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Contract Brewing – Production-Oriented Cooperation in Craft Brewing Industry

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Abstract

The objective of the paper is to analyze the cooperation in craft beer manufacturing in Poland and to identify the specificity of this phenomenon from the perspective of enterprise management. The sales of craft beers in Poland are growing rapidly. Craft beers have about a 0.5% share in the total beer sales value in Poland. The popular practice in the industry is contract brewing. It is an interesting phenomenon in the field of cooperation of enterprises which can be classified and analyzed as a form of economic cooperation (generally), production cooperation, outsourcing, network and virtual organization and also co-competition. It is a specific business model. Contract brewing is a complex problem the specificity of which emerges on several levels. Firstly, there is a special way to emerge in the market of craft beers, even while not possessing significant funds by the entrepreneur. Secondly, it is a form of cooperation in the field of production which unites efforts on the side of both the customer and the contractor since it is not limited to normal outsourcing of production to an external entity but involves physical production capacity of the contractor and technological know-how of both cooperation parties. Thirdly, it is firmly embedded in human relationships. Fourthly, it can generate co-competitive relations since the brewery accepting the order may conduct its own activity related to production and sales of beer under its own brand.

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1. Introduction

All enterprises operating within a competitive environment are forced to search for opportunities for growth. In the contemporary world there is no place for an isolated activity of an enterprise. Market circumstances bring about the exploration of new ways of gaining competitive advantage. Cooperative actions of enterprises may particularly lead to development and gaining effectiveness by small firms. Important tools allowing for gaining competitive advantage, improving sales, better customer relations, lowering supply costs and joint cooperation with the environment are networks and virtual organizations, which, in fact, are based on the idea of outsourcing.

E. Stańczyk-Hugiet (2015) pays attention to the fact that traditional thinking leads to the perception of rivals competing for domination and profits in organizations. However, nowadays, organizations operate in more complex conditions the result of which is often innovative integration of competition and collaboration and intensive cooperation with the environment.

Human propensity to cooperate is driven by the embeddedness in social networks (Melamed et al., 2018), which are a natural effect of the existence of human contact with the environment. At present, networks and their ecosystems shape a modern mode of production, while forming economies which are both more coherent in confrontation with challenges set by a high level of uncertainty generated by the dynamically changing environment and more innovative, which affects their increased competitiveness and self-sustaining (Smorodinskaya et al., 2017). Social, economic and organizational life should, therefore, be perceived while taking into account not only the units creating it but it should also take into account the relationships between them. Embeddedness in the network of relationships concerns nearly every area of human life. This, among others, results from their utility and, therefore, from providing individuals and communities with certain benefits (Kilduff, 2006). Due to all types of manifestation of collaboration and the creation and use of relationship networks one may observe some benefits in the area of production and sales in the brewing industry.

The objective of the paper is to analyze the cooperation in craft beer manufacturing in Poland and to identify the specificity of this phenomenon from the perspective of enterprise management. The conducted research was exploratory in nature. The applied research method was the research strategy used for diagnosing the cooperation within the framework of craft brewing inspired by ethnographic research (Kostera 2003) and virtual ethnography (Cichocki et al., 2013) since ethnographic research allows a particular insight into the hidden dimension of knowledge of the specific culture (Jemiłniak, 2013). In the research, the following were used: observations, interviews with people associated with craft brewing, analysis of documents and audiovisual contents. Within the framework of the research, a participant observation of the members of the discussion forum - piwo.org.pl and the analysis of the contents of blogs and video blogs devoted to the problem of craft brewing were undertaken. In addition to the use of the aforementioned methods, the secondary data sources were utilized.

2. The craft brewing industry in Poland

Beer is the third most popular drink, following water and tea (Oliver, 2012). It belongs to a group of alcoholic drinks based on starch, produced without distillation (Mosher, 2009). According to the report *The Brewers of Europe*, the largest manufacturer of the brewing industry in the area of Europe is Germany, followed by Great Britain and Poland. It is estimated that, there are 8490 breweries across Europe, which produced over 400 million hl of beer in 2016, while employing nearly 2.3 million of people (The Brewers of Europe, 2017). The brewing industry market in Poland is one of the fastest growing industries, which results from changes in preferences of consumers who choose increasingly weaker alcohols. The good condition of the brewing industry is important for the creation of jobs and economic growth (Kielesińska, 2018). Poland is the third beer manufacturer in Europe whereas the sales of beer generates nearly 10 billion PLN annually to the State budget. More importantly, the brewing industry has significant impact on the economy, which is due to the use of raw materials produced by Polish farmers. The sales of craft beers in Poland are growing rapidly and, only in the last 12 months, have increased by as much as 41%, which still implies a slowdown – previously sales doubled practically every year. Currently, craft beers have about a 0.5% share in the total beer sales value in Poland. It does not seem much but it should be remembered that beer is definitely the largest food category of FMCG in Poland, with the retail sale of more than 15.5 billion PLN in 2017. New manufacturers are constantly entering the market and those with established reputation are actively increasing their distribution via specialist shops or hypermarkets but also discount stores (Nielsen, 2018).

Craft breweries' operations are small and they are considered to be traditional and independent. The malt is high grade, the brewing process is relatively slow and the production is small scale. The main differentiating factors of craft brewers are their unique styles of brewing which can lead to

enhanced flavor and taste (Craft Brewers Association). Along with the development of craft brewing and the occurrence of subsequent microbreweries the concept of "craft beer revolution" started to be used. "Beer revolution" is undoubtedly a sociological and economical phenomenon. (Niemczyk, 2017). "Beer revolution" in Poland began in 2010 with the spectacular return of the "grodziskie" beer, which is an old-fashioned Polish beer (Poszumaska, 2017). The craft brewing industry is experiencing a historic period of growth. Growth of small craft breweries over the past half-decade has been epitomized by brewers/owners establishing new breweries with innovative and creative means (Smith et al., 2017). Entrepreneurs dealing with craft brewing are driven by passion for and orientation towards fixing "unhealthy" industry saturated with the activity of large corporations and also aiming at identification with craft and entrepreneurship (Watne and Hakala 2013). In the opinion of some researchers, the people behind production in the craft beer segment are driven by unique entrepreneurial passion which leads them to the implementation of ventures in a particularly hostile environment (Cardon et al., 2009). Craft breweries provide services to the market segment which cannot be served by general manufacturers, which implies that possessing specialized features by craft breweries may be associated with a profitable and long-standing strategy (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000).

3. Cooperation in craft beer manufacturing - enterprise management perspective

The effect and, on the other hand, the reason for the development of craft brewing is an increased interest of beer producers in all forms of interorganisational cooperation. One of the symptoms of this cooperation, present in the markets all over the world, is contract brewing. It is a popular form of cooperation in the production area, intensively used also in Poland. It is an arrangement where a company brews and packages beer on equipment that it does not own. The arrangements may vary widely, from distant relationships to very hands-on partnerships. In the most attenuated form, the host brewery may basically provide everything from the recipe to the actual packaged beer, with very little input from the contracting brewer. In this case, the contracting brewery is essentially a marketing company - they provide the identity for the beer and then market and sell it. In other cases, the contracting brewer may bring in their own ingredients and yeast strains, supply the recipe, and specify every detail of production and packaging. In the latter cases, a brewer or manager from the contracting brewery frequently visits the premises of the host brewery, shepherding beer through the system. Contract brewing also takes various forms in legal terms. In a simple contract situation, the host brewery will purchase all the materials used to produce the beer, physically brew the beer, and then actually hold legal title to the beer until the contracting brewery takes possession of it. Another form of contract, known as "alternating proprietorship" or "alternating premises," emerged out of the wine industry in the late 1990s. In this type of contract, the contracting brew-

ery, now referred to as the “tenant brewery,” basically rents time on the equipment at the host brewery. In this arrangement, all of the ingredients and the resulting beer are possessed by the tenant brewery from the start of the process (Garret, 2019). Contract brewing is a mutual benefit initiative between a small brewery that does not fully exploit its processing capacity and brewing enthusiasts wishing to share the taste of beer manufactured while brewing at home with a wider group of consumers. Thanks to the idea of contract brewing, there has been a resumption, modernization and reorganization of many small regional breweries (Podeszwa 2015). Nowadays one may claim that contract brewing is evolving to support modern brewers. With the growth in contract-specific facilities and excess capacity at regional breweries, the industry continues to evolve to support contemporary brewers (Strauss et al., 2018).

Contract brewing is an interesting phenomenon in the field of cooperation of enterprises which can be classified and analyzed as a form of: economic cooperation (generally), production cooperation, outsourcing, network and virtual organization and also often cooperation.

There are many debates on the essence and content of cooperation. The term “cooperation of production” or “production cooperation” is applicable in this case. Cooperation is a dynamic process of enterprise interaction based on key competences for the production and sale of products or services. Cooperation may also be understood as production relationships between enterprises (Akhtaryev, 2010; Fomina et al. 2018). The craft beer industry shows how emerging younger and smaller breweries compete with each other to face large, dominant, already established, mass-producing competition by creating a growing niche market (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000). Their sharing activities with respect to resources, ideas and costs are said to be the secret to the success of the craft brewers (Kraus et al., 2018; Nikulina, and Kuznetsov, 2016; Fomina et al., 2018). Considering craft brewing, it is necessary to distinguish two interrelated trends in industrial cooperation. Firstly, it is a form of management related to the production process, since the obligations of the participants in the cooperation, although they are delineated, are aimed at the production of a certain product. Secondly, cooperation also provides for the exchange between cooperators of products and services produced. Thus, industrial cooperation includes both the actual production process and the exchange of resources necessary for the production process. A cooperative network unites several companies into a single structure that enhances their competitive advantages (Nikulina and Kuznetsov, 2016).

While discussing craft brewing it is worth referring to the idea and essence of outsourcing as the concept with the longest history and the deepest embeddedness in the theory of economy and management of production companies. It is simultaneously the concept accurately defining the essence of contract brewing. In literature, there are presented the definitions of outsourcing in which it is underlined that it is a method which amounts to narrowing the range of tasks of the company and entrusting their execution to an external partner. When considering the presented characteristics of

outsourcing it can be concluded that it is a management method consisting in transferring responsibility for the implementation of specific areas of business activity to the specialized partner, while taking into account economic (quantitative) and qualitative benefits with a simultaneous opportunity for development of key competences of the enterprise and adding new values, which allows for strengthening the market advantage and development of the company (Matejun, 2006). Recent literature suggests that outsourcing, properly understood and managed as an integral part of strategy, can aid competitiveness (Ulewicz, 2018a). Since the end of the 20th century outsourcing has become a part of strategic decisions and agreements made by companies to lower operating costs, improve performance and quality. Market conditions, new development strategies, concentration on the processes bringing the highest rate of value added make many companies select just outsourcing solutions. Outsourcing can occur anywhere in the entire supply chain as well as in manufacturing processes, after-sales and service operations (Ulewicz, 2018b). Williamson’s transaction cost theory (1985) (significant for the concept of outsourcing) is also reflected in the work of Galbraith (1995) who used the terms “virtual company” (or “networked organization”) and “fully integrated company” to describe the two sourcing extremes. The virtual company is formed when the company decides to outsource all of its business activities – except for the strategic management – to a network of suppliers (Zeffane, 1995). The virtual company forms a sharp contrast to the fully integrated company which coordinates and controls all activities in-house and thus, does not pursue an outsourcing strategy. The virtual company is extreme in the sense that it has outsourced key functions such as purchasing, manufacturing, R&D, marketing and sales while keeping only the strategic management in-house. This means that the virtual company basically builds on an overall vision, a corporate strategy, a business strategy and managers responsible for selecting the best-suited suppliers for the specific activities, and for coordinating the supplier network (Momme, 2001). The production cooperation in the field of beer manufacturing can also be defined as the creation of a virtual organization, which is accurately defined by its early interpretations. A virtual organization is a geographically distributed organization whose members are bound by a long-term common interest or goal, and who communicate and coordinate their work through information technology. Such an organization, in the opinion of K. Perechuda, is a management model implemented in enterprises searching for opportunities to improve performance by focusing on investments in intangible resources.

A virtual organization not only does not possess administrative mechanisms, central supervision and coordination positions but also does not have shared buildings and structures, therefore, in terms of tangible assets is an empty set. A virtual organization can be defined as a dynamic set of participants that, through co-sharing key capabilities and resources, aim at the pursuit of common goals. These networks are artificial creations, based on individual key com-

petences and integrate independent companies along the common value chain.

It is claimed that most business, government and scientific projects and processes today have very prominent virtual dimensions (Cogburn, 2019). The changing market environment, global competition, rapidly fluctuating customer demands and more complex global network of supply chains require new production conceptions and technologies. Novel supply chain paradigms are forms in order to increase and maintain competitiveness of companies. New organization and cooperation forms are created, e.g. the members of an Agile Supply Chain form a virtual enterprise, which supports the fast and flexible fulfillment of changing customers' demands (Kovács, 2017). A virtual enterprise is a temporary cooperation of enterprises in which the members share their skills, competencies, equipment and human resources for the purpose of a more efficient operation (Kovács and Kot, 2016). When summing up the concepts referred to, it should be concluded that business cooperation can take different forms and scope but it is always the tool of achieving business advantages (Havierníková, 2016).

4. Contract brewing in practice - the case of Poland

The first contract brewery in Poland was "Stary Kraków" (2005–2007) which, however, ceased its activity after two years of operation. Therefore, the Pinta brewery, which has been operating up to the present, is recognized as the forerunner of this movement in Poland. In 2011 the Pinta brewery introduced the first new-wave craft beer to the Polish market called "Atak Chmielu" (Hop Attack). The brewery conducts its activity using the experience the founders have gained as home brewers, the organizers of beer festivals and contests, the authors of articles and books on beer. The Pinta brewery, intensively making use of the cooperation with bricks-and-mortar breweries, has provided more than 100 different beers in the market. The brewery develops recipes, purchases raw materials, experiments as well as brews and bottles beer in partner breweries. In years 2017-2018, under the Smart Growth Operational Program 2014-2020, the Pinta brewery developed the project on the implementation of an innovative technology of intensification of physical and chemical changes while manufacturing wort in the brewery worth more than 10 million PLN. The objective of the project was the purchase of a new technology, its implementation and the startup of new processes on its basis. Within the framework of the project implementation, the BROWAR Pinta Sp. z o.o. company aimed at purchasing the technology in the form of unpatented technical expertise, commissioning the manufacture of the technological line for beer production, including the boiler making use of the previously purchased technology. Moreover, the objective of the project was to build the production plant in which the technological line with an innovative technological solution would be placed. In spring 2019 Browar Pinta will start brewing beer in the brewery being built in the municipality of Radziechowy-Wieprz near Żywiec. According to the information given by

BROWAR, the production capacity of a new brewery, after setting up, is to amount to 20 thousand hl per year. Eventually, 50 thousand hl of beer can be manufactured there. In the first stage, a complete production building and an administration and social one are being constructed. A new brewery will be equipped with the facilities for brewing and bottling beer. The cost of the whole investment will be nearly 21 million PLN. In the second stage (2019-2020), the company pub with the infrastructure for the brewery visitors will be established. Pinta finances the construction with the funds of the previous co-owners and also two new business partners. The budget of the investment has been supplemented, among others, with the grants from the technological budget of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego (National Economy Bank) of 4.6 million PLN and Śląskie Centrum Przedsiębiorczości (Silesian Center of Entrepreneurship) of more than 1.4 million PLN. Pinta, until the moment of its brewery startup, will remain the so called contract brewery, which brews its beers using two rented breweries in Zawiercie and Zarzecze. The operations of BROWAR PINTA indicate that the cooperation in the field of production, based on the concept of contract brewing, allows for gaining a significant market position as well as the development of the company directed to arising in the form of a brick-and-mortar manufacturing plant.

Another example of the company using the concept of contract brewing is the Karuzela brewery. Due to the use of interpersonal and interorganisational relations realized in the form of outsourcing of the production process, the founders of this brewery, equipped only with knowledge, enthusiasm and entrepreneurial passion, created beers conquering Warsaw. In over a year the Karuzela brewery managed to develop creating a serious brand whose products are available in a growing number of shops and tap bars. From the point of view of the cooperative nature of the conducted activity, the way of promotion and expansion selected by the creators of this venture seems to be interesting. They entered the cooperation with friends in the neighborhood starting to conquer the market from this area. The founders themselves met accidentally, through the portal for home brewers, which allowed them to exchange yeast essential for home beer production. They decided to start a business, beginning on a small scale – to build an own brand and subsequently, possibly, to develop the strategy of development and realize larger investments. The name of the brewery was taken from the history of the district. The pre-war Bielany carousel was known throughout the capital. All the beers also relate to the places in this area of Warsaw. Wólka, Placówka, Młociny, Chomiczówka, Huta, Piaski, Słodowiec, Wolumen, Ruda or Mary (from Marymont) – are the names of housing estates and sites and the Karuzela beer brands. The brewery perfectly deals with local promotion. It cooperates with other entities on the Bielany "beer map", among others, with pubs famous in the whole city. Join promotion activities are implemented in this area. The founders claim that they operate in this manner because they know each other and mutual promotion is just courtesy. They also emphasize the lack of contracts in this field. Therefore, these operations are based on the founders' social network. The contract production is

realized on the basis of current arrangements with bricks-and-mortar breweries they cooperate with. These breweries are mainly Palatum and Browar Jana. For some beers entrepreneurs buy all raw materials, however, basic malt or pale or pilsner are often purchased from the partner brewery which still gathers them for their own needs. Hop and yeast are bought individually by the Karuzela brewery. The basis for the fermentation process is liquid yeast which is propagated by the Karuzela brewery itself. The Karuzela owners watch the whole brewing process and entirely handle the beer distribution.

Another contract brewery is the Brodacz brewery, operating since 2015, having over 60 different beers in its portfolio. The production in cooperation based on the idea of contract brewing results in the sales of about 100 000 liters of beer annually. The Brodacz owners declare they observe the beer they offer from beginning to end – they control, watch, taste and finally bottle the beer whose production they supervise and brand. Concentrating exclusively on ideas on new beers and their distribution allows Brodacz to offer from a few to several new beers during the year and continue to offer beers popular in previous years. The Brodacz brewery aims at development and also, while following the pattern of the best foreign breweries (BrewDog, Mikkeller), opening the network of brand breweries. Brodacz also reveals the tendency to cooperate by participating in the most important trade fairs.

The idea of the use of contract brewing is favorable for establishing and starting up new economic ventures. The functioning of contract brewery in Poland begins with the fact that the brewer (or a group of brewers) has an idea for brewing own beer, has funds for starting up the company but not for building the brewery. In such a situation, the most popular and easiest method for production and sales of own beer is just brewing it in the physically existing brewery under the contract. The adopted name suggests the existence of the contract, however, its form, in practice, may differ in the case of different breweries. The details of contracts are kept secret by the cooperating enterprises. In some cases, brewing just takes place without a written contract, on the basis of mutual trust. According to D. Siedlecki (2015), the statutory work contract can be treated as a rule (the subject of the contract is beer). Due to the existing regulations concerning beer production and the related restrictions lease is not an appropriate type of contract. However, most frequently, there is used a mixed agreement, e.g. known as the cooperation agreement, the framework agreement which, irrespective of the name, is the contract similar to the work contract. It should be pinpointed that whatever the relationships developed by breweries are, the beer producer (under the law) will not be the contract brewery in any case. This results from the provisions existing in Poland – in order to manufacture beer, one must undergo a range of complicated and costly procedures associated with starting up a bricks-and-mortar brewery. Contract breweries often take the form of enterprises dealing with wholesale trade in alcoholic beverages of up to 4.5% and beer. They order beer from breweries or, actually, participate in the process of its manufacture (which, informally in

the industry, constitutes an important factor determining the possibility of defining the brewery as the contract one), however, all the time the physical owner is the beer owner. The contract brewery, as a “wholesaler” buys beer from the bricks-and-mortar brewery and since then they may freely dispose of it, selling it to other wholesalers, stores and pubs. Mutual settlements between breweries are individual cases, depending on the entity purchasing raw materials, providing bottles, labels and also depending on at which point the contract brewery pays the brewery for brewing beer. In economic practice, each bricks-and-mortar brewery provides its production capacity in a different way and each contract brewery gets involved in the process of beer manufacture to varying degrees.

The offer of bricks-and-mortar breweries is important for the development of the use of the concept of contract brewing. Some of them provide their services to contract breweries. One of these is Browar Jana. They provide flexible adjustment to the needs of the contract brewery while relating to the characteristics of people standing behind individual initiatives (the slogan: Each beer is different, each one is the history of different people). When cooperating with enterprises Browar Jana may count on comprehensive services: preparation of valuation, support in selection of technological processes, advice on recipes and raw materials, development of labels and also help in launching the beer into the market. In this context, it is worth pinpointing that the models worth following in the conditions of Poland are comprehensive services provided by experienced bricks-and-mortar breweries provided in the USA. An example can be the package of services offered by Brew Hub (Brewhub, 2019) which provides an entirely new business model for the craft brewing industry. Brew Hub is an incubation center for partner-brewers. Their unique solution helps craft brewers overcome production and distribution barriers. This concept allows craft brewers to expand their distribution without the overhead costs of building a new brewery, storing or transporting a product. Partner brewers have full-control of the brewing and packaging process for their own brands to ensure that all specifications are met. In addition to brewing and packaging services, Brew Hub offers assistance in sales, marketing and logistics initiatives as well as legal and government affairs. Brew Hub has the ability to identify marketplace trends, then source, create, and market brands quickly and efficiently to create a distinct competitive advantage at retail. They also offer dedicated, local market brewing/packaging facilities to manufacture and co-pack various beverage products and offer access to the premier distribution channels to address the needs of the industry. The services provided by Brew Hub are highly specialized, adjusted to the market needs in the following areas: (1) Ingredients - malt, hops, yeast propagation; (2) Batch Sizes - up to 100 barrel batches; (3) Mashing Strategies - simple infusion and multiple temperature step programs; (4) Aging. (5) Custom Hopping Schemes; (6) Finishing. Brew Hub has a sophisticated laboratory and an extensive quality assurance program. They are able to provide for each batch: (1) Physical Analysis; (2) Microbiological Analysis; (3) Chemical Analysis; (4) Sensory Analysis -

Semi-quantitative taste panel analysis can be run on all new batches and trends established.

Summing up, it should be pinpointed that the contact brewery is the business venture dealing with beer production, not possessing its own equipment but only renting production capacity in the brewing plant. Contract breweries, by model, have their own brewer, individually develop the recipe and individually prepare beer in the rented brewery. On the other hand, the contract brewery is not the company trading in beer whose manufacture has been commissioned by another brewing plant. In the brewing industry the term of the so called “craft spirit” is referred to. It is just the element which determines the need to independently watch the whole process by brewers and participate in subsequent production stages to maintain the quality and the expected parameters. The beer meeting these industrial, informal and non-codified standards may be offered in the market under the label of the contract brewery, which is responsible for its promotion and distribution. Market analysis, both in terms of supply and demand, indicates that, it is welcome and even desired in the market to reveal the contract specificity of the brewery if it actually is the one. Among the people interested in the problem of craft brewing there are discussions whether the contract brewery can be called the crafted one.

As a summary, it is worth recalling the data relating to the number of contract breweries in Poland. According to Piwna Zwrotnica, an independent publisher analyzing the craft beer market, in years 2014-18, in Poland, 286 new craft breweries were established, and 6906 beer types were launched. A total number of new contract breweries established in this period is 139 (nearly 49% of all the established breweries). An important practice and beneficial for the industry is transforming contract breweries into brick-and-mortar ones. In 2017 three contract breweries started their stationary production. One bricks-and-mortar brewery was established exclusively for the needs of two contract breweries. Compared to the previous years, 2018 was the record-breaking year – both in relation to the number of bricks-and-mortar breweries and the contract ones. An interesting fact is that among contract breweries two of them initiated brewing with their own equipment. In 2018 another brewery designed only for contract breweries was set up. Along with an increase in the number of new breweries, there is still a trend of leaving the market by some contract breweries. In 2018 about 13 breweries did not show any activity, which indicates great dynamism of the market, uncertainty of operation but also developmental changes directed to the transformation of contract breweries into bricks-and-mortar ones.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The characteristics of contract brewing implies that it is a specific business model. Most perspectives on models include the firm’s offerings and activities undertaken to produce them. The management must take into account the company’s value proposition, select the activities it will undertake within the company and determine how the company fits into the value creation network. Based on Schum-

peter’s theory of economic development, value is created from unique combinations of resources producing innovations, while transaction cost economics identifies transaction efficiency and boundary decisions as a value source. The business model construct builds upon central ideas in business strategy and its related theoretical traditions. Most specifically, it builds upon the value chain concept and the extended notions of value systems and strategic positioning. Models implicitly or explicitly address the internal competencies underlying a company’s competitive advantage. This is compliant with the resource-based theory, where the company is regarded as a bundle of resources and capabilities. Competitive advantage can arise from superior execution of specific activities within the company’s internal value chain, superior coordination among those activities or superior management of the interface between the company and others in the value network (Morris et al., 2005). In the case of contract breweries, own skills and resources are important, allowing the effective recognition of market needs and development of recipes and also access to external resources of companies manufacturing beer. An appropriate combination of the resources used and outsourcing of the selected functions of the value chain of the contract brewery and also the decision on the scope and intensity of cooperation within the framework of the outsourced functions creates the core of the business model of contract breweries whereas these models and their use lead to the diversity in the operation of these breweries and, simultaneously, to diversity in the competitive position, competitiveness and, eventually, their performance.

Contract brewing is a part of the beer business, which has not been explored enough, however, the analysis of the functioning of enterprises operation on the basis of this concept leads to the conclusion that contract brewing is an interesting phenomenon in terms of modern business management practice and entrepreneurship. Contract brewing can be regarded as a business model (Morris et al., 2005; Osterwalder and Pigneur, 2010; Zott, et al., 2011) which is flexibly adjusted by cooperation parties to the recognized market conditions. Although it is based on well-known and frequently used concepts of enterprise management, also in the area of production, its specificity is firmly embedded in social networks and the cooperation in the field of production takes place on the basis of informal interorganisational agreements, based on agreements between entrepreneurs.

In the case of contract breweries, generally, the following remain in the hands of the “brewery”: the idea for the beer, the recipe and broadly understood marketing activities. Therefore, the key competencies include: the knowledge of the market and consumer needs (selection of recipes) as well as creating the image of the brewery and the beer, their advertising and beer distribution. The elements of the value chain remaining at the disposal of the contract brewery require intensive interorganisational cooperation as well as creating, sustaining and using human relationships, due to which one may obtain necessary information and implement tasks in the area of marketing ending with distribution itself. Contract brewing is not only a great startup strategy for aspiring brewers, but also an appropriate solution for brewers

looking to expand. Although most contract brewing relationships are symbiotic, one may state that the contractor is greatly at the mercy of its host.

Contract brewing is an interesting and complex problem the specificity of which emerges on several levels. Firstly, it is a special way to emerge in the market of craft beers, even while not possessing significant funds by the entrepreneur. Secondly, it is a form of cooperation in the field of production which unites efforts on the side of both the customer and the contractor since it is not limited to normal outsourcing of production to an external entity but involves physical production capacity of the contractor and technological know-how of both cooperation parties. Thirdly, the discussed form of cooperation is firmly embedded in human relationships. Fourthly, it can generate co-competition-like relations since the brewery accepting the order may conduct its own activity related to production and sales of beer under its own brand. Therefore, the specific conditions of cooperation between market rivals occur. However, this competition takes place in the conditions of the “craft spirit” which carries a strong load of acceptance for and promotion of all forms of cooperation.

The flexibility of contract breweries deserves attention since, in some cases, their transformation into bricks-and-mortar breweries takes place. This indicates a dual nature of contract breweries. Some of them are the initiatives established with a view to permanent contract brewing whereas others are the ones of a temporary nature for which outsourcing of production allows for concentrating on recipes and marketing and, after achieving the desired level of development of distribution channels and occupying the specific market segment, these companies begin the implementation of production processes on their own at the same time becoming independent of their partners and their target form of activity is just the bricks-and-mortar-brewery. One may expect that there is a third form of contract breweries. While assuming that entrepreneurial strategies may be emergent in their nature and planning does not often include the strategic period, some enterprises may be subjected to the transformation into bricks-and-mortar breweries under the influence of current experiences and recognition of development opportunities during current activities in the form of contract breweries.

The present paper is an attempt to draft the image of contract brewing, however, this problem requires further exploration. It would be advisable, among others, to thoroughly examine the co-competitive relationships between the parties to cooperation in beer production and also to recognize the specificity of social networks laying the grounds for this cooperation.

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合同酿造 – 工艺酿造业的生产型合作

關鍵詞

生产合作
精酿啤酒
外包
商业模式
酿造业

摘要

企业管理的目标。波兰的精酿啤酒销量正在快速增长。工艺啤酒占波兰啤酒总销售额的0.5%左右。该行业的流行做法是合同酿造。这在生产，合作，外包，网络和虚拟组织以及合作中都是一个有趣的现象。这是一种特定的商业模式。合同酿造是一个复杂的问题，正在几个层面上出现。首先，在工艺市场上出现了一种特殊的方式。其次，它不仅限于外部承包商的生产。合作双方的专业知识。第三，它牢牢地嵌入人际关系中。第四，它可以产生合作关系。
