and in the radial sector of the spare parts for motorcycle tires. Pirelli is also a leader in Europe, China and Brazil in the market for spare parts for New Premium tires for Auto and Premium. Its strategic positioning in a profitable and fast growing segment, its production and global sales structure, focused on Pirelli High Value, make it one of the first multinationals in the world with a solid international presence since the early twentieth century. In fact, the Company serves over 160 markets grouped in six regions: Europe, NAFTA, APAC, LATAM, MEAI, and Russia & CIS.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>214</sup>*Annual Report 2017 - Relazione degli amministratori sulla gestione*, Pirelli & C. S.p.A., Milano, pp. 49-50.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibidem*.

### 3. Pirelli's strategic communication

Pirelli communication represents an exemplary case of intelligence and vision in the relationship between business and culture, through advertising campaigns, design responsibility, sense of institutional communication, up to the new advertising languages. The advertising was initially created by a house agency of the group in which great artists of the time collaborated.<sup>216</sup> Therefore, Pirelli continues its path of innovation also in communication and thus approaches the most radical marketing strategies that lead to large and powerful international agencies. Thus were born the global campaigns, represented by new figures from contemporary mythology and by great protagonists of cinema and sport, who retrace the company's important innovative choices.

The company's messages are not limited to being mere suggestions for purchases but, more importantly, tools for building verbal, sensory and cognitive relationships through which the company identifies new interlocutors, interpreting new future scenarios.<sup>217</sup> Communication is the main means by which Pirelli decides to make its brand identity perceived, reaching directly to the consumer's heart; this occurs not only by communicating its technology and innovation, but also by becoming part of its everyday life, capturing its most salient features.

The communication strategy that is pursued over the years is innovative; it is not limited to the visual communication described above but follows the cultural evolution of the world. The result is communication that is attentive to culture, which is not reserved for a niche audience but can involve a wider audience; it is informative, educational, supportive and engaging. Pirelli manages to be present even in the leisure time of its customers, engaging in sports partnerships, with which it is able to spread a message quickly and effectively to fans. Furthermore, it can be said that the aforementioned company is also very attentive to social problems and global policies. Especially in recent years, it develops a strategic communication that favors the issue of social responsibility, road safety and environmental sustainability.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>216</sup> Colin, G., "La creatività Pirelli. Pirelli e le metamorfosi della pubblicità", in *Corriere della sera*, Milano, 2017.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibidem*.

### 3.1 The birth of an international brand

The long P was born in 1908, which has represented the group logo since ever. The idea was born in New York with the intent of the Pirelli representative in the USA to give a distinctive sign to differentiate Pirelli products from the competition. In particular, the graphic idea originates from the characteristic of Piero and Alberto Pirelli themselves, who precisely use an elongated P in their signature. Today the Pirelli brand is one of the best known in the world and its economic value is estimated at 2.27 billion euros.<sup>219</sup> It lays its foundations on a passage of languages, styles and forms of communication within an evolution of advertising strategies, techniques and languages.

Pirelli communication is always the protagonist, starting from analog to digital technology, as demonstrated by the creation of a long P made up of 140 cars shot at 85 meters high, and one of the first advertising experiments made entirely digitally with the 1981 "Pirellibility" spot.<sup>220</sup>



*Figure 10, "Pirellibility" spot of 1981.  
Source: Fondazione Pirelli: "La Pubblicità con la P maiuscola"*

Pirelli's way of communicating begins from the long and promising season of great graphic designers and artists, then passing through traditional media such as TV and cinema, and culminating with the web. Among the supporters of this communication there

<sup>219</sup> Quotidiano digitale affaritaliani.it, "Pirelli: una storia lunga 140 anni", 2012, in [https://www.affaritaliani.it/sport/pirelli-una-storia-lunga-140-anni.html?refresh\\_cens](https://www.affaritaliani.it/sport/pirelli-una-storia-lunga-140-anni.html?refresh_cens)

<sup>220</sup> *Ibidem.*

are great protagonists of the cinema such as Paola Brondoni portrayed for the advertising poster for the Pirelli "Hevea" rubber overshoes, so called in tribute to the waterproofing properties of latex, produced from the rubber tree.<sup>221</sup> Andrea Imperiali, head of the Pirelli brand, recalls how the idea of entering the world of fashion arises from the observation of the wide variety of promotional catalogs that the company uses for the benefit of its dealers in different countries:

“La scelta della linea di scarpe costituisce un’unificazione dei cataloghi e nello stesso tempo un’ottima metafora del pneumatico e delle sue caratteristiche. L’abbinamento ad un prodotto poco attraente come il pneumatico a linee di moda, che trovano grande successo tra i consumatori, ha la sua origine nella forza del brand Pirelli e costituisce un’ulteriore dimostrazione della stessa. Pur facendo parte dello stesso mercato è più difficile pensare a una linea d’abbigliamento con il brand Michelin o Firestone.”<sup>222</sup>

In 1952, Lucia Bosè promoted the Pirelli imitation leather suitcase, while Marilyn Monroe, smiling on the beach, was photographed for the 1952 advertisement for swimsuits in Lastex Pirelli. Then Sharon Stone, in the spot "If you want to drive, really drive", in which the actress gets off the plane and gets into the car skims a Pirelli tire; and Sophia Loren, on the covers of the magazine "Vado e torno" over the years Sixties and in the 2007 edition of the famous Calendar.<sup>223</sup>

Between the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century, advertising poster designers created the basis for what would later become modern visual communication of the product. In fact, the greatest pre-war illustrators carry out the propaganda of Pirelli products, with a genius also fueled by the many innovative products that the rubber industry put on the market in those years. Giuseppe Cappadonia was responsible for the sketch for the Marca Stella heels, adjustable to the shoe according to consumption and featuring a pixie. The waterproof overcoats instead inspire Giorgio Tabet in the design

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<sup>221</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Un Oscar “di gomma”. Attrici testimonial Pirelli”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/un-oscar-di-gomma-le-attrici-testimonial-per-pirelli/>

<sup>222</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 562.

<sup>223</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Un Oscar “di gomma”. Attrici testimonial Pirelli”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/un-oscar-di-gomma-le-attrici-testimonial-per-pirelli/>

made in 1929 for the women's trench line, in which simplicity, elegance and a wise use of colors stand out. Nino Nanni, in 1925, created the amazing sketch for the Pirelli Superflex Cord. In the same artistic climate, Renzo Bassi places himself and in the following years starts advertising campaigns for Stella Bianca tires. Thus, the avant-garde of the poster designers who make their talent available for Pirelli products starts with new stylistic canons and graphic suggestions to explore.<sup>224</sup>

Reviewing a figurative history of Pirelli advertising from the end of the last century until today means retracing the history of Italian advertising graphics, but that is not all: it also means retracing the history of the figure of aesthetics as manifested in the mass media and social and economic history.

The Pirelli skyscraper that the Milanese continue to call Pirellone is testimony to the value and sense of a social role. The construction of the skyscraper represents Pirelli's global approach to a new industrial world, depicted by architectures that outline the future city skyline. Industry historians place the Italian economic boom between 1958 and 1963. Since 1956, the scaffolding that protects the Pirellone shipyard has been used as walls on which to hang signs and symbols of a company that wants to communicate with Milan and with his community. The building was completed in 1960 and is celebrated by the international press as a technically and aesthetically exceptional work; in fact, the Pirelli skyscraper is the tallest reinforced concrete construction in Europe and the third in the world. It is a symbol of a Milan that creates and produces.<sup>225</sup>

In the fifties, graphic designers and designers found fertile ground in the aforementioned city in order to set up advertising works with a strong design approach, to make communication clear and impose the graphic as a recognizable sign, to use clean lines and perfectly in harmony with the context.

Right on, the twenty-fifth floor of the Pirellone, the Milanese photographer Ugo Mulas works with Arrigo Castellani, head of the Pirelli Propaganda Department and director of the Pirelli Magazine. The magazine also observes Italy and the world from the top of the skyscraper; precisely the Dutch photographer Arno Hammacher sold on the

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<sup>224</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "La comunicazione visiva Pirelli tra le due guerre: l'epoca dei cartellonisti pubblicitari", in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/la-comunicazione-visiva-pirelli-tra-le-due-guerre-lepoca-dei-cartellonisti-pubblicitari/>

<sup>225</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Pubblicità e cinema: il Pirellone diventa un simbolo", in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/pubblicita-e-cinema-il-pirellone-diventa-un-simbolo/>



Pirellone peak in 1959 for the immortal in black and white of the work of the "Man and the skyscraper", published in the magazine in the same year.<sup>226</sup>

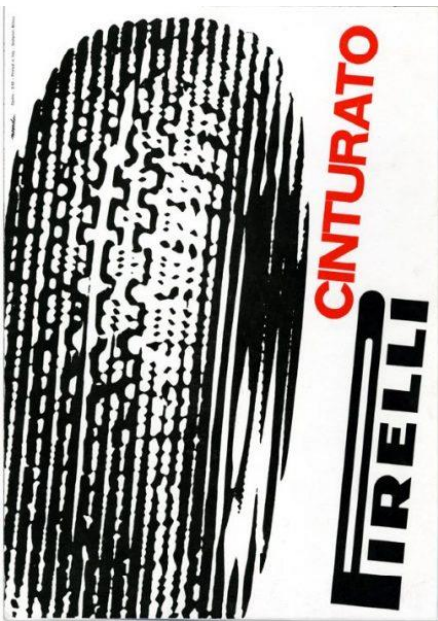


Figure 12, manifesto of the Cinturato, Noorda language.

Source: Fondazione Pirelli: "Linguaggio Noorda. Stile e creatività in Pirelli"

In 1961 Pirelli appoints art director the Dutch artist Bob Noorda to whom it had already commissioned a large amount of works including the poster for the "Cinturato" of 1959 which represents a wheel that folds to the right. In addition, he collaborates with Mulas for a catalog of Pirelli raincoats set right on the Skyscraper, and designs the advertising campaign for the "N + R" and that for the "Rolle" tire.<sup>227</sup> In this regard, Noorda claims:

“Quando arrivai in Italia gli industriali affidavano ancora la pubblicità a illustratori e pittori. Siamo stati tra coloro che hanno introdotto la grafica moderna, l’immagine coordinata aziendale, che è un misto di architettura d’interni aziendali, di design e di pubblicità.”<sup>228</sup>

Noorda is capable of expanding space and opening up to color. In his works, the lines become more elastic and the strength of black is attenuated gradually yielding to the use of shades of gray; his is an advertisement called "soft" because of the way it generates sensations of lightness as in the case of the advertisement for the "Palla dei Campioni". In other cases, such as in the advertising of straps for threshing machines, the graphic element multiplies creating space-time dilations and giving the image the idea of movement.<sup>229</sup> The Pirellone appears even in the last shots of the Pirelli Carousels such as the misadventures of Mammut, Babbut and Figliut of 1963-1964.<sup>230</sup> Whether for the Cinturato tire or the wonderful Foam rubber, the universally known symbol of the "Centro

<sup>226</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>227</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Linguaggio Noorda. Stile e creatività in Pirelli", in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/linguaggio-noorda-stile-e-creativita-in-pirelli/>

<sup>228</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>229</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>230</sup> Libreriamo, "La pubblicità con la p maiuscola. Pirelli, la 'P lunga' che ha fatto la storia della pubblicità in un volume celebrativo", in <https://libreriamo.it/libri/pirelli-la-p-lunga-che-ha-fatto-la-storia-della-pubblicita-in-un-volume-celebrativo/>



Pirelli" acts as a guarantee for the product. The building is also immortalized in many films such as Michelangelo Antonioni's *The Night* and Carlo Lizzani's "La vita agra" from 1964.<sup>231</sup>

In the Castellani's office, Mulas also meets the graphic designer Pino Tovaglia. The long collaboration between Tovaglia, a young and rigorous advertising graphic designer, and Castellani, director of Pirelli Advertising produces some of the most famous and ingenious pages in the history of visual communication of the "P Lunga". Pino Tovaglia began working with Pirelli in 1957, when Castellani hired him together with five other artists such as Antonio Boggeri, Franco Grignani, Erberto Carboni, Ezio Bonini and Bob Noorda to sign a multi-hand tire advertising campaign. The style of Tovaglia, made up of clean lines, no concessions to the essential and a preference for black and white, proves to be successful especially in view of the following decade, in which in full pop art climate, it finds the point of maximum expressiveness in the advertising campaign for the Cinturato tire entitled "A journey, but" from 1966. The following year, Tovaglia together with Roberto Menghi created the Pirelli stand located in the Paris Motor Show. The result is an almost hypnotic sequence of black and white lines to suggest the concept of the "radial", interrupted by a sort of red "heel", which guarantee a vision of the Cinturato as powerful as it is immediate. The advertising campaign for the "flags" with which the Pirelli Cinturato is known in all the countries of the world only by stylising the national flag, and the cover of the Pirelli Magazine n. 3 of 4 February 1968.<sup>232</sup>

In 1970, the tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the Pirellone, the Belgian painter Folon portrays it for the magazine and Dino Buzzati tells of the "Piccole storie" that help immortalize the skyscraper in its "Pirellian" years.<sup>233</sup>

In the business-economic context, storytelling is a discipline that uses rhetoric and narratology to tell the story of the company, using it as a persuasive communication strategy. Storytelling theory was developed by Benjamin Walter in 1936, assuming that the arrival of modern media such as newspaper printing, radio and cinema had

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<sup>231</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Pubblicità e cinema: il Pirellone diventa un simbolo", in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/pubblicita-e-cinema-il-pirellone-diventa-un-simbolo/>

<sup>232</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "La P lunga essenziale e "pop" di Pino Tovaglia" in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/la-p-lunga-essenziale-e-pop-di-pino-tovaglia/>

<sup>233</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Una redazione per raccontare l'impresa", in *Cultura d'impresa*, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/una-redazione-per-raccontare-limpresa/>

disconnected people from the social relationships they were used to. In this regard, he writes:

“Less and less frequently do we encounter people with the ability to tell a tale properly. More and more often there is embarrassment all around when the wish to hear a story is expressed. It is as if something that seemed inalienable to us, the securest among our possessions, were taken from us: the ability to exchange experiences. One reason for this phenomenon is obvious: experience has fallen in value. And it looks as if it is continuing to fall into bottomlessness.”<sup>234</sup>

Over the years, there is an ever-increasing trend towards a narrative turning point that expands up to the company's management and organizational history. According to scholars, a growing interest in historical perspectives has emerged. The term "history", however, is often used by management and organization scholars in a variety of ways to cover a range of different concepts and methods such as time, the past, timelines, longitudinal studies, process philosophy, and evolutionary theory. Basically, they identify the state of narrative as one of the most important differences between historians and organization theorists, in the dimension in which historians are concerned about the construction of narrative, while organization theorists subordinate narrative to analysis.<sup>235</sup>

Within management and organization, research is made up of the performative element of narrative, or the creation and success of the creation of the historiographic product. According to Popp and Fellman, historians perceive themselves as narrative historians who create access to knowledge, understanding and perhaps even explanations of past events by writing stories about these events. For these historians, narratives are therefore not only a form in which they represent the past but the theoretical and epistemological way of accessing knowledge of the past. The corporate history community finds its way into the paradigmatic battles associated with narrative / linguistic turns. As Tom and Wilson say:

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<sup>234</sup> Benjamin, W. “The Storyteller”, in *Illuminations*, eds. W. Benjamin and Hannah Arendt, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1968 p. 83-34.

<sup>235</sup> Mordhorst, M., Schwarzkopf S., “Theorising narrative in business history”, *Business History*, 59:8, 1155-1175, DOI: 10.1080/00076791.2017.1357697

“In common with most historians, the business historian is interested in discovering truth, through the processes of verification, authentication and replication. With such a professional objective in mind, adopting an epistemological position that rejects the possibility of objective truth can only frustrate the enterprise. So, if business historians have reason to doubt the possibility of objective truth, they have every professional incentive to put such concerns to one side. ‘I will spend six months in the archives, but I don’t expect to be able to prove anything as a result’ or ‘here are my findings, but I don’t believe they are true (or they are just one of several equally valid stories)’, are neither statements of self-motivation, logic, nor mechanisms for enhancing a research career.”<sup>236</sup>

The return of narrative in traditional history coincides with the advent of the cultural turning point and the effect of linguistic settlement. Historical knowledge and intuition are created in and through language. So corporate history has a lot to offer to its adjacent disciplines, in particular business historians in general tend to study how narratives create organizational and social stability.

Narratives can be created for different purposes and at different levels and are able to restore political, geographical, cultural, religious and historical contexts. In this regard, historians associated with the "Copenhagen School" of business history have begun to identify in the historiographic product an opportunity to project the authenticity of an organization, through constructivist approaches more inclined to culture.<sup>237</sup>

Today artists such as Stefan Glerum or Pokras Lampas are called to illustrate Pirelli's Annual Reports. In fact, in 2010 the Pirelli Group decided to publish its financial statements in an original way, highly appreciated by stakeholders, creating a mix consisting of not only numbers, literature and art, but also using personalities from the world of culture at an international level. In 2012, for example, the Annual Report makes use of the New Yorker cartoonist, Liza Donnelly, who using the graphic form represents ten words chosen by university students from different parts of the world invited to identify terms that express the most significant values for their future. The street, mobility

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<sup>236</sup> Toms, S., and J. Wilson. “In Defence of Business History: A Reply to Taylor, Bell and Cooke”, *Management & Organizational History* 5, no. 1, 2010, p. 111.

<sup>237</sup> Mordhorst M., Schwarzkopf S., “Theorising narrative in business history”, *Business History*...1155-1175.

and multiculturalism, typical elements of Street Art, are the protagonists of 2014. The most famous budget so far is that of 2018. In fact, on the occasion of the 25 years of “Power is nothing without control”, the payoff that identifies Pirelli all over the world, the Annual Report is enriched with images that evoke the concept. In addition, three internationally renowned authors such as Adam Greenfield, Lisa Halliday and JR Moehringer, compose writings, which offer different interpretations of the slogan through the dimension of technology, sport and culture.<sup>238</sup>

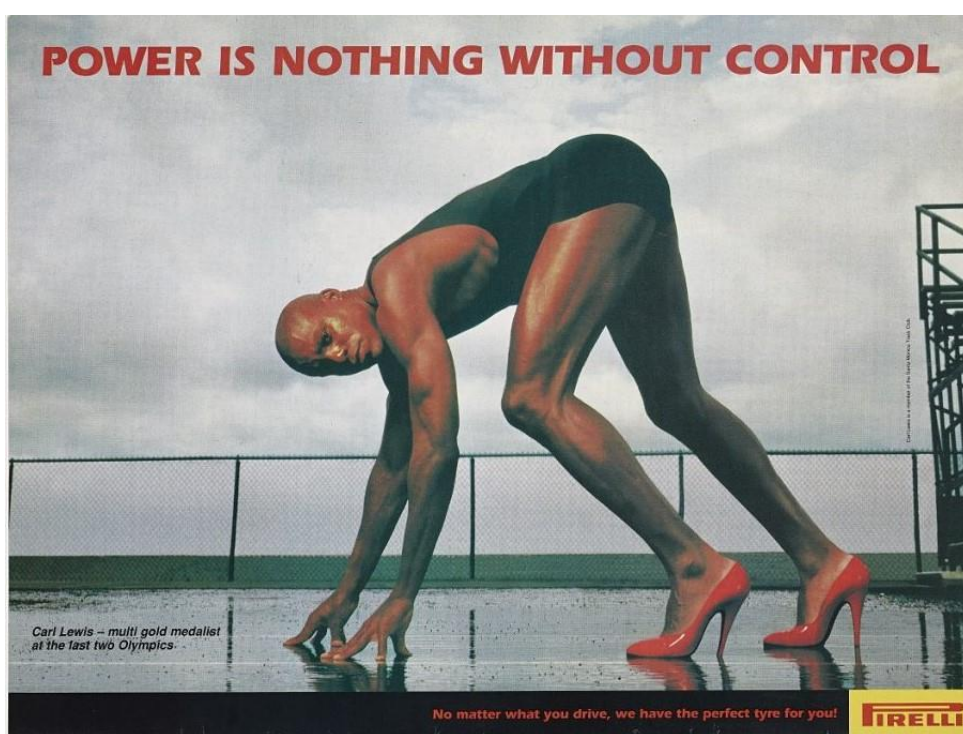


Figure 13, the "Power is nothing without control" advertising campaign portrays Carl Lewis in the classic starting sprinter position, wearing red shoes with high heels, which later became legendary and kept at the Pirelli Foundation..

Source: Vergani, G., "La storia", in Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese, Milano, Libri Scheiwiller, 1997.

<sup>238</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Gli annual report pirelli fra cultura e innovazione*, 2019, [https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/gli-annual-report-pirelli-fra-cultura-e-innovazione?search=annual%20report%202020&\\_ga=2.82651346.536798354.1589624750-1570158091.1584099125](https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/gli-annual-report-pirelli-fra-cultura-e-innovazione?search=annual%20report%202020&_ga=2.82651346.536798354.1589624750-1570158091.1584099125)

### 3.2 The Cal

Coherent with the company's mission, Pirelli's corporate culture anticipates themes and topics; a tangible sign of this mission is the Pirelli Calendar which soon became an icon- first English and then for the whole world. The first edition of the Pirelli Calendar dates back to 1964, the year in which Derek Forsyth, a young man who works for Pirelli in England, proposes to the top of the English branch to make a calendar. After receiving approval for his project, Forsyth involves photographer Robert Freeman in the implementation of the initiative. The first calendar has Majorca as its setting and one of the first two models is Freeman's wife. The Calendar is successful because it is conveyed in the circle of friends of the two young people that includes characters who would have become icons of their time. The classic and modern beauty of the woman's body, from real to mythological forms, represents a highly effective advertising campaign, which immediately attracts the attention of consumers for the products and the brand; moreover, it follows the declination of the different ideas of beauty in the various geographical contexts in which the company operates.

Even the different settings of the Calendar take on a meaning of attention to the specific characteristics and peculiarities of the different local communities of the places where society is present. In fact, Pirelli wants to approach the public through an immediate, more pop language, which through the exaltation of the female figure interprets the transformations of society, such as the evolution of customs and style.<sup>239</sup> Pirelli wants to convey to its stakeholders a message of global excellence and quality, testifying to its ability to be a global and successful economic entity, capable of enhancing its brand. The history of the Pirelli calendar can be divided into three periods. The youth years of "The Cal" are characterized by the growing success of the Beatles, rock music, but also by youth protests and pacifist mobilization against the war in Vietnam. The models are mostly young beginners, photographed against the backdrop of some of the most evocative and exclusive natural scenarios. In 1968, Harri Peccinotti was inspired by the poems of Elizabeth Barret Browning, Allen Ginsberg, Ronsard and the following year he stole the shots on the beaches of California; in 1972, Sarah Moon, first female photographer, broke some taboos of her time.

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<sup>239</sup> Direzione Comunicazione Pirelli, "Metà '50- inizio '70 La gomma è pop", in *Pirelli, un'italiana nel mondo*, Episodio III, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/pirelli-history>

The cessation of publications, in March 1974, aroused great clamor, an evident sign of the growing success of the Pirelli Calendar, which continues to live in the following decade in a series of books, collections and anthologies published in different languages. The most famous ten-year volume of "The Cal" was published in 1975.<sup>240</sup>

In 1984 the rebirth of the Calendar began and it was led by the new artistic director, Martyn Walsh, who, to return to the origins, included in the photographs the main product of the group or the tire. In 1987, Terence Donovan created the first calendar entirely dedicated to the colored Venus. The following year, Barry Lategan for the first time included a male protagonist in a purely female landscape. In 1990, Arthur Elgort created the first all-black and white Pirelli Calendar, dedicated to the Olympics and to the German director Leni Riefenstahl. In 1993, Pirelli communication imposed itself internationally with highly successful advertising campaigns and the Calendar became one of the key tools for communicating the Group's renewed image. "The Cal" abandons the representation of tires, returning to being pure artistic expression without constraints or conditions. Herb Ritts inaugurated in 1994 the new season of "The Cal" entitled "A Homage to Women" with the aim of representing women of the nineties. The latter are proud, seductive and beautiful women inside.<sup>241</sup>

From 1994 to today, "The Cal" has established itself as a cult object, capable of making a trend, also representing stars of the world of entertainment both Italian and international; Bruce Weber also dedicates some shots to male movie, song and sports stars such as Robert Mitchum, John Malkovich, Kris Kristofferson, B.B.King, Bono and Richie La Montagne. Patrick Demarchelier was responsible for the first creation on the Asian continent. The protagonist of The Call 2009 is the environment. Peter Beard's shots convey the photographer's thought, which states: "My real concern is the destruction of nature on a global scale. We've totally lost track that it is the very foundation of survival."<sup>242</sup> Set in Botswana, between the Okavango delta and the Kalahari Desert, the

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<sup>240</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *La storia. Le tre vite di "The Cal"*, 2019, <https://pirellicalendar.pirelli.com/it/le-tre-vite-di-the-cal>

<sup>241</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>242</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Life as a work of art by Peter Beard*, 2020, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/en-ww/life/life-as-a-work-of-art-by-peter-beard>

Beard Calendar is a written, drawn and told diary in which seven models have the task of reconnecting a dialogue between humankind and elements of nature.<sup>243</sup>

The 2010 edition is entrusted to the American photographer Terry Richardson, known for his provocative and transgressive style that portrays provocative girls; the creative Karl Lagerfeld, artist, esthete and multifaceted figure, signs the next edition. Lagerfeld gives birth to "Mythology" a calendar that reflects his passion for the legends and myths of Greco-Roman mythology. The author of the 2013 edition of "The Cal" is Steve McCurry, one of the world's most famous photojournalists, who talks about the social and economic transformation of Brazil, where women are committed to supporting non-governmental organizations, foundations and humanitarian projects.

In 2014, to celebrate 50 years of "The Cal", Pirelli chose not to produce a "2014 Calendar", but to show, for the first time, the 1986 Pirelli Calendar created by Helmut Newton and so far kept in the Historical Archive of Society. The operation was also possible thanks to the long reconstruction work carried out by the Pirelli Foundation. Peter Lindbergh's ability to bring elements related to the industrial environments of his childhood is well known. His goal is to transfer technology and industry-related aspects to the 2017 Calendar, making numerous shots at the Pirelli industrial center in Settimo Torinese. In 2016, Annie Leibovitz's Calendar identifies the woman as the bearer of positive messages. The American photographer brings together thirteen successful women who have achieved important milestones in professional, social, cultural, sporting and artistic life. From 1964 to 2018, 45 calendars were made over a 50-year period, made by 35 photographers in all.<sup>244</sup> The calendar becomes a fundamental initiative for the construction of the brand because it contributes to making Pirelli products interesting to consumers. The Calendar has never been put on sale and is produced in approximately 17,000-20,000 copies against 1 million requests per year.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>243</sup>Fondazione Pirelli, "Peter Beard, la visione della natura nel Calendario Pirelli", in *Cultura d'impresa*, 2020, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/peter-beard-la-visione-della-natura-nel-calendario-pirelli/>.

<sup>244</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *La storia. Le tre vite di "The Cal"*, 2019, <https://pirellicalendar.pirelli.com/it/le-tre-vite-di-the-cal>

<sup>245</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, Pirelli. *Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*,... pp. 637-638.

### 3.3 Communicating corporate culture

#### 3.3.1 Pirelli magazine

The belted has set in motion an entire society with which Pirelli is determined to undertake a dialogue in which culture takes on a fundamental role, thus a post-war monthly business culture magazine was born in the second post-war period. In its twenty-five years of life, the Pirelli magazine deals with information and technology; the numbers of the 1950s deal with issues such as the environment and the female issue, anticipating the times and expressive ways with which these topics are described.

The first director of Pirelli magazine is Leonardo Sinisgalli, engineer and poet. Among the first in Italy to be able to clearly grasp the sense of the bonds that unite the two cultures, that is, scientific and humanistic. A large company must not be interested in culture because it decides to do a socially good work; it must be brought to be interested in culture, in a completely spontaneous way.<sup>246</sup>

In 1948, Alberto writes in the first issue of the Pirelli magazine:

“Questa nostra rivista si inserisce nel dialogo di tutti i giorni tra chi produce e chi acquista, ma vuol trascenderne i limiti, vuol superare quel dialogo, articolato come esso è in termini di fabbisogni, di qualità e di prezzi; vuol prescindere dalle immediate preoccupazioni commerciali; acquistare scioltezza nella forma e nella sostanza; investire aspetti tecnici, scientifici e sociali e, perché no, anche culturali ed artistici, i quali al fattore produttivo sono bensì strettamente legati ma ricevono tuttavia incompleto rilievo in sede di rapporti commerciali e pubblicitari. Ed oggi che la rivista nasce, che il primo numero sta per andare in macchina e che vengono scritte queste righe di presentazione, nasce in noi la speranza di essere riusciti, così come tenderemo in avvenire, a darle il tono di una manifestazione diversa e se volete complementare – da quella più aggressiva che caratterizza la moderna pubblicità. [...] Veniamo a conversare con voi a nome di un’azienda che, per la somma di intelligenze e di lavoro che racchiude, per le sue manifestazioni nel campo sociale, come in quello tecnico ed organizzativo, per il primato raggiunto e le affermazioni realizzate in

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<sup>246</sup> Ivi, p. 637.



tante parti del mondo sente di poter dire una parola utile. Nessuna industria offre un così vario campo di applicazioni ed interessa così diverse categorie di persone. Siamo quasi sempre l'accessorio, ma l'accessorio indispensabile, ed i nostri prodotti interessano il campo dei trasporti, dell'elettricità, di ogni altro genere di industria, dello sport, dell'abbigliamento, della casa, delle applicazioni sanitarie e via dicendo. [...] Ma se potremo in questa rivista sollevarci qualche volta anche più in su, lo faremo col senso che ogni contributo alla civiltà meccanizzata va inquadrato nei più alti valori culturali e sociali della vita."<sup>247</sup>

Among the most important contributors to the magazine are Umberto Eco, Gavino Manca, Alfonso Gatto, Emilio Gadda, Adriano Olivetti, Italo Calvino, Umberto Saba, Giuseppe Ungaretti and others.<sup>248</sup>

The cinema could not fail to occupy an important place among the topics covered by the magazine, and of course, the word is entrusted to the most famous critics of the moment.

Emilio Cecchi, a great scholar, intrigued by cinema, travels to the United States and inspired by the drive-in theaters, he introduces the Italian readers of "This form of cinema show which is accessed sitting in one's car", in his article "Il cinema motorizzato", published in *Pirelli Magazine* no. 1 of 1954. According to Cecchi in America in the 1950s no one would be encouraged to increase the number of cinemas, to wait for those who don't come: while, in this way, it is so to speak cinema that meets a motorized audience, and offers the show without even the trouble of bothering to get out of the car.<sup>249</sup>

Tullio Kezich, already recognized as a master of film criticism, in 1961 wrote for *Pirelli magazine* the short essay "L'occhio della telecamera" investigating the effects that TV, now in the home of Italians for ten years, has on traditional forms of entertainment like cinema and theater. The mechanisms of TV have rules independent of the more traditional media, but theater, opera and ballet can never be reduced to the small screen without distorting themselves in their being empathetic and emotional spectacle.

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<sup>247</sup> Pirelli, A., "Questa nostra rivista", in *Pirelli. Rivista d'informazione e di tecnica* n.1, 1948, [https://www.rivistapirelli.org/it/selezione\\_antologica/questa-nostra-rivista-2/](https://www.rivistapirelli.org/it/selezione_antologica/questa-nostra-rivista-2/)

<sup>248</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 637.

<sup>249</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "La Rivista Pirelli, tra cinema e TV", in *Cultura d'impresa*, 2020, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/la-rivista-pirelli-tra-cinema-e-tv/>

Certainly for Kezich to favor TV is contemporaneity, that is his ability to be "here and now"; "TV is the news that a stage, or a movie set, will never be able to give you." Even if only in documenting a goal action on a football field, the camera eye will always have the "now" weapon on its side.<sup>250</sup>

Moreover, the critic Morando Morandini collaborates for many years with the Pirelli magazine by signing the section "Cinema dello specchio". Scholar of habits and customs of the big screen, he deals with an American comedian, Jerry Lewis, "the comedian's James Dean, the only funny cinematographer on active duty who has ingenuity, ideas and a worldview". The article, published in Pirelli Magazine no. 2 of 1967, criticizes the dubbing, which he says damages the "spoken" comedy of Lewis, known in Italy as "Picchiatello".<sup>251</sup>

Pirelli Magazine is not only an unrepeatable community of writers, journalists, poets, writers, scientists, designers, architects and intellectuals of the time; it is also an impressive laboratory of graphic designers, illustrators, photographers and artists. To testify a long research and experimentation in this area, which lasted decades, are in fact the covers of the Pirelli Magazine that mark a time that is also that of international graphics.

### **3.3.2 International relations studies and business memory: ISPI, the HangarBicocca and Pirelli Foundations**

On March 27, 1934 a group of young scholars from the Universities of Milan and Pavia, who wish to create a foreign policy study center in Italy, dedicated both to research and to the knowledge and dissemination of the international reality, gave rise to the Institute of international political studies (ISPI). The following year Alberto Pirelli was appointed president of the institute and started a rapid development, guaranteeing the necessary economic resources, favoring a strong link with Lombard entrepreneurship. It also ensures a certain autonomy with respect to fascism, thanks to the contribution of leading figures of culture and hostile politics to the regime such as Federico Chabod,

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<sup>250</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>251</sup> *Ibidem.*

Luigi Einaudi and Ugo La Malfa.<sup>252</sup> In 1935 the magazine "International Relations" was also launched, which during the Second World War was the only means of information that could bring to the attention of the Italian public news that had been ignored or misrepresented by the press, such as Allied war bulletins and Churchill speeches.<sup>253</sup>

After the end of the war, ISPI resumed its activity in 1949, with the new series of "International Relations", the reopening of the library and the newspaper library and, subsequently, the start of preparatory courses for the diplomatic career. The articles and documents published in the magazine deal with the Cold War, the first community institutions and relations between Europe and the United States, but also with the decolonization in Asia and Africa and the new Latin America. In other words, unlike the other Italian newspapers in the 1980s, the magazine devotes more space to foreign policy and international economics. In 1972, ISPI was erected as a moral body and operates under the supervision of the Foreign Ministry; instead, as regards management, it takes place under the control of the Ministry of Economy and the Court of Auditors.<sup>254</sup>

The Institute, which has always been linked to the Pirelli name, it is also part of that famous legacy that Leopoldo Pirelli takes charge of. According to the President-in-Office, Ambassador Giancarlo Aragona, Leopoldo is interested in an Institute like ISPI because:

“seguendo la tradizione di una grande impresa, Leopoldo è uno dei grandi italiani a capire che il nostro Paese non è una monade isolata dal resto dell’Europa e dal mondo, ma è invece una realtà fortemente integrata del mondo globale. Quindi Leopoldo aveva capito che era necessario far lievitare questa consapevolezza in strati sempre più ampi dell’opinione pubblica, quindi nulla meglio di Milano per potere intraprendere un’operazione di questo genere. [...] Lo stesso Leopoldo affermava: Cosa si può trasmettere? Non molto ma l’esempio.”<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> Fornara, P., “Ispi, da 80 anni una finestra aperta sul mondo”, in *Il Sole24ore*, n. 18, 2014, <https://st.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2014-04-01/ispi-80-anni-finestra-aperta-mondo-140048.shtml?uud=AB9jZS7>

<sup>253</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>255</sup> Documento audiovisivo, Leopoldo Pirelli, in Canale ISPI Youtube, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/user/IspiFormazione/search?query=leopoldo>

The Institute's activity consists of four main sections: research, publications, training and the organization of events. ISPI also remains a point of reference for companies and entities wishing to extend their range of action abroad, offering materials and ad hoc meetings. In the latest "Global Go to Think Tank Ranking 2013" made by the University of Pennsylvania, ISPI ranks first, while in the "Best policy study produced" category it ranks fourth, after Brookings Institution, Chatham House and McKinsey Global Institute.<sup>256</sup>

In a world that becomes increasingly global, the ability of a large company to dialogue with very different worlds and cultural contexts between them becomes an intangible asset of great importance. In this difficult corporate inculturation work, contemporary art can be an appropriate way of expressing society's interest in men and the products they create worldwide.<sup>257</sup>

In 2008, a large disused industrial space was used as an exhibition space for exhibitions and contemporary art, with the aim of establishing the HangarBicocca Foundation. Contemporary art is a symbolic expression of the propensity to make corporate culture, in this regard Antonio Calabrò declares:

“Insistere sul fatto che fare impresa significhi contestualmente fare cultura significa sottolineare la forte valenza culturale della ricerca scientifica e della tecnologia, dando al termine innovazione una serie di connotazioni che riguarda i nuovi prodotti e i nuovi sistemi di produzione, la sperimentazione dei materiali, le nuove combinazioni fisiche e chimiche ma anche i linguaggi dalla comunicazione al marketing, le relazioni industriali e di lavoro, le regole attraverso cui si governa un’azienda, i rapporti fra l’impresa e i territori in cui si sviluppa l’attività economica.”<sup>258</sup>

The HangarBicocca foundation revives the area in which the company had its roots, transforming the very concept of factory and urban suburbs of a large city into a place of culture and art. It represents a reference paradigm for the Group's many

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<sup>256</sup> Fornara, P., “Ispi, da 80 anni una finestra aperta sul mondo”, in *Il Sole24ore*, n. 18, 2014, <https://st.ilsole24ore.com/art/notizie/2014-04-01/ispi-80-anni-finestra-aperta-mondo-140048.shtml?uuid=AB9jZS7>

<sup>257</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, *Pirelli. Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 634.

<sup>258</sup> Ivi, p. 633.

production companies and in the world, precisely for this reason the Foundation hosts many artists of different nationalities. Corporate culture plays a fundamental role in the development of a creative talent that supports the capacity for innovation; this dimension involves both Pirelli's future and past.

Over the years, Pirelli has invested heavily in the reorganization and enhancement of its brand. Thus for these reasons and to promote corporate culture and to spread the Group's huge cultural and historical heritage, in 2009, the Pirelli Foundation was established with the intention of giving space to the thought that consolidates industrial experiences with the memory kept in the historical Archive. The project aims to enhance current events, as it becomes history. In this regard Castronovo declares:

“La feconda collaborazione fra mondo produttivo e della ricerca storica ha permesso di costruire in Italia la più consistente rete di archivi e musei industriali a livello europeo. La memoria storica è una componente fondamentale dell'identità di un Paese. Di qui l'importanza di conservare e valorizzare un patrimonio prezioso di dati, informazioni ed immagini che rispecchino una somma di scelte, risoluzioni, ed esperienze attraverso cui l'Italia è diventata una società industriale avanzata.”<sup>259</sup>

The many documents and materials that make up the historical archive are a testament to Pirelli's multifaceted history. These range from corporate documents, to cataloging magazines as a corporate communication tool, to drawings and advertising sketches, which, in addition to being an excellent marketing tool, represent works of art of the last century. As well as being important for preserving the identity of a Group, the preservation of corporate memory also performs an important task in favor of the nation in which businesses represent a positive externality in favor of the country, which affects not only the past but also the future. The need to remember and highlight a glorious past conveys different messages depending on the corporate entity that supports the initiative and indicates an intangible asset of decisive importance to draw on in order to direct the future.<sup>260</sup> Culture produces effects of economic growth and improvement of the quality of life. Indeed, the philosopher John Armstrong states:

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<sup>259</sup> Ivi, p. 635.

<sup>260</sup> Ivi, p. 639.

“La solidità e la diffusione delle discipline umanistiche sono essenziali per la democrazia; tali discipline insegnano a pensare criticamente, a usare l’immaginazione, a essere compassionevoli e trasformano gli individui in cittadini globali, ossia in persone capaci di una visione d’insieme del mondo. [...] Serve un’educazione che insegni la bellezza e il pensiero critico e i pensieri vanno riformati per promuovere umanesimo, logica e alti studi. Una vera e propria cultura politecnica, per usare un’espressione cara alla cultura d’impresa Pirelli. [...] Se ciò che vogliamo è un’economia florida, allora dobbiamo fare sì che il mondo degli affari assorba il meglio di quanto le discipline umanistiche sono in grado di offrire. Non solo tecniche, ma scienza. Filosofia. Senso delle cose. Sguardo in profondità e in prospettiva. Le sintesi di un nuovo umanesimo. Naturalmente, parlando di economia, senza demonizzare il profitto, che arriverà di conseguenza.”<sup>261</sup>

### 3.3.3 University collaborations

Pirelli's research and development structures have worked closely with scientific institutions and vehicle manufacturers. Some of these are the University of Akron, the US tire capital where research is carried out on polymers, those of Darmstadt, Rome, and Helsinki with which, together with Peugeot, Pirelli works on the Tino project on the reduction of noise. In addition, together with the University of Birmingham and Rome it collaborates for driving comfort. Pirelli enjoys a constant relationship with the main car manufacturers in the world. From time to time, he establishes a real partnership relationship with them, a continuous collaboration that starts from the design phase of the new vehicles, leading to the production of tires developed ad hoc for the needs that gradually emerge.<sup>262</sup>

Leopoldo Pirelli, in 1986, describes the Bicocca Project with the following words:

“La Bicocca degli anni Novanta non dovrà essere uno spazio chiuso e inaccessibile ai cittadini, ma al contrario un luogo aperto, ricco di

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<sup>261</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “‘Valore cultura’ tra Napolitano e Armstrong”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, 2013, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/cultura-dimpresa/valore-cultura-tra-napolitano-e-armstrong/>

<sup>262</sup> Colombo, U., “La tecnologia”, in *Pirelli 1872-1997 Centoventicinque anni di imprese*, ...p. 96.

possibilità di comunicazione e di interscambio economico sociale e culturale. Un'area dove nuove tecnologie parleranno il linguaggio degli uomini restituendo una valenza urbana alla vecchia-città fabbrica della Bicocca."<sup>263</sup>

Today that district is the headquarters of the State University, and where there were vulcanizers and production machinery, today there are squares and modern offices. The U6 tower hosted in the historic buildings 45 and 66 and which has always been the strategic headquarters of Pirelli Pneumatici in Italy and abroad in the history of the company, carrying with it the large inscription "University of Milan Bicocca".<sup>264</sup> The redevelopment redesigns the face of the Bicocca district, transforming it into an area dedicated to new technologies, services and advanced services. In addition to the university, the quarter now hosts research centers, various companies, private residences and places dedicated to culture. Provera in this regard states:

The Bicocca project is the most important urban transformation project carried out in Italy and one of the largest in Europe. This project "integrates the business world with that of research and university in a single area where businessmen, researchers, students, merchants and resident families work."<sup>265</sup>

### **3.3.4 Between art and music**

As it can clearly see, Pirelli innovation does not only concern its products, but also involves communication. In 1949, the Company set up a mobile exhibition on an advertising vehicle. The latter is a real pavilion among the most important that can be presented at a national fair. This first exhibition, particularly intended for the applications of rubber in the agricultural sector, consists of an elementary presentation full of suggestive elements, or a series of photographs that offer observers the possibility of seeing on both sides other applications of rubber in agricultural works through a beautiful set of illustrations. A magnificent creation that bears a great name on the streets of Italy

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<sup>263</sup> Distretto Bicocca, *Scatta la Bicocca*, 2019,

<https://www.distrettobicocca.it/project/scatta-la-bicocca/>

<sup>264</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Bicocca una volta, quando l'Università era il 'Fabbricato 45'", 2013, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/bicocca-una-volta/>

<sup>265</sup> Bellavite Pellegrini, C, Pirelli. *Innovazione e passione 1872-2015*, ...p. 271.

with a form of commercial presentation that contributes to the greater dissemination and use of rubber.<sup>266</sup>

On the fifth edition of "Open Archives", promoted by the Photography Network, participants are given the opportunity to retrace a continuous dialogue between past and present within the Bicocca area. On the saddle of Pirelli e-bikes there is a tour that starts from the Pirelli Foundation to continue through the streets of the district, from the Pirelli headquarters to Borgo Pirelli, built in the 1920s, passing through the Deutsche Bank building, up to the at the Greco Pirelli railway station and at the Teatro degli Arcimboldi, born in 2001. Then the University, with the first building redeveloped by the Bicocca Project, building 184.<sup>267</sup> In 2017, inside the Settimo Torinese factory, Pirelli organizes an exhibition in one hundred images, to tell, between history and current affairs, a company that includes production lines and research laboratories in many countries of the world.<sup>268</sup>

The Pirelli family has always shared a love for culture; besides being one of the founders of the Piccolo Teatro di Milano, he is interested in politics, art and music. Pirelli's relationship with music is a link that has distant roots, starting from the experiences of John Cage at the Pirelli Cultural Center in the 1950s, up to the "Il Canto della Fabbrica" project. It is a composition commissioned by the Pirelli Foundation to the composer and violist Francesco Fiore in 2017. The piece was made known during the MITO SettembreMusica Festival, hosted within the Settimo Torinese plant and represents, through music, the contemporary nature of the factory. Maestro Fiore creates sounds capable of evoking the rhythms of the digital factory, from the voices of the workers and the noises of the machines, from the mixers to the automated production systems of the tires. For Maestro Fiore a factory is understood as:

“luogo dell'uomo che interviene nell'ambiente naturale per creare un suo luogo di lavoro, e dove il sapere e il lavoro comune devono trovare una sintesi in un prodotto finale: appunto, la musica. Il maestro Accardo sostiene di aver “condiviso l'importanza del ‘fare con mano’, toccando

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<sup>266</sup> Villani, D., “Il padiglione viaggiante”, in *Pirelli. Rivista di informazione e di tecnica*, n. 6, 1949.

<sup>267</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Photo bike tour ‘Scatta la Bicocca’. La Fondazione Pirelli a Archivi Aperti 2019”, in *Cultura d'impresa*, 2019, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/photo-bike-tour-scatta-la-bicocca-la-fondazione-pirelli-ad-archivi-aperti-2019/>

<sup>268</sup> *Ibidem*.



la materia, in questo caso musicale, strumentale, plasmandola secondo le caratteristiche degli interpreti, rinnovando un sapere antico.”<sup>269</sup>

The Pirelli Foundation for the 18th Business Culture Week organizes a meeting with secondary schools entitled "Il nostro Bach. La fabbrica tra musica e scienza", during which the master Salvatore Accardo, together with Pirelli R&D collaborators, talks about the technical, scientific and humanistic culture that characterizes the world of production and industry using images, sounds, formulas, calculations and words . Finally, the master Salvatore Accardo performs some pieces, so that the kids are guided to listening to music, deepening themes related to the mathematical soul that unites the music and the factory, necessary to build increasingly technological and innovative production systems.<sup>270</sup>

### **3.4 To the heart of the fan: sports sponsorships**

Sport represents an opportunity for the industry to experiment with new products during demanding competitions in order to target the results to a wider audience. The same core of Pirelli moves the company to be present in sport, thus approaching the millions of people who follow it.<sup>271</sup> With sponsorships, the brand is defined and the public is involved, for this reason Pirelli gives rise to a record of presence of over 110 years in sports competitions, consolidating important sponsorships, including the historic link with the football team FC Internazionale Milano, internationally known as Inter, strengthening brand awareness. That with Inter is a link that goes beyond the partnership and that sees these two companies grow and establish themselves together at first European and then global level. In fact, Pirelli has joined Inter since 1995, creating the longest sports sponsorship agreement in Italian football. In this regard, Erick Thohir, president of the football team, says:

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<sup>269</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Il suono dell’industria è online: riascoltare ‘Il canto della fabbrica’”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, 2020,

<https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/il-suono-dellindustria-e-online-riascoltare-il-canto-della-fabbrica/>

<sup>270</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “Il nostro Bach. La fabbrica tra musica e scienza”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, 2019, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/il-nostro-bach-la-fabbrica-tra-musica-e-scienza/>

<sup>271</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli nel cuore dello sport*, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-nel-cuore-dello-sport>

“Quello tra Inter e Pirelli è un connubio che ha scritto pagine vincenti della storia del calcio italiano e mondiale. È con orgoglio che oggi ufficializziamo insieme la prosecuzione di una partnership che affonda le sue radici in un passato glorioso e guarda a un futuro che vogliamo disegnare insieme sempre più globale e ricco di soddisfazioni per tutti i tifosi che ovunque nel mondo amano i colori nerazzurri. Un rinnovamento nel segno della continuità e della tradizione che a pochi giorni dal compimento del nostro 108° anno di età mette la passione e la voglia di eccellere in campo e fuori dal campo al centro del nostro progetto comune.”<sup>272</sup>

Marco Tronchetti Provera, executive vice president and Pirelli CEO regarding the collaboration between the two companies declares:

“Il rinnovo del sodalizio con l'Inter è la conferma di una comunanza di obiettivi, strategie e voglia di competere, che ha contraddistinto i venti anni della collaborazione tra le nostre società e sarà la caratteristica degli anni a venire. Pirelli è un player globale e la passione che la storia di un club come l'Inter suscita nel cuore di tanti tifosi in tutto il mondo è un asset importante per la valorizzazione del nostro brand.”<sup>273</sup>

Since 1997, Pirelli has been alongside Inter Campus for a development project and law in poor countries, at war or without development opportunities. This project, also supported by collaboration with the UN, with partners, with local institutions and with schools, has the aim of restoring the right to play to all those children who have been prevented from living a peaceful childhood ; children are given the opportunity to carry out regular medical checks and receive school education.<sup>274</sup>

Through partnership with the LA Dodgers baseball team, the company improves the brand's presence internationally. With sponsorships for the Alpine World Ski Championship FISU and for the Ice Hockey World Championship IIHF Pirelli consolidates its role as a protagonist, during the winter, on the competition fields, snow

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<sup>272</sup> Sito ufficiale FC Internazionale, *Conferenza Stampa FC Internazionale-Pirelli*, 2016, <https://www.inter.it/it/news/2016/03/14/fc-internazionale-e-pirelli-ancora-insieme-per-una-partnership-sempre-piu-storica.html>

<sup>273</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>274</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Vivere il mondo con inter CAMPUS*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/vivere-il-mondo-con-inter-campus>

or ice and on the roads every day with the its technologically advanced Winter products. The idea of a sponsorship with IIHF was born from the collaboration between Pirelli Design and the Blossom technological laboratory, an important Made in Italy ski manufacturer. The rubber plays a main role; it is a strip of vulcanized anti-vibration rubber obtained from a compound specifically designed by Pirelli engineers to dampen up to 60% of the stresses that the ski undergoes during the descent. The design is characterized by the long P logo on the top of the ski, which is produced in seven colours inspired by those used for competition tires. Each colour is made in a limited and numbered series of 110 pieces per colour, in honour of the anniversary of Pirelli Motorsport, which in 2017 was 110 years old.<sup>275</sup>

With the recent signing of a partnership with Luna Rossa Challenge, Pirelli is targeting the public of Prestige products, particularly sensitive to innovation and high performance.<sup>276</sup>

Car and motorcycle competitions indicate an advantage for design innovations, for designs, for materials, for processes and for testing. Pirelli Design is the incubator of Prestige projects that contribute to the enhancement of the brand, innovation, performance level and glamor, through the development of products for a unique and iconic lifestyle.<sup>277</sup> The commitment of tire manufacturers in motor racing competitions affects consumer choices, to the point that the close link between Pirelli and motor sports allows us to experiment and develop new technologies, which find application in road tires.<sup>278</sup> To implement its "perfect fit" strategy, that is, to every car and every motorist the coverage suited to its needs, Pirelli relies on working groups that bring together the skills of the Bicocca engineers and the experience of the Pirelli structures in Germany, to then test the winter products in facilities located in different points of Northern Europe. In the motorcycle sector, Pirelli has been the official supplier of the FIM Superbike Championship (WSBK) since 2004.

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<sup>275</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli porta la gomma nello sci*, 2017, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/road/pirelli-porta-la-gomma-nello-sci>

<sup>276</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Marchio*, <https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/aboutus/marchio>

<sup>277</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>278</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Ferrari e Pirelli, una lunga storia di vittorie", in *Cultura d'impresa*, 2020, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/ferrari-e-pirelli-una-lunga-storia-di-vittorie/>

In the auto sector, the competitions of the Formula 1 Championship are the most fruitful in the world due to an audience of 1.6 billion spectators per year.

During the Formula 1 races, Pirelli supplies around 1,800 race tires and a total number of around 40,000 tires per year. The tires are supplied in three different colours, namely white, yellow and red, which respectively identify the slick hard, medium and soft compounds, plus two wet tires such as the Cinturato Green Intermediate and the Blue Full Wet, in order to allow the public to know what the compound used in a specific race.<sup>279</sup> Starting from 2011, the Italian Automobile Federation nominates Pirelli as the only official supplier of tires for Formula 1. This adventure began on March 12, 1947, when the engineer Enzo Ferrari started the Ferrari 125 S, the first model built by the car manufacturer; the history of that car soon intertwines with the history of Pirelli. In fact, in May 1947 the drivers Franco Cortese and Nino Farina brought the 125 for the first time on the circuit of Piacenza and then immediately afterwards to the Grand Prix of Rome on the Circuit of Caracalla. The car with Pirelli tires gets its first victory with Cortese driving. Shortly thereafter, the 125 S would be replaced by the 125 F1, which in 1948 sanctioned the entry of Ferrari into the Formula Grand Prix, that is, what two years later, in 1950 it would become Formula 1. In these years the Pirelli Stella tires Bianca bring Italian cars on the podium all over the world, from Europe to South America; called "victory" tires accompany Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Maserati in the new world of Formula 1.

Since the 1980s, Pirelli has been present in the rally world championship, where it collects more than 200 victories and later the company will begin its climb to the monopoly of the championship rubber sector.<sup>280</sup>

### **3.5 Corporate Social Responsibility**

Business ethics is a good thing for the brand, both from an economic and an image point of view. The importance of corporate social responsibility therefore promotes

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<sup>279</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli sponsor ufficiale dei campionati del mondo di hockey su ghiaccio dell'IIHF*, 2017, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/road/pirelli-sponsor-ufficiale-dei-campionati-del-mondo-di-hockey-su-ghiaccio-dell-iihf>

<sup>280</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, "Ferrari e Pirelli, una lunga storia di vittorie", in *Cultura d'impresa*, 2020, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/iniziative/storie-dal-mondo-pirelli/ferrari-e-pirelli-una-lunga-storia-di-vittorie/>

profits and at the same time contributes to social well-being. In this regard, the writer Spizzo declares:

“L’assunzione di una responsabilità sociale diventa interessante e concretamente realizzabile quando si dimostra conveniente, nel senso etimologico latino del termine, cioè quello di ‘venire da più parti in un medesimo luogo e per una medesima ragione’. In questo ‘incontro armonico’ si allineano gli obiettivi di competitività ed economicità per l’impresa con quelli sociali.”<sup>281</sup>

For these reasons, in recent years, Pirelli's corporate social responsibility is among the most prosperous communication strategies for the company. It promotes social initiatives to improve the lives of both employees and their families and citizens of the world.

In 2007, Pirelli Tires Romania started a project offered by the Slatina hospital, aimed at improving the quality of the health service, by signing a collaboration agreement with the Niguarda Hospital in Milan to start professional training courses for doctors and nurses and contributing to the purchase of necessary equipment in emergency medicine. The Pirelli Company invests more than 1.5 million euros in the project, which will change the health system for over 80,000 inhabitants of Slatina.<sup>282</sup>

In 2014, he sponsored the renovation of one of the seven wonders of the modern world, namely the Christ the Redeemer of the Corcovado of Rio de Janeiro. With the restructuring of a universal symbol and icon of Brazil, Pirelli communicates its corporate presence in favour of social responsibility projects.<sup>283</sup>

The United Nations in New York organize an event, the "1 Billion Voices: Making the Invisible Visible", dedicated to Julio Gonzales, a former football player and today technical director of Inter Campus Paraguay, who, after a car accident, lost an arm. The event aims to increase the sensitivity of companies and involve them in the search for innovative solutions to improve the lives of disabled people; main objectives are the

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<sup>281</sup> Fondazione Pirelli, “L’etica fa bene al profitto”, in *Cultura d’impresa*, 2014, <https://www.fondazionepirelli.org/it/cultura-dimpresa/letica-fa-bene-al-profitto/>

<sup>282</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Insieme per la salute!*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/insieme-per-la-salute>

<sup>283</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Molto di più di produrre pneumatici*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/molto-di-piu-di-produrre-pneumatici>

strategies to make sport accessible to all and to encourage national and international cooperation between the various stakeholders. Obviously, Pirelli cannot miss and participates in the initiative as a representative of the private sector.<sup>284</sup>

Finally, in 2020, to deal with the Covid-19 emergency affecting the entire planet, Pirelli promptly contributed by making available sixty-five devices for intensive care assisted ventilation, 5,000 coveralls for sanitary use and 20,000 masks. In addition, the Group initiates a donation of € 750,000 intended to strengthen the safety level of assistance activities and to contribute to research.

Attilio Fontana, president of the Lombardy Region, declares:

“La gara di solidarietà che si è innescata intorno alla Lombardia è sempre più grande. Ringrazio in modo particolare Pirelli e Marco Tronchetti Provera per una donazione tanto importante, quanto preziosa. Gestì straordinari che ci danno la forza di andare avanti nonostante le criticità che dobbiamo affrontare quotidianamente. Grazie e ancora grazie a tutti coloro che ci sostengono.”<sup>285</sup>

Marco Tronchetti Provera, Executive Vice President and CEO of Pirelli, comments:

“In un momento di così grande difficoltà, vogliamo essere a fianco della nostra Regione e del Paese, anche grazie all’aiuto dei nostri partner, con un’iniziativa concreta e per supportare il sistema sanitario regionale attraverso aiuti rapidi ed efficaci. Un grazie a tutti coloro che ci hanno supportato in questo impegno.<sup>286</sup> [...] Tutto il mondo Pirelli è vicino a chi oggi è in prima linea nell’affrontare questa grave emergenza ed è al fianco di tutti i medici, infermieri, operatori del sistema sanitario. A

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<sup>284</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A, *Pirelli: una delle voci contro l'esclusione*, 2019, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-una-delle-voci-contro-l-esclusione>

<sup>285</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A, *Pirelli a fianco di regione Lombardia contro l'emergenza covid-19*, 2020, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-a-fianco-di-regione-lombardia-contro-l-emergenza-covid-19>

<sup>286</sup> *Ibidem*.

loro, e a chi oggi è insieme a noi nel supportarli, va il ringraziamento di tutti i dipendenti e dell'azienda.”<sup>287</sup>

Pirelli is dedicated to a series of initiatives on road safety, from the organization of training courses to the development of persuasive information at the points of sale, which will increase consumer awareness of safe driving. As a partner of the International Automotive Federation, Pirelli is launching 158 safe driving projects, which will be disseminated through the association's clubs worldwide.

The company also took on a further commitment regarding the training of international dealers on the importance of tires for road safety, and above all on the different performance of winter, summer and all-season tires. Road safety is intrinsically present in Pirelli's commitment to future and sustainable mobility. Safer products for people and the environment play a fundamental role, especially technology, which allows consumers to control and monitor the performance of their tires in a simpler way.

Pirelli is a sponsor of the British charity named Tire Safe, which undertakes to spread awareness of the importance of correct tire maintenance and the dangers associated with the use of defective and non-regulatory tires.<sup>288</sup> One of the main themes to which Pirelli collaborates is the tread depth, using an innovative system for measuring this depth. In particular, the Pirelli offices in Burton and Carlisle host an event in which a machine checks the tread depth of the cars of over a thousand employees, in addition to those of the players of the two local football teams, Carlisle United and Burton Albion, involved in the initiative to spread the message as much as possible.<sup>289</sup>

With the same intent as Safe Tire, the Milanese Company decides to take on an initiative, the Ride Safe, dedicated to employees of the "Ospedale dei Bambini Vittorio Buzzi" and "Ospedale Fatebenefratelli e Oftalmico di Milano", to which it is offered the free rental of 14 Pirelli CYCL-e around electric bicycles. The bicycles are equipped with high-end assisted pedaling aimed at supporting sustainable mobility; in addition,

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<sup>287</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *I dipendenti Pirelli 'insieme per l'Italia' contro l'emergenza sanitaria*, 2020, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/i-dipendenti-pirelli-insieme-per-l-italia-contro-l-emergenza-sanitaria>

<sup>288</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *La sicurezza degli pneumatici nel Regno Unito*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/road/la-sicurezza-degli-pneumatici-nel-regno-unito>

<sup>289</sup> *Ibidem*.

employees participating in the initiative will have the opportunity until July 10 to use eBikes for a period of two weeks, after which they will be sanitized and entrusted to other colleagues. Therefore, through the initiative, not only do you choose to communicate safety but also the attractiveness of the product is analyzed.<sup>290</sup>

Continuing, in the wake of sustainable mobility, in Campinas, a project is launched, or the "Sustainable Mobility Project 2.0", in which the basic idea is to help local institutions and review their urban mobility plan to encourage the use of public transport and the use of bicycles with the aim of improving the quality of life and eliminating pollution. Lorenzo Cella, Pirelli Group Sustainability and Risk Governance Division says:

“Lavorando sul campo nello sviluppo del progetto abbiamo sperimentato che elemento chiave per l’efficacia di un piano di mobilità sostenibile è il dialogo tra tutti i portatori di interesse, dalle istituzioni ai cittadini, al settore privato. Nell’integrare le aspettative degli attori coinvolti, si è reso tra l’altro evidente che le soluzioni innovative quali il miglioramento delle infrastrutture, dei trasporti e della sicurezza stradale debbono essere accompagnate da un vero e proprio cambio culturale, inteso come evoluzione delle abitudini delle persone nel vivere la città e negli spostamenti quotidiani. Innovazione, dialogo e cultura si sono posti quindi come gli elementi portanti della sfida comune per raggiungere una reale mobilità sostenibile.”<sup>291</sup>

According to statistics, 3,500 people die every day from road accidents. This data becomes the incentive for the creation of a campaign entitled FIA Action For Road Safety, which involves the global partner Pirelli at the forefront. Pirelli's contribution regards the matter in which the tire manufacturer always manages to excel, that is technology. In fact, it harnesses the power of its technology and its networks with its employees all over the world, through the Cyber line and the Connesso line. The latter merge to create the Cyber Car, or a sensor integrated inside the tire capable of processing information, which is sent directly to the car's electronic systems. In detail, the sensor collects information on ground

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<sup>290</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Le e-bike Pirelli per gli ospedali di Milano*, 2020, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/le-e-bike-pirelli-per-gli-ospedali-di-milano>

<sup>291</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *L’impegno di Pirelli per la mobilità urbana a Campinas*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/l-impegno-di-pirelli-per-la-mobilita-urbana-a-campinas>



conditions, for example if there is ice or if it is wet, on tire wear, on pressure and on temperature. The driver is then warned if there is a risk of puncturing, slipping or aquaplaning, or if it is necessary to inflate or replace a tire.<sup>292</sup>

Filippo Bettini, Head of Sustainability and Risk Management di Pirelli afferma:

“Come produttore di pneumatici da tempo attivo nell'arena automobilistica e motoristica, da sempre crediamo che la sicurezza stradale proceda di pari passo con il nostro impegno per produrre gli pneumatici alla massima avanguardia tecnologica. L'accrescimento della consapevolezza è fondamentale per modificare l'approccio nei confronti della sicurezza stradale. Riuscire a trasmettere il giusto messaggio nella maniera più efficiente è essenziale, soprattutto quando ci si rivolge ai più giovani.”<sup>293</sup>

FIA's Director of Marketing and Events, Alexandre Gueschir declares:

“Secondo la FIA gli sport automobilistici sono un veicolo perfetto per trasmettere il messaggio sulla sicurezza per ben due motivi. Prima di tutto, spiega, essi forniscono un modello di risultati raggiungibili. Negli ultimi 30 anni, gli sport automobilistici hanno dimostrato di essere in grado di ridurre il numero di incidenti agendo sul comportamento del conducente, sulle automobili e sull'infrastruttura. I campioni di questi sport sono in genere gli idoli dei ragazzi, ossia la fascia demografica che conta il maggiore numero di vittime causate da incidenti stradali.”<sup>294</sup>

Regarding the agreement signed between Pirelli and the UN Road Safety Trust Fund dedicated to Road Safety, Pirelli Executive Vice President and CEO Marco Tronchetti Provera says:

“Il Fondo per la Sicurezza Stradale promosso dalle Nazioni Unite è un'iniziativa importante che Pirelli è sostiene. La sicurezza stradale è

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<sup>292</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Vi presentiamo cyber car*, 2018, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/road/incontrando-la-cyber-car>

<sup>293</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli e FIA insieme per la sicurezza globale sulle strade*, 2017, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-e-fia-insieme-per-la-sicurezza-globale-sulle-strade>

<sup>294</sup> *Ibidem*.

per Pirelli un elemento fondamentale. Da tempo collaboriamo con la FIA e con altre istituzioni internazionali per sostenere progetti concreti su questi temi in molti Paesi del mondo. Investiamo molto nell'innovazione tecnologica dei nostri prodotti, come i pneumatici intelligenti che abbiamo recentemente presentato e che permettono di monitorare le condizioni delle gomme e garantire il massimo delle performance in sicurezza.”<sup>295</sup>

### 3.6 Sustainability

Nowadays, investors are attracted to Environmental Social Governance (ESG) business investments. In particular, young investors want to be sure that the companies they support meet high ESG standards, which can also represent a solid defensive strategy in times of difficulty. ESG opportunities are reflected in the growing diffusion of market indices that replicate the performance of the sector but above all, in the fast evolution of the world, which in recent years has placed interest in renewable energy sources. The goal of environmental sustainability thus becomes the focal point of new investments.<sup>296</sup> Sustainability, in all its forms, is the driving force behind Pirelli's strategy, which aims to reduce specific CO2 emissions by 15%, specific energy consumption by 18%, water withdrawal and increase by 58% of waste recovery.<sup>297</sup> Sustainability does not only concern the environment, but must lay the necessary conditions to foster the interaction between the company's business model, the external and competitive context, strategy, risk management and corporate governance. Dr. Eleonora Giada Pessina, Sustainability and Diversity Officer of the Pirelli Group, says:

“Si tratta di considerare la sostenibilità non come un aspetto a sé stante, ma come un modello di gestione trasferibile a tutte le funzioni. [...] I diversi tipi di capitale devono essere gestiti in modo responsabile e

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<sup>295</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli e le nazioni unite insieme per la sicurezza stradale*, 2018, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-e-le-nazioni-unite-insieme-per-la-sicurezza-stradale>

<sup>296</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *I millennial e gli investimenti ESG*, 2020, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/i-millennial-e-gli-investimenti-esg>

<sup>297</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli va oltre la responsabilità sociale d'impresa: (CRS) colloca la sostenibilità al centro delle proprie attività*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-va-oltre-la-responsabilita-sociale-d-impresa>

sostenibile. In caso contrario la sopravvivenza finanziaria dell'azienda è a rischio.”<sup>298</sup>

In addition, a company that is committed to sustainability benefits in terms of savings, for example Pirelli's investments in environmental protection contributed to a saving of 94.4 million Euros in 2015. All this is undoubtedly due to the advent of the so-called green economy; in fact, Pirelli's Green Performance products reached 48% of tire turnover in 2015, compared to 35% in 2011.<sup>299</sup>

To communicate environmental protection and increase its strategic power, Pirelli decides to focus in particular on two problems, namely the reduction of water consumption and the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions, following global warming. In fact, if water started to be scarce in countries where it currently does not have a high cost, the impact on companies would be enormous; therefore Pirelli, in line with its vision and mission, must be able to anticipate risks like this responsibly. Marco Tronchetti Provera explains that Sustainability represents a fundamental choice of Pirelli. It is fully integrated into the Group's vision and growth strategies, in all areas of activity and in all decisions, everywhere in the world.<sup>300</sup>

Strategic consultant McKinsey says that water scarcity is no longer a small problem affecting the production departments of companies, but has become a strategic issue for management.<sup>301</sup>

In six years, Pirelli reduced water withdrawals by 42% and at the end of 2015, the company limited its water withdrawal by around 30 million cubic meters of water compared to 2009; this amount corresponds to the water that falls from the famous Niagara Falls every three and a half hours. The Group is in the process of reaching its long-term goal of reducing the 58% by 2020. Gioacchino Verga, Pirelli Group Environment Officer says:

“La limitazione dell'utilizzo di acqua non deve necessariamente comportare l'impiego di tecnologie nuove e costose. È il comportamento della gente che fa la differenza. [...] Si deve accrescere

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<sup>298</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>299</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>300</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>301</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., Come le aziende rispondono alla carenza idrica, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/come-le-aziende-rispondono-alla-carenza-idrica>

la consapevolezza a partire dai livelli dirigenziali. Puoi avere a disposizione la migliore tecnologia, ma se le persone non sono in grado di utilizzarla, è impossibile ottenere i risultati.”<sup>302</sup>

The Milanese Group, through better maintenance of its water networks, reduces risk, enhances strategic preparation and increases the level of attractiveness of the investor.<sup>303</sup>

Pirelli, in relation to the second problem, asks its suppliers to participate in the Carbon Disclosure Project, an initiative that provides for monitoring the impact of its activities on climate change. Suppliers were able to reduce their CO2 emissions by 116.5 million tons and achieve economic savings of 793 million euros. The Company is part of the Global Compact LEAD Management Committee, which aims at better management by promoting adequate communication of the environmental, social and governance aspects of companies.<sup>304</sup>

In 2013, he signed a global agreement with DuPont Sustainable Solutions. The program, launched in 2014, is extended to all the Group's offices and soon becomes a concrete example of how safety and sustainability can have a positive impact on the financial statements. The challenge for Dawn Rittenhouse, head of sustainability of the DuPont team, is to generate growth and value for stakeholders by reducing the environmental impact by developing materials that make the products longer lasting. In this regard Rittenhouse observes:

“Anni fa questo sarebbe stato un evento per i soli governi, con le aziende confinate ai margini a cercare di capire cosa succedeva e magari influenzare i processi. Adesso invece le società sono direttamente e proattivamente coinvolte e danno contributi costruttivi. [...] Penso anche che le aziende stiano iniziando a percepire gli effetti dei cambiamenti climatici come qualcosa che accade oggi. E non tra 50 anni.”<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>302</sup>*Ibidem*

<sup>303</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>304</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli va oltre la responsabilità sociale d'impresa: (CRS) colloca la sostenibilità al centro delle proprie attività*.

<sup>305</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Dupont e Pirelli: insieme per sicurezza e sostenibilità*, 2016, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/dupont-e-pirelli-insieme-per-la-sicurezza-e-la-sostenibilita>

Worldwide, Pirelli is the only one in the "Auto Components" sector to have obtained the "Gold Class Distinction" award in the ranking that is carried out annually based on the results of the SAM Corporate Sustainability Assessment.<sup>306</sup> These important awards enhance companies that adopt a sustainable management model. This model is aimed at signing partnerships with the most prestigious research centers for the use of new materials with low environmental impact.<sup>307</sup> Already in the 2000s, Pirelli began to communicate a strategy focused on sustainability that envisages the enhancement, rather than the exhaustion of the planet's resources as stated by Filippo Bettini, Pirelli's Chief sustainability and Risk governance officer:

“Il nostro piano di sostenibilità si integra con quello industriale; l’obiettivo finale è rendere Pirelli sostenibile. [...] Gli Obiettivi di Sviluppo Sostenibile offrono un framework da utilizzare per indirizzare al meglio il nostro contributo. Siamo convinti che contribuire ai Sustainable Development Goals sia estremamente importante, in quanto ad ogni azienda viene chiesto di agire negli interessi del futuro del pianeta. Questo è il vero valore. [...] Invece di lavorare da soli sulla gestione sostenibile della catena di fornitura della gomma, abbiamo adottato un approccio forse più impegnativo ma in cui crediamo molto in termini di capacità di impatto: dialogo e partnership, con ciascun attore chiave lungo la catena del valore della gomma naturale e sostenendo un coinvolgimento comune nel settore.”<sup>308</sup>

To fulfill the duties of a sustainable company, the tire manufacturer develops systems for the use of new renewable materials for the production of its products, implementing the Sustainable Natural Rubber Policy. The latter, developed because of consultations with international non-governmental organizations, with Pirelli's main suppliers of natural rubber and with all stakeholders, was created with the aim of promoting and developing a sustainable and responsible supply of natural rubber

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<sup>306</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli due volte leader mondiale in sostenibilità*, 2020, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-confermata-da-sp-global-gold-class-di-sostenibilita>

<sup>307</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli, leader mondiale di settore per sostenibilità*, 2018, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/pirelli-leader-mondiale-di-settore-per-sostenibilita>

<sup>308</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Il contributo di Pirelli verso gli obiettivi di sviluppo sostenibile delle Nazioni Unite*, 2018, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/il-contributo-di-pirelli-verso-gli-obiettivi-di-sviluppo-sostenibile-delle-nazioni-unite>

throughout the value chain, from farmers to dealers, to sellers, to producers. All this consists in increasing transparency and protecting human and labor rights, preserving the development of local communities, and preventing deforestation through higher productivity cultivation methods, recognized as High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) for the conservation of the ecosystem.<sup>309</sup>

The Pirelli's sustainability plan is based on 12 objectives that identify with the areas in which it is possible to make more significant initiatives, based on the respective sectors of activity, business and development strategies. The above objectives are the following:<sup>310</sup>

1. Poverty eradication
2. Well-being and good health
3. Quality training
4. Clean water and sanitization
5. Clean and sustainable energy
6. Acceptable working conditions and economic growth
7. Industry, innovation and infrastructure
8. Reduction of inequalities
9. Sustainable cities and communities
10. Responsible production and consumption
11. Climate actions
12. Partnership for the objectives

Pirelli not only launches innovative products on the market but also is concerned with maintaining a consumer-centered approach, in particular with the consumer groups that represent key targets for the future, such as the new generations, women and consumers sensitive to sustainability and mobility issues intelligent. In addition, in order

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<sup>309</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Per andare veloci bisogna saper aspettare*, 2019, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/per-andare-veloci-bisogna-saper-aspettare>

<sup>310</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Il contributo di Pirelli verso gli obiettivi di sviluppo sostenibile delle Nazioni Unite*, 2018, <https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/il-contributo-di-pirelli-verso-gli-obiettivi-di-sviluppo-sostenibile-delle-nazioni-unite>

to satisfy its customers, he decides to open Prestige stores, including the PZero World in Los Angeles.

### **3.7 Towards new frontiers: digital marketing**

As it was found during this analysis, Pirelli has always been committed to the search for innovative products, which can live up to or even exceed its biggest competitors. All this is certainly due to the unstoppable desire to stay constantly in step with the times, managing to foresee not only changes in the technological world but above all consumer choices in this context. Precisely for this reason, in recent years the world of digitalization has become the center of innovation and corporate communication.

For over 20 years, Pirelli scientists and researchers, with the aim of creating intelligent tires, have formed alliances with the Milan Polytechnic Foundation for Smart Mobility and the Berkeley Wireless Research Center, filing over 300 patents. The result of these partnerships leads to a further development of the Pirelli Cyber Tire, which, using the 5G network, designs digital tires.<sup>311</sup> The latter are able to predict the obstacles that may arise along the road, modifying the behavior of the vehicle, own or others, to ensure maximum safety on the road at any time. The risk-predicting data is then shared through 5G networks; in this way, an alert can be sent in real time to the other cars in the vicinity.<sup>312</sup>

Pirelli digital also develops within its sustainability policy with plans that reach 2025, through a sustainable approach that includes both the entire product life cycle and the entire value chain. In fact, materials deriving from renewable sources and recycled materials are used, in order to reduce the percentage of materials of fossil origin, with which tires are produced today. Sustainable products will be destined for electric vehicles, whose penetration rate in the global market is growing. The Company's strategy is consolidated in the investment of Carbon Neutrality and on virtual tests. Obviously, in this responsible context, the role of the people who work within the offices and factories is essential to support the digitalization process of the company; for this reason, the

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<sup>311</sup> Villa, A., “Pirelli: Il futuro in 5G della mobilità su strada”, in Sito ufficiale IMPA SOLUTION s.r.l., 2019, <https://www.impapcs.com/post/2019/12/13/pirelli-il-futuro-in-5g-della-mobilita-su-strada>

<sup>312</sup> Cappa, C., “Pirelli. Il futuro degli pneumatici è fatto di sensori e rete 5G”, in *Il Messaggero*, 2019.

company intends to invest in training courses for tire specialists and sales staff.<sup>313</sup> With regard to the former, the in-depth study of the best commercial strategies for customer loyalty is envisaged, programs for the knowledge of the characteristics of the new range of tires, activities for the enhancement of projects related to the brand and processes to improve the management of the sales and service.

All this takes place with the use of different digital communication channels such as email, B2B site, e-learning platform, webinars and virtual meetings, in which articles, manuals, interviews, video tutorials and technical courses, in the local language of the main countries where Pirelli is present.<sup>314</sup>

Instead, salespeople in the commercial area are offered digital marketing webinars and virtual customer management. In this regard, Mattia Bussacchini, Pirelli Senior Vice President Commercial Operations, declares:

“Questa iniziativa permette allo staff dell’area di vendita e al gommista di conoscere nuovi strumenti per proporre i nostri prodotti e nuove tematiche di business in maniera virtuale, rafforzando l’iterazione con il cliente e offrendogli un servizio migliore.”<sup>315</sup>

Therefore it can be said that Pirelli communication does not only take place outside the company, and therefore it is not addressed only to its consumers. In fact, today the Company is one of the most active companies in the field of employer branding. This means that the company communicates to its next collaborators what are the characteristics that make the workplace unique. For this reason it is important to introduce the concept of employer advertising, through which the company deals with promoting work as if it were a product. This occurs not only through traditional channels but also and above all on web 2.0 mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis. In fact, Pirelli is at the top of the global social media ranking in the tire sector, positioning itself ahead of its competitors, such as Bridgestone, General Tire, Cooper, BF Goodrich, Michelin,

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<sup>313</sup>Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Sostenibilità Pirelli a supporto degli obiettivi SDGS delle nazioni unite*, 2020,

<https://www.pirelli.com/global/it-it/life/sostenibilita-pirelli-a-supporto-degli-obbiettivi-sdgs-delle-nazioni-unite>

<sup>314</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Pirelli: al via nuova formazione digitale per gommisti e forza vendita*, 2020,

<https://press.pirelli.com/pirelli-al-via-nuova-fomazione-digitale-per-gommisti-e-forza-vendita/>

<sup>315</sup>*Ibidem*.



Goodyear and Yokohama. In 2019, he received the score of 90.30 from both Klear and Kred, analysis platforms on social media; it is the first time that a brand has exceeded the result of 90 points twice since 2011, the year in which it began to draw up this ranking.<sup>316</sup>

The company decides to start right from LinkedIn, the social network dedicated to job recruitment, building a corporate image also virtual. Initially the social network had about 170 million members while today it exceeds 200 million. Pirelli's LinkedIn profile has three pages consisting of a company presentation home, a careers page aimed at showing growth opportunities within the group and a products page that offers a complete catalog on the items produced. In addition, the Group is active both on Facebook, where it is followed by over 1,600,000 people, and on Instagram with more than 85,000 followers, as well as on Twitter with over 12,000 followers, and on Youtube. Furthermore, the success of the website [www.pirelli.com](http://www.pirelli.com), Pirelli's digital magazine, is growing, a new digital communication platform, in which articles on product, motorsport, culture and sustainability issues are published. The platform reaches over 6.2 million visits, of which almost half attracted through social networks and about 4.3 million unique users, an increase of 16.7% compared to 2017. In addition, Pirelli publishes the Magazine world.<sup>317</sup>

The Milan Company expands its digital marketing frontiers described so far, in a sophisticated cloud platform for automation, thanks to which the company is able to reach every single customer with targeted messages based on interests and purchase choices. The project aims to engage tire customers through a mix of digital technologies and creative content, thus placing Pirelli at the forefront of new data-driven marketing and content marketing. About it Antonella Pescio, marketing consultant, says:

“se la tecnologia, per quanto potente e sofisticata, non potrà mai sostituire le competenze dei professionisti, specie in un settore che chiede una forte componente di creatività, è però vero che l'utilizzo intelligente di piattaforme automatizzate può permettere di sgravare i

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<sup>316</sup> Quotidiano digitale [affaritaliani.it](http://affaritaliani.it), “Pirelli ai vertici della classifica social media globale settore pneumatici”, in *Affaritaliani.it*, 2019,

[https://www.affaritaliani.it/marketing/pirelli-ai-vertici-della-classifica-social-media-globale-settore-pneumatici-627921.html?refresh\\_ce](https://www.affaritaliani.it/marketing/pirelli-ai-vertici-della-classifica-social-media-globale-settore-pneumatici-627921.html?refresh_ce)

<sup>317</sup> Sito ufficiale Pirelli & C. S.p.A., *Marchio*,

<https://corporate.pirelli.com/corporate/it-it/aboutus/marchio>

team del marketing di molte mansioni routinarie e a basso valore aggiunto.”<sup>318</sup>

Through digital, the customer, no longer anonymous, is followed until the next purchase. The goal to be achieved is to keep customers emotionally connected for two or three years, grasping their interests and passions, to be present when changing tires. This ensures that other forms of communication, such as sponsorship, can also be better oriented towards a specific audience. To develop this project, the Company uses a series of cutting-edge technologies, as stated by Davide Alemani, Pirelli's Global Head of Digital Marketing:

“abbiamo scelto la piattaforma di Modern Marketing di Oracle in modalità Cloud. In particolare abbiamo adottato la DMP Oracle BlueKai (Data Management Platform, DMP), per la gestione dei dati, la soluzione di Marketing Automation B2B Eloqua, il CMS (Content Management System) per il content marketing e la gestione dei contenuti con un repository unico, Maximizer per ottimizzare il sito Web e realizzare A/B test, e la piattaforma per la gestione dei social media, che è un acquisto più tattico. Ci siamo affidati a Oracle anche per i servizi di consulting, una scelta strategica vincente: avevamo poco tempo e dovevamo cambiare tutto. Ci hanno supportato nel deploy delle tecnologie, nel change management e nel piano di training. In parallelo all’adozione delle tecnologie, abbiamo definito – insieme al nostro partner strategico Sapient Razorfish – le nuove customer journey, individuando i gap in tutte le fasi e studiando come le tecnologie ci potevano aiutare: la tecnologia è un enabler, ma senza il contenuto giusto non serve.”<sup>319</sup>

In conclusion, it can be observed that social media are very important for a company, especially in contemporary reality, in which consumers are the real protagonists and become increasingly important for companies. The latter are called to

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<sup>318</sup> VeneziaPost, “Pirelli, le nuove frontiere del digital marketing nel mini-master al via”, in VeneziaPost, Ed. Post Editori Srl, 2020,

<https://www.veneziepost.it/pirelli-le-nuove-frontiere-del-digital-marketing-nel-mini-master-al-via/>

<sup>319</sup> Gianni, M., “Digital Marketing ad altissime prestazioni per Pirelli”, in *Digital4*, 2018,

<https://www.digital4.biz/marketing/pirelli-digital-marketing/>

interact more with customers, because through social media consumers can give feedback and thus increase their power. Here, communication is no longer based on the top-down model, but takes place between poles of equal importance. Companies must therefore adopt a communication strategy aimed at getting to know everything about their consumers.

## Conclusions

At the end of this work, it was highlighted how the needs of communication have changed in relation to the change in the consumer and the economic and social environment of reference, which today has become global. Communication must accompany the company throughout its life on the market and be a protagonist alongside the products, management and episodes that characterize its daily evolution. In fact, globalization has increased competition. It has generated the need to develop a systemic approach to business communication, which must make its way on global markets, modifying traditional systems within the company, with activities that are increasingly opening up networking and collaborations with external professionals. Strategic communication, produced by top management, defines the company's mission, values and philosophy, combined with corporate culture, strategies and policies.<sup>320</sup> According to Veneziani:

“è caduta la separazione tra comunicazione ai fini commerciali di brand e di prodotto e comunicazioni ai fini istituzionali, mentre vanno affermandosi linee di condotta ispirate al concetto di comunicazione integrata (global communication) intesa come un insieme coordinato di azioni finalizzate a entrare in contatto con differenti tipi di pubblici, interni ed esterni alle imprese. La comunicazione integrata da parte dell'azienda deve essere utilizzata in maniera sinergica tra le varie leve.”<sup>321</sup>

Therefore, in the paper we wanted to highlight the importance of strategic communication within the company, which is not always considered essential for the latter, as this type of communication is often understood and confused with the simple "advertising". In fact, as it was found through this thesis, strategic communication brings competitive advantage and value to the company along the entire chain. Initially, the history and evolution of communication were studied, also taking into account the

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<sup>320</sup> Pecchenino, M., Arnese E., D., *Digital corporate communication. Le cinque leve della comunicazione d'impresa nell'era del web: Le cinque leve della comunicazione d'impresa nell'era del web*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2016, p. 60.

<sup>321</sup> Veneziani, S., “La guida del Sole 24 Ore all'ufficio stampa. Le regole e gli strumenti per comunicare con i media”, Milano, Il Sole 24 Ore, 2009, p. 6.

theoretical models, up to the use of the same within the company. The analysis of the strategic levers used by the companies, which in recent years have focused mainly on Corporate Social Responsibility, was also useful for the purposes of the subsequent discussion relating to the multinational Pirelli.

According to the authors Cavazza and Kettlitz, the company must develop a flow of communication and information through:<sup>322</sup>

1. the vision of one's identity is seen as a set of actions that allow the search for new knowledge;
2. the ability to recognize one's own well-defined identity;
3. the ability to prioritize knowledge development over other organizational management needs;
4. the specific identity is seen as a priority of the organizational structure when it is necessary to face one's own reference market;
5. the ability to distinguish emerging and urgent elements from all that is really important for facing future development;
6. the ability to use a large part of time to reflect and dialogue on the various signals that come from both outside and inside;
7. the ability to understand that knowledge develops better through a continuous exchange of information and relations with the outside world, including those which are aimed at developing strategic alliances, mergers and acquisitions;
8. the ability to put together new internal and external knowledge, to then interpret them;
9. the ability to forge alliances not only at the level of the conclusion of business agreements but also at the cultural level with external realities;
10. Interconnection capacity at different levels, both between the individual operators within the organization and among the numerous external interlocutors.

Pirelli's strategic communication has been analyzed in its historical, evolutionary, theoretical and practical aspects, observing how it contributes to the achievement of corporate objectives and strategies, thus creating corporate value and competitive

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<sup>322</sup> Cavazza, G., Kettlitz, V., *Il linguaggio delle comunicazioni aziendali*, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 2000, p. 20.

advantage, in such a way as to guarantee the success of the company. It therefore is not limited to pure theoretical processes, on the contrary it is the protagonist within the company, as it assumes an important role in the business process. Strategic business communication also benefits the company because it manages to support other functions such as production, human resources, the process between business decisions and stakeholder expectations and in particular helps management to interpret and attribute meaning to what happens in the context external and thus identify new business opportunities. It is decisive above all in product innovation policies and in those aimed at social changes, strategic levers on which Pirelli relies heavily. In fact, analyzing its history, it is clear how internationalization gives it power right away; his name around the world and the international relations policies, developed by all its leaders, represent the starting point of a communication that fascinates the consumer through innovation and quality strategies, but also of art, sport, culture and social responsibility.

Precisely for this reason, it can be said that communication takes on a strategic role in the most innovative companies, in which digital communication activities take on particular importance, as it supports internal collaboration and promotes the improvement of the work environment. In addition, it strengthens its presence on the net and Search Engine Optimization activities, increases brand awareness, guarantees the management of communication directly and effectively, with the aim of building a real dialogue with customers through the direct sale of tires online, as in the case study taken into consideration. In this regard, it should not be forgotten that communication supports Pirelli's business model, one of the key factors thanks to which the company achieves success. Over the years, the business model has evolved with the aim of reaching the end customer, not only directly through the business to consumer (B2C), but also and above all by involving its distributors by combining the business-to-business (B2B) and B2C, or business to business to consumer (B2B2C).<sup>323</sup> ECommerce allows Pirelli to open direct channels to reach the end customer, without however ousting the intermediary but involving him directly and actively in the process of generating value and business. Thus, the company becomes more sensitive and attentive to changes in consumer tastes by having full control of its brand.

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<sup>323</sup> Battaini, N., *Commerce 2.0*, Confcommercio, Milano, 2012, [https://www.theinnovationgroup.it/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Nicola-Battaini\\_-Pirelli.pdf](https://www.theinnovationgroup.it/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Nicola-Battaini_-Pirelli.pdf)

At the end of this analysis, it can be observed how Pirelli manages to maintain constant the relationship between the traditional and the digital world with the aim of creating a single world that is both digital and offline at the same time where the stakeholder can feel comfortable with values and lifestyle that the brand offers. In fact, in recent years the figure of the web integrator has become important, coordinator of all the online and offline tools of the various communication levers.<sup>324</sup> In this context, big data become the protagonists of the stories told by the company through all the communication channels it has available. The analysis of big data is very important, as stated by Pirelli director of communication, Maurizio Abet:

“Sappiamo quante persone abbiamo raggiunto, quante hanno interagito con la marca, quante hanno lasciato la loro mail per ricevere la nostra newsletter e quante sono atterrate dai social su Pirelli.com o su altri siti Pirelli. Questo è un dato importante perché avere le persone sulle nostre properties permette di stabilire una relazione più forte e diretta.”<sup>325</sup>

In other words, Pirelli's dialogue with the consumer is built by identifying the target audience, obtaining indications thanks to big data, identifying the themes that excite consumers, to produce relevant content. It is also important to be able to perceive the right moment in which to put the brand in contact with the consumer and then identify the digital channels frequented by the reference consumers. In this way, the analysis helps to understand how to use the brand at the right time, on the right channel, with the most appropriate content. Obviously, in order to be more competitive than others, the brand must have an emotional connection with the stakeholders and therefore strategic communication must feed this characteristic. In addition, it has the aim of strengthening the brand's personality, making it recognizable and relevant for the consumer, and keeping it alive and in step with the times.<sup>326</sup> According to Maurizio Abet:

“Questi filoni narrativi generano un vero e proprio palinsesto. I contenuti che produciamo alimentano quotidianamente i nostri canali e

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<sup>324</sup> Pecchenino, M., Arnese E., D., *Digital corporate communication. Le cinque leve della comunicazione d'impresa nell'era del web: Le cinque leve della comunicazione d'impresa nell'era del web*, p. 54.

<sup>325</sup> Grattagliano, F., “Dati e creatività: così Pirelli consolida il «lovebrand»”, in *Il Sole 24 Ore*, Milano, 2019.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibidem*.

generano un flusso di comunicazione costante per informare, dialogare e creare un legame, anche emotivo, con i nostri stakeholder. [...] Da questi luoghi cerchiamo di portare il pubblico verso il nostro hub rappresentato dal Pirelli.com, un sito che racconta tutto il nostro mondo e che è repository dei nostri contenuti editoriali, oppure su *landing page* dedicate al prodotto.”<sup>327</sup>

In conclusion, strategic business communication is a matter in constant evolution, ready to adapt to any context, both in terms of means and ways; today it is among the main company assets, also thanks to its ability to know how to collaborate and support other disciplines. In addition, it must be stimulating and treated in detail.

Pirelli owes its international success above all to its ability to communicate its brand since the years of its foundation, through leaders who have been able to tell the essence of the company and who have always done so in the most original ways. The success of his communication is, in fact, the result of a great job and constant commitment of artists, researchers and intellectuals who have supported this great family. It is a communication that embraces every type of consumer and carries its history with it; it is not limited to mere promotion but aims to woo the consumer with the sole purpose of conquering him, through a story full of enthusiasm, passion, originality, innovation, determination and desire to go further, which have always distinguished it.

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<sup>327</sup> *Ibidem.*



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## Summary

Il mondo economico e manageriale è sempre stato sottoposto a continue evoluzioni e mutamenti. Soprattutto con l'avvento della globalizzazione sono cambiati i modi e i mezzi attraverso i quali l'azienda si appropria al cliente e lo soddisfa; allo stesso tempo è mutato anche il consumatore. Infatti, ogni impresa deve essere in grado di prevedere le scelte di quest'ultimo e quindi le necessità, le funzioni e la qualità che desidera riscontrare in uno specifico prodotto. Inoltre, non bisogna dimenticare che oggi, attraverso lo sviluppo delle nuove tecnologie, il consumatore è un cliente attento, che ha vasta opportunità di scelta e che può a sua volta confrontarsi con altri consumatori e influenzarli. In un clima di questo tipo, la comunicazione diviene di fondamentale importanza, poiché riesce a creare un contatto tra l'impresa e il consumatore in modo da poter creare un dialogo e stabilire una relazione, anche di fiducia, ai fini di una ricerca di mercato, che miri a conquistare il cliente finale con il proprio prodotto.

Come si evince da questo studio, la comunicazione si interseca con gli altri sistemi delle attività d'impresa e di conseguenza realizzare una strategia di comunicazione non solo è utile per creare una immagine distintiva, ma soprattutto ha lo scopo di generare per l'impresa un vantaggio competitivo difendibile nel lungo periodo.

La comunicazione d'impresa viene suddivisa in quattro aree che sono la comunicazione commerciale, la comunicazione istituzionale, gestionale ed economico finanziaria; dunque, il seguente lavoro si propone l'obiettivo di studiare la comunicazione all'interno dell'impresa e analizzare il suo aspetto strategico in toto. Inoltre, viene sottolineato come l'evolversi della società e dei mercati abbia influito sulla comunicazione, rendendola sempre più innovativa, al punto tale da non essere più considerata esclusivamente come mezzo pubblicitario, bensì capace di definire non solo l'affidabilità, l'immagine, i valori e l'etica ma anche le economie di scala dell'impresa. Per fare ciò, è stata presa in analisi la comunicazione strategica della multinazionale Pirelli S.p.a., che rispecchia a pieno quanto descritto in precedenza, e che da sempre rappresenta un pilastro fondamentale per la Società, garantendole un grande successo.

Nel primo capitolo è ripercorsa la storia della comunicazione strategica a partire dai mezzi tradizionali, quali l'evoluzione della scrittura, l'avvento della stampa, quello della televisione e della radio, sino ad arrivare alle nuove tecnologie, la cosiddetta "era



digitale” evidenziando lo sviluppo del web che concede e garantisce l’interazione tra persone e la connessione tra le informazioni, fornendo uno strumento di grande funzionalità per le imprese. Successivamente viene analizzata la comunicazione da un punto di vista teorico, analizzandone prima la sua etimologia, ai fini di comprendere non solo il suo più intimo significato ma anche gli scopi comunicativi e l’importanza che la comunicazione ha nella quotidianità; dopo, sono individuate e approfondite le due correnti di pensiero principali riguardo ai modelli della comunicazione, studiati dai linguisti nel corso degli anni: il modello lineare e il modello circolare. Il primo effettua una comunicazione del tipo unidirezionale, mentre il secondo di tipo bidirezionale.

Durante questo studio si è messa in evidenza la funzione del target, importante perché da esso viene definito il linguaggio da utilizzare quando si vuole comunicare qualcosa a qualcuno. In aggiunta, si introduce il concetto di feedback, sviluppatosi all’interno del modello circolare, secondo il quale il target a sua volta può rispondere positivamente o negativamente al messaggio ricevuto, al fine di migliorare l’attività comunicativa dell’impresa, quindi di potenziare la propria strategia di comunicazione. Per quanto riguarda il modello lineare, vengono citati e spiegati il modello matematico di Shannon e Weaver e il modello Transazionale di Barnlund, una rivisitazione del modello sopracitato; per ciò che concerne il modello circolare, sono presi in considerazione la Teoria degli atti linguistici di Austin e la Teoria dei cinque assiomi della comunicazione di Paul Watzlawick e colleghi della scuola di Palo Alto. A seguire viene posta l’attenzione sulla caratteristica principale della comunicazione, ovvero il suo essere multicanale. A questo proposito sono studiate la comunicazione verbale, non verbale e visiva, indicandone le peculiarità e i loro utilizzi in varie tipologie di contesti.

Infine si identifica il ruolo della comunicazione strategica all’interno dell’impresa, ponendo anche attenzione sulla figura dello *strategic planner* e contestualizzando la comunicazione strategica all’interno di un panorama in continua crescita tecnologica. Si dimostra come l’utilizzo di canali di comunicazione sempre più diversificati risulta una risorsa imprescindibile per le aziende che cercano di garantire la propria immagine focalizzandosi sul messaggio e sugli stakeholders come destinatari. Questi ultimi sono generalmente suddivisi in tre categorie, in base al tipo di comunicazione a loro destinata, ovvero: interni, esterni e co-maker.

Le nuove tecnologie, unite a quelle precedenti già in uso, hanno fatto sì che la moderna comunicazione aziendale globale fosse gestita, da un lato, dalla comunicazione analogica, che sviluppa politiche di comunicazione unidirezionale (push strategy communication); e, dall'altro, dalla comunicazione digitale per stimolare i processi di comunicazione bidirezionale (pull strategy communication). Infine, ai fini di poter comprendere gli argomenti successivi, si individuano le leve principali di una comunicazione strategica efficace come quella della Pirelli S.p.a., tra le quali l'internazionalizzazione e la joint venture, un accordo che fornisce ai partner il contesto per facilitare l'apprendimento cooperativo e genera know-how collaborativo. L'esperienza cooperativa consente a un'organizzazione di ottenere sia vantaggi tangibili come l'aumento della quota di mercato, sia vantaggi intangibili come l'acquisizione e la generazione di conoscenza; inoltre assicura future alleanze.

Oltre alla comunicazione visiva e alle sponsorizzazioni, considerate fondamentali per raggiungere un determinato target, è stata posta l'attenzione sull'etica e la responsabilità sociale. Il mondo imprenditoriale è in continuo cambiamento e l'impegno sociale è diventato uno degli elementi strategici fondamentali per competere sul mercato con prospettiva a lungo termine. La responsabilità sociale è una rinnovata concezione del rapporto tra azienda e società, ha origine dalla coscienza sempre più consolidata della recente trasposizione da un'economia industriale ad un'economia basata sull'informazione e sulla conoscenza. In questo senso la responsabilità sociale non viene concepita come un costo ma, al contrario, come un investimento.

Nel secondo capitolo si focalizza l'attenzione sulla globalità dell'impresa. Inizialmente si analizza il cambiamento apportato dalla globalizzazione che ha favorito l'interdipendenza tra le economie dei Paesi, attraverso il commercio, lo spostamento della forza lavoro, lo scambio di informazioni e tecnologie, gli investimenti produttivi e i flussi di capitale finanziario. Essa ha modificato la cultura d'impresa e questa, a sua volta, cambia strategie, organizzazioni e rapporti sociali all'interno delle fabbriche. In questo contesto, la strategia di internazionalizzazione, insieme a quella di diversificazione del prodotto, vengono considerate di fondamentale importanza.

Sono, inoltre, evidenziate le cause e le modalità per le quali un'impresa decide di investire all'estero e divenire così multinazionale. Le politiche pubbliche di sostegno all'internazionalizzazione possono essere classificate in due tipologie: i servizi finanziari

e i servizi reali come informazione sui mercati, promozione dei prodotti, iniziative fieristiche, consulenza e formazione di personale specializzato. Sempre più aziende multinazionali affrontano sfide per l'integrazione globale e la reattività locale; per rispondere a questa sfida, la società internazionale deve essere gestita come una rete coordinata. I driver dell'internazionalizzazione, i determinanti della posizione e i processi di gestione sono unici per ogni attività.

Dopo aver introdotto i concetti di prima e seconda globalizzazione, viene analizzata la storia della Società Pirelli, caratterizzata dallo spirito di un'anima tecnologica e innovativa, sempre pronta a nuove sfide, che porterà la Pirelli a realizzare grandi obiettivi strategici, uniti da un motore principale che da sempre contraddistingue l'impresa: l'internazionalizzazione. In particolare, verrà posto in evidenza il continuo legame con l'Inghilterra e gli Stati Uniti, considerati sin da subito obiettivi strategici dell'impresa. Essa non solo porta il nome della famiglia che l'ha concepita all'estero e l'ha fatta nascere in Italia, bensì ne condivide la sua etica e le sue ambizioni.

La Società Pirelli rappresenta un paradigma di relazioni industriali aziendali di tipo cooperativo, che è stato ripetutamente contrapposto a quello conflittuale proprio di altri gruppi industriali italiani. L'impresa si è impegnata in profonde trasformazioni per effetto delle spinte competitive, costantemente in crescita, determinate dal cambiamento tecnologico e organizzativo, dall'evoluzione dei mercati, dalla globalizzazione dell'economia. È uno dei pochi grandi gruppi privati che hanno fatto la storia industriale dell'Italia e a essere riuscito a sostenere la sfida della globalizzazione. Infatti, la nascita della Società, nel 1872, è sin da subito caratterizzata dal desiderio del suo fondatore, Giovanni Battista Pirelli, di esplorare un nuovo settore, quello della gomma, sconosciuto in Italia prima di allora. Durante gli anni successivi la Pirelli sarà guidata da Alberto Pirelli, Leopoldo Pirelli e Marco Tronchetti Provera, i quali svilupperanno un'attività imprenditoriale basata sul concetto di *stakeholders vision*, ovvero sul conflitto tra la società e i suoi concorrenti sul mercato globale.

Nel corso del seguente lavoro si potrà osservare come l'anima della Società sia dunque costituita dal carattere e dalle ambizioni di ciascuno dei suoi leader. Il Gruppo Pirelli ha storicamente operato nella produzione e commercializzazione di pneumatici, in particolare nel segmento industrial, che si riferisce agli autocarri e ai veicoli destinati a uso agricolo, e nel segmento consumer, che invece riguarda auto e moto, con un

posizionamento distintivo sul segmento high value. È un marchio iconico riconosciuto globalmente. un processo di riorganizzazione che ha portato alla separazione del business industrial e al focus sul business Consumer, arricchito di nuove competenze anche attraverso la creazione di nuovi dipartimenti e business.

Il modello di business su cui si basa Pirelli conta, sullo sviluppo dei pneumatici, su una costante collaborazione con le case produttrici di Auto Prestige e Premium, la quale consente di compiere un processo integrato che va dalla casa automobilistica al cliente finale, per ottenere prodotti che soddisfino al meglio le necessità e i gusti del consumatore. Questo è reso possibile dal ruolo fondamentale che Pirelli attribuisce alle attività di R&S, che rappresentano il fulcro della capacità di Pirelli di soddisfare le richieste delle case automobilistiche e di assecondare l'evoluzione dei trend tecnologici e delle abitudini di consumo. Pirelli può così programmare le attività produttive e gli investimenti a breve e medio termine, soprattutto nelle attività di R&S. Inoltre, grazie a un continuo monitoraggio degli andamenti del mercato mondiale di auto e moto, Pirelli è in grado di fare una previsione a medio e lungo termine rispetto alla produzione, soprattutto nell'ambito dell'equipaggiamento. In aggiunta il monitoraggio costante dell'evoluzione del panorama legislativo e regolamentare consente di anticipare i possibili sviluppi nelle normative dei mercati in cui Pirelli presiede, per poter cogliere potenziali opportunità di mercato determinate dal mutamento della disciplina normativa.

Infine, nell'ultimo capitolo, questo lavoro di tesi si concentra sulla comunicazione strategica della Pirelli, che da sempre rappresenta un caso esemplare di grande visione nel rapporto tra impresa e cultura, attraverso campagne pubblicitarie, responsabilità progettuale, senso della comunicazione istituzionale, sino ad arrivare ai nuovi linguaggi della pubblicità. Dunque, Pirelli continua il suo percorso di innovazione anche nella comunicazione, dalla nascita della sua P lunga, ai bozzetti, ai manifesti pubblicitari, ai cataloghi promozionali per la moda, il brand Pirelli diviene internazionale.

Il calendario diviene uno strumento coerente con la missione della Società, che anticipa temi e argomenti. La bellezza classica e moderna del corpo della donna, dalle forme reali a quelle mitologiche, rappresenta una campagna pubblicitaria di grande efficacia, che da subito attrae l'attenzione dei consumatori per i prodotti e il brand; inoltre, anche le diverse ambientazioni del Calendario assumono un significato di attenzione alle caratteristiche specifiche e alle peculiarità delle diverse comunità locali dei luoghi in cui

la società è presente. Infatti, Pirelli vuole avvicinarsi al pubblico attraverso un linguaggio più immediato, che attraverso l'esaltazione della figura femminile interpreta le trasformazioni della società, come le evoluzioni del costume e dello stile. In particolare, è approfondita la connessione tra la storia d'impresa e la narrazione aziendale, definita *storytelling*, finalizzata alla comunicazione persuasiva.

All'interno dell'impresa si dà un grande valore alla cultura e per promuoverla si usa una vastità di canali. Decisa a intraprendere questo dialogo con la cultura, pubblica la Rivista Pirelli di informazione tecnica, istituisce l'Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale e le fondazioni HangerBicocca e Pirelli. Inoltre, sviluppa collaborazioni universitarie e si inserisce in contesti artistici e musicali. Lo sport rappresenta un'occasione per l'industria di sperimentare nuovi prodotti durante gare impegnative con lo scopo di destinare i risultati a un pubblico più ampio. Lo stesso core di Pirelli muove l'impresa a essere presente nello sport, avvicinandosi così ai milioni di persone che lo seguono. Con le sponsorizzazioni si definisce il brand e si coinvolge il pubblico, proprio per questa ragione Pirelli dà origine a un record di presenza di oltre 110 anni nelle competizioni sportive consolidando importanti sponsorship, sperimentando e sviluppando nuove tecnologie. L'etica d'impresa è un bene per il brand, sia da un punto di vista economico che di immagine. L'importanza della responsabilità sociale d'impresa favorisce, dunque, profitti e allo stesso tempo contribuisce al benessere sociale. Proprio per i suddetti motivi, negli ultimi anni, la corporate social responsibility di Pirelli è tra le strategie di comunicazione più prospere per l'azienda. Essa promuove iniziative sociali per miglioramento della vita sia dei dipendenti e delle loro famiglie, sia dei cittadini del mondo.

Oggi gli investitori sono attratti da investimenti aziendali di tipo Environmental Social Governance (ESG). In particolare, i giovani investitori vogliono essere sicuri che le società da loro supportate soddisfino elevati standard ESG, i quali possono anche rappresentare una solida strategia difensiva in periodi di difficoltà. Le opportunità ESG trovano riscontro nella crescente diffusione di indici di mercato che replicano l'andamento del settore ma soprattutto nella veloce evoluzione del mondo, che negli ultimi anni pone l'interesse sulle fonti di energia rinnovabili. Per comunicare la tutela dell'ambiente e aumentare il suo potere strategico, Pirelli decide di concentrarsi in particolare su due problemi, ovvero la riduzione del consumo di acqua e la riduzione delle

emissioni di anidride carbonica, a seguito del riscaldamento globale. L'obiettivo di sostenibilità ambientale diviene così il punto focale dei nuovi investimenti. La sostenibilità non riguarda soltanto l'ambiente, bensì deve porre le condizioni necessarie a favorire l'interazione tra il modello di business dell'azienda, il contesto esterno e concorrenziale, la strategia, la gestione del rischio e la corporate governance.

Per adempiere ai doveri di un'impresa sostenibile la Società produttrice di pneumatici, sviluppa sistemi di impiego di nuovi materiali rinnovabili per la produzione dei suoi prodotti, attuando la Sustainable Natural Rubber Policy. Il piano di sostenibilità Pirelli si basa su 12 obiettivi che si identificano con le aree in cui è possibile apportare iniziative più significative, in base ai rispettivi settori di attività, di business e di strategie di sviluppo. Pirelli da sempre si impegna nella ricerca di prodotti innovativi, che possano essere all'altezza o addirittura superare i suoi più grandi competitors; tutto ciò è sicuramente dovuto all'irrefrenabile voglia di rimanere costantemente al passo coi tempi, riuscendo a prevedere non solo i cambiamenti del mondo tecnologico ma soprattutto le scelte del consumatore in tale contesto. Proprio per questo, negli ultimi anni il mondo della digitalizzazione diviene il fulcro dell'innovazione e della comunicazione dell'impresa. Esso è presente sia nei piani di innovazione, di sostenibilità, *employer branding* ed *advertising*. In aggiunta, la Società decide di dare il via a una formazione digitale sia per i gommisti che per lo staff commerciale. Dunque, si può affermare che la comunicazione assume un ruolo fortemente strategico nelle aziende più innovative, nelle quali l'attività di comunicazione digitale assume particolare rilevanza, in quanto supporta la collaborazione interna e favorisce il miglioramento dell'ambiente di lavoro.

Dunque, al termine di questo lavoro si è evidenziato come siano cambiate le esigenze della comunicazione in relazione al mutamento del consumatore e dell'ambiente economico e sociale di riferimento, che oggi è diventato globale. La comunicazione deve accompagnare l'impresa lungo tutta la sua vita sul mercato ed essere protagonista a fianco dei prodotti, del management e degli episodi che ne caratterizzano la quotidiana evoluzione. Infatti, la globalizzazione ha incrementato la concorrenza e ha generato la necessità di sviluppare un approccio sistemico della comunicazione di impresa, che deve farsi strada su mercati globali, modificando i tradizionali sistemi all'interno dell'impresa, con attività che si aprono sempre di più al networking e a collaborazioni con professionisti esterni. Nell'elaborato si è voluto mettere in evidenza l'importanza della comunicazione

strategica all'interno dell'impresa, che non sempre viene considerata essenziale per quest'ultima, in quanto questa tipologia di comunicazione spesso viene intesa e confusa con il semplice "fare pubblicità". In realtà, come si è constatato attraverso questa tesi, la comunicazione strategica apporta all'impresa vantaggio competitivo e valore lungo tutta la catena. Inizialmente, sono state studiate la storia e l'evoluzione della comunicazione, anche tenendo in considerazione i modelli teorici, sino ad arrivare all'utilizzo della stessa all'interno dell'impresa. È stato utile, anche ai fini della successiva trattazione relativa alla Società multinazionale Pirelli, l'analisi delle leve strategiche utilizzate dalle imprese, le quali negli ultimi anni si sono concentrate soprattutto nel Corporate Social Responsibility.

La comunicazione strategica della Pirelli viene analizzata nei suoi aspetti storici, evolutivi, teorici e pratici, osservandone come essa contribuisca al raggiungimento degli obiettivi e delle strategie aziendali creando così valore d'impresa e vantaggio competitivo, in maniera tale da garantire il successo dell'azienda. Essa quindi non si limita a puri processi teorici, al contrario è protagonista all'interno dell'impresa, in quanto assume un ruolo importante nel processo del business. La comunicazione strategica di impresa apporta benefici all'azienda anche perché riesce ad essere di supporto alle altre funzioni quali produzione, risorse umane, processo tra decisioni aziendali e aspettative degli stakeholder e in particolare aiuta il management ad interpretare e attribuire senso a quanto avviene nel contesto esterno e identificare così nuove opportunità di business. Essa è decisiva soprattutto nelle politiche di innovazione di prodotto e in quelle rivolte ai cambiamenti sociali, leve strategiche su cui la Pirelli fa molto affidamento. Infatti analizzando la sua storia, si evince come l'internazionalizzazione le conferisca potere sin da subito; il suo nome in giro per il mondo e le politiche di relazioni internazionali, sviluppate da tutti i suoi leader, rappresentano il punto di partenza di una comunicazione che affascina il consumatore attraverso strategie di innovazione e qualità, ma anche di arte, sport, cultura e responsabilità sociale.

Proprio per questo si può affermare che la comunicazione assume un ruolo fortemente strategico nelle aziende più innovative, nelle quali l'attività di comunicazione digitale assume particolare rilevanza, in quanto supporta la collaborazione interna e favorisce il miglioramento dell'ambiente di lavoro. Inoltre, rafforza la propria presenza in rete e le attività Search Engine Optimization, incrementa l'awareness del brand,

garantisce la gestione della comunicazione in maniera diretta e efficace, con l'obiettivo di costruire un vero e proprio dialogo con i clienti, anche attraverso la vendita diretta di pneumatici online, come nel caso di studio preso in considerazione. A tal proposito non bisogna dimenticare che la comunicazione affianca il modello business di Pirelli, uno dei fattori chiave grazie al quale l'azienda ottiene successo. L'eCommerce consente a Pirelli di aprire canali diretti per raggiungere il cliente finale, senza però estromettere l'intermediario ma coinvolgendolo direttamente ed attivamente nel processo di generazione di valore e business. Così l'impresa diventa più sensibile e attenta ai mutamenti dei gusti dei consumatori avendo il pieno controllo del proprio brand.

Al termine di questa analisi si può osservare come Pirelli riesca a mantenere costante il rapporto tra il mondo tradizionale e quello digitale con l'intento di creare un unico mondo che sia allo stesso tempo digitale e offline dove lo stakeholder possa sentirsi a proprio agio con i valori e lo stile di vita che il brand propone. Infatti, negli ultimi anni è divenuta importante la figura del web integrator, coordinatore di tutti gli strumenti online e offline delle varie leve della comunicazione.<sup>328</sup> In questo contesto, i *big data* divengono protagonisti delle storie raccontate dall'impresa tramite tutti i canali comunicativi che essa ha a disposizione.

In altre parole, il dialogo di Pirelli con il consumatore è costruito individuando il target di riferimento, ricavando indicazioni grazie ai *big data*, identificando i temi che appassionano i consumatori, per produrre contenuti rilevanti. È inoltre importante riuscire a percepire il momento giusto in cui mettere in contatto il brand con il consumatore e individuare poi i canali digitali frequentati dai consumatori di riferimento. In questo modo l'analisi aiuta a capire come utilizzare il brand nel momento giusto, sul canale giusto, con il contenuto più appropriato. Ovviamente il brand per poter essere più competitivo degli altri deve avere un legame emotivo con gli stakeholder e perciò la comunicazione strategica deve alimentare questa caratteristica.

In conclusione, la comunicazione strategica di impresa è una materia in continua evoluzione, pronta ad adattarsi a ogni contesto, sia per mezzi che per modi; oggi è tra i

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<sup>328</sup> Pecchenino, M., Arnese E., D., *Digital corporate communication. Le cinque leve della comunicazione d'impresa nell'era del web: Le cinque leve della comunicazione d'impresa nell'era del web*, p. 54.



principali assets aziendali, anche grazie alla sua capacità di saper collaborare e supportare altre discipline. Inoltre, deve essere stimolante e curata nei minimi particolari.

La Pirelli deve il suo successo internazionale soprattutto alla sua capacità di comunicare il proprio brand sin dagli anni della sua fondazione, attraverso leader che hanno saputo raccontare l'essenza dell'impresa e che lo hanno fatto sempre nei modi più originali. Il successo della sua comunicazione è, infatti, il risultato di un grande lavoro e impegno costante di artisti, ricercatori e intellettuali che hanno affiancato questa grande famiglia. È una comunicazione che abbraccia ogni tipologia di consumatore e che porta con sé la sua storia; non si limita a mera promozione ma mira a corteggiare il consumatore con il solo fine di conquistarlo, attraverso un racconto pieno di entusiasmo, passione, originalità, innovazione, determinazione e voglia di spingersi oltre, che da sempre l'hanno contraddistinta.

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