



Research on the Brand Internationalization Strategy of BYD's New Energy Vehicle

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Abstract

This paper explores the brand internationalization strategy of BYD, a leading Chinese manufacturer of electric vehicles (EVs), focusing on the underlying motivations, opportunities, and challenges faced in the global marketplace. The study examines the reasons behind BYD's strategic shifts, including the necessity to diversify revenue sources and mitigate risks associated with reliance on the saturated domestic market. Furthermore, it analyses the advantages of leveraging technological innovations and manufacturing capabilities while addressing the concerns regarding market perceptions of Chinese brands. Additionally, this research investigates specific steps undertaken by BYD to implement its international strategy, including local manufacturing establishment and partnerships, alongside potential challenges such as quality control issues and competitive pressures from well-established global players. Finally, the paper proposes actionable improvement measures aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of BYD's internationalization efforts. Through this comprehensive analysis, the study contributes valuable insights into the dynamics of brand internationalization in the rapidly evolving electric vehicle sector.

Subject Areas

International Business, Marketing, Strategic Management, Innovation and Technology Management

Keywords

New Energy Vehicles (NEVs), Electric Vehicles (EVs), BYD, Brand Internationalization, Global Expansion, Strategy, SWOT, Localization, Battery Technology

1. Background to Study

The electrification of transportation is not merely a trend; it represents a funda-

mental shift towards sustainability that is reshaping global automotive markets [1]. In this context, BYD (Build Your Dreams), a leading Chinese manufacturer of electric vehicles (EVs), has emerged as a pivotal player by spearheading innovative strategies for internationalization. Founded in the late 1990s, BYD has evolved from a battery manufacturer into a dominant force in the global electric vehicle arena, continually adapting its business model to meet the demands of diverse markets [2]. This paper aims to analyze the intricacies of BYD's brand internationalization strategy, exploring the motivations behind its global expansion, the advantages and disadvantages faced, and the specific steps it has taken to establish a robust presence beyond China.

Central to understanding BYD's international strategy is the concept of market diversification, which mitigates the risks associated with the saturated domestic market. As global demand for electric vehicles surges, driven by environmental concerns and policy support, BYD's strategic embarkation into international markets reflects a calculated response to capitalize on emerging opportunities. However, navigating the complexities of globalization also exposes BYD to challenges such as fluctuating market demands, regional competition, and perceptions surrounding the quality of Chinese-made products [3]. By delving into these dynamics, this research offers insight into how BYD is positioning itself not only as a leader in the electric vehicle sector but also as a key contender in the broader automotive industry.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Literature Review

A systematic literature review will complement the case study analysis by synthesizing existing research related to brand internationalization strategies in the electric vehicle sector [4]. This literature review aims to identify gaps in the current body of knowledge regarding internationalization strategies employed by similar companies, as well as the broader trends in the electric vehicle market.

The literature review process will include:

- 1) Defining Research Scope: Focusing on brand internationalization strategies in the electric vehicle sector, specifically within the context of Chinese manufacturers [5].
- 2) Identifying Literature: Conducting searches of academic databases, industry journals, and other relevant sources to gather existing research studies, articles, and reports related to the topic.
- 3) Critical Analysis: Evaluating the findings from the literature, identifying key themes, trends, and conflicting viewpoints.

This comprehensive literature review will provide a theoretical foundation for understanding BYD's strategic initiatives, framing its internationalization process within the existing scholarly discourse.

2.2. SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis will be conducted to evaluate BYD's internal strengths and

weaknesses, as well as the external opportunities and threats present in the international electric vehicle market [6]. This strategic tool will facilitate a structured examination of BYD's market position and strategic outlook.

The SWOT analysis will involve:

- 1) Strengths: Assessing BYD's technological advantages, brand reputation, cost-effectiveness, and manufacturing capabilities.
- 2) Weaknesses: Identifying internal challenges such as quality perceptions, supply chain vulnerabilities, and market entry barriers.
- 3) Opportunities: Exploring potential markets for expansion, favourable government policies supporting EV adoption, and emerging consumer trends favouring sustainable mobility.
- 4) Threats: Analysing competitive pressures from established global players, evolving regulations, and economic uncertainties impacting consumer demand.

2.3. Comparative Analysis

A comparative analysis will be utilized to benchmark BYD's internationalization strategy against its competitors in the electric vehicle sector [7]. This method will involve a systematic comparison of strategies, market performance, and operational practices of leading global EV manufacturers, such as Tesla, Nissan, and Volkswagen.

The comparative analysis will include:

- 1) Defining Comparison Criteria: Establishing key performance indicators such as market share, growth rates, technological innovation, and consumer satisfaction metrics.
- 2) Conducting Research: Gathering data on competitors through market reports, financial statements, and industry analyses.
- 3) Performing Analysis: Evaluating BYD's performance relative to competitors to identify strategic advantages and areas for improvement.

The insights gained from the comparative analysis will inform strategic recommendations for BYD, highlighting best practices and potential pitfalls observed in competitor strategies [8].

3. Reasons for Brand Internationalization Strategy

China's emergence as the largest electric vehicle (EV) market globally has set the stage for BYD, one of its flagship new energy vehicle manufacturers, to reconsider its growth trajectory beyond domestic boundaries [9]. There are multiple interwoven reasons why BYD has decisively implemented a brand internationalization strategy, each driven by both internal competencies and external market forces. Key reasons include market saturation in China, supportive policies and stringent environmental regulations, technological maturity, and a clear strategic vision, all of which coalesce to shape BYD's approach to global expansion [10].

3.1. Market Saturation in China

The Chinese EV market has experienced explosive growth in recent years, with

BYD's sales volume contributing significantly to this surge [11]. However, the rapid development and intensifying competition within China's domestic market have begun to yield diminishing marginal returns. As of 2024, BYD's market share increased from 12.5% in 2023 to 17.1%, overtaking long-standing competitors like Volkswagen, yet this growth partly reflects the intense saturation of the market rather than unlimited expansion potential. The concentration of EV players across China, combined with a maturing consumer base and policy shifts aimed at stabilizing the industry, means that the opportunity for BYD to continue exponentially growing solely within domestic borders is limited [12]. This saturation compels BYD to seek new markets overseas where demand remains nascent but promises rapid growth, allowing the company to maintain its momentum and scale. Expanding abroad is therefore not only a growth imperative but also a measured response to market maturity at home, illustrating BYD's pragmatic recognition of limits inherent to domestic markets.

3.2. Policy Support and Environmental Regulations

Policy dynamics both within China and in overseas markets play a pivotal role in accelerating BYD's international endeavors. Domestically, China's robust support for new energy vehicles—reflected through subsidies, infrastructure investments, and legislative encouragement—has fortified BYD's competitive edge in battery and vehicle manufacturing. More importantly, the global urgency surrounding climate change and increasingly stringent environmental regulations worldwide make electric vehicles a critical engine for future mobility [13]. Government policies in regions like Southeast Asia, the European Union, and parts of Latin America are aligning toward electrification, offering BYD policy windows for entry and expansion. Recognizing these favorable policy landscapes, BYD has strategically positioned production facilities in Thailand, Hungary, Brazil, and Indonesia, thereby leveraging local incentives and circumventing trade barriers through on-site manufacturing. Furthermore, the uncertainty arising from U.S. trade restrictions and tariffs pushes BYD to diversify risk by strengthening presence in markets with more welcoming regulatory regimes. The convergence of domestic policy backing and international environmental mandates underscores not only a regulatory push, but a market pull that fundamentally catalyzes BYD's internationalization ambitions.

3.3. Technological Maturity

A fundamental enabler of brand internationalization for BYD is its technological maturity and innovation capacity, especially in battery technology [5]. BYD boasts proprietary control over the three core EV powertrain technologies: batteries, electric motors, and electric controls, setting the company apart with advanced lithium iron phosphate (LFP) batteries, encapsulated in its pioneering Blade Battery design. This proprietary technology, celebrated for safety, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness, constitutes a substantive ownership advantage critical for competing in diverse international markets [14]. Technological self-reliance facilitates

BYD's vertically integrated production model, allowing for cost advantages and adaptability in global supply chains. Moreover, the company's plans to introduce next-generation solid-state batteries by 2027 symbolize its forward-looking approach to sustaining technological leadership even as competitors continuously evolve. Technological depth not only bolsters product competitiveness but also enhances brand credibility internationally, enabling BYD to meet stringent performance and safety standards demanded by foreign consumers and regulators alike.

3.4. Strategic Vision

Beyond tactical responses to market and technological conditions, BYD embodies a deliberate strategic vision that shapes its path to global brand internationalization. Since its inception, BYD's leadership, including founder Wang Chuanfu and key executives like Stella Li, have articulated an ambition to transcend China-centric operations by embedding the company within global automotive ecosystems (Steve Hanley, 2024). This vision draws inspiration from established Japanese and South Korean automakers that successfully transitioned from domestic strongholds to global players [15]. BYD's strategic internationalization is characterized by a multi-pronged approach: beginning with cost-competitive exports, followed by local production footprints, strategic partnerships for distribution, and aggressive brand-building through global marketing initiatives. The company aims to morph from a battery specialist and EV manufacturer into a household name in multiple continents, mitigating geopolitical risks and fostering sustainable long-term growth. The vision is underscored by a willingness to adapt, innovate, and localize operations to suit diverse regional demands, reflecting a blend of bold ambition and pragmatic execution [16].

The rationale behind BYD's brand internationalization strategy is multifaceted, grounded in response to domestic market realities and driven by proactive leveraging of policy environments, technological assets, and strategic foresight. As China's EV market edges toward saturation, BYD's pivot to international markets becomes an imperative for sustained growth. Supported by robust government incentives both at home and abroad, BYD capitalizes on its technological maturity to differentiate itself and build credibility overseas. Concurrently, its visionary leadership guides a comprehensive expansion strategy that balances rapid scaling with consideration for geopolitical and regulatory complexities globally [17]. Together, these factors reveal a thoughtfully orchestrated approach, positioning BYD not just as a Chinese EV leader but as an emerging global automotive powerhouse prepared to shape—and thrive in—the evolving energy transition landscape.

4. Specific Steps and Practice in Implementation

BYD's brand internationalization strategy unfolds through a meticulously orchestrated set of steps and practices that respond to the complex demands of global markets [18]. This multifaceted approach integrates localization, overseas manu-

facturing, strategic alliances, and after-sales network development. Each element is designed not only to navigate regulatory and market-entry barriers but also to forge strong connections with regional consumers and stakeholders, ultimately reinforcing BYD's global brand presence [19].

4.1. Localization

Localization lies at the core of BYD's international expansion, embodying a strategic commitment to tailoring products, services, and operations to resonate with local markets. Recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach would prove ineffective amid regional diversity, BYD actively adapts its vehicle design, marketing campaigns, and customer engagement strategies to reflect local cultural preferences and regulatory requirements [20]. This practice is evident in BYD's differentiated product offerings across Europe, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, where models are customized to address budget sensitivities, driving conditions, and consumer expectations specific to each region.

Beyond product adaptation, BYD prioritizes localization in its workforce by hiring local employees and management teams [18]. This facilitates deeper market understanding, smoother integration with community and governmental institutions, and enhances brand credibility. For example, BYD's European operations rely heavily on a local talent base, enabling the company to engage more effectively with European stakeholders and adapt swiftly to evolving market demands [21]. This localized human capital strategy also reinforces BYD's image as a global yet regionally embedded player rather than an external challenger.

4.2. Overseas Manufacturing

Central to BYD's internationalization efforts is the establishment of overseas manufacturing facilities [22]. This strategic step serves dual purposes: circumventing import tariffs and reducing logistical complexities and signaling long-term commitment to host countries [23]. BYD's factories in Hungary, Thailand, Brazil, and Turkey exemplify this approach, each positioned to serve regional markets with an efficient supply chain and localized production advantages.

The Hungarian plant, slated to produce key models such as the Atto 3 BEV SUV and later expand to other segments, represents a flagship of BYD's European manufacturing ambitions. Meanwhile, the Turkish facility focuses on plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), aligning with regional consumer preferences amid challenges posed by EU tariffs on pure battery electric vehicles (BEVs). By manufacturing on-site, BYD not only mitigates cost disadvantages but also accrues goodwill as a local employer and economic contributor.

This capability for flexible regional production is enhanced by BYD's vertical integration, which enables the company to produce key components, such as batteries, in-house and support overseas assembly with streamlined supply flows [24]. Such integration optimizes costs and maintains consistent product quality worldwide, fostering consumer confidence in emerging markets where trust in

foreign brands may be tentative.

4.3. Strategic Alliances

Forming strategic alliances is a deliberate practice in BYD's internationalization framework, aimed at facilitating rapid market entry and augmenting competitiveness through collaboration [25]. Partnerships with established regional players enable BYD to leverage local networks, distribution channels, and technical expertise, which are crucial for overcoming entry barriers and accelerating brand recognition.

Notably, BYD's collaboration with ride-sharing giant Uber exemplifies the scale and scope of these alliances. The multiyear agreement to deploy 100,000 BYD electric vehicles across global Uber platforms—from Europe to Latin America—exemplifies a symbiotic relationship that expands BYD's reach while supporting Uber's electrification goals. Similarly, partnerships with automotive suppliers like Forvia integrate BYD into local supply chains, facilitating the construction and operation of manufacturing facilities such as the new Hungarian plant. These alliances reduce operational risks and provide BYD with vital insights into consumer and regulatory landscapes, strengthening its market positioning [21].

Moreover, BYD's strategic alliance with Japanese truck manufacturer Hino reflects its ambitions beyond passenger vehicles, targeting commercial battery electric vehicles. This cooperation combines BYD's BEV expertise with Hino's electrification technology and market presence, demonstrating BYD's intent to diversify its portfolio and deepen its global industrial footprint.

5. Challenges in Internalization

The internationalization of BYD, China's leading electric vehicle (EV) manufacturer, marks a significant leap as the company ambitiously expands beyond domestic markets to assert its global presence. Despite its rapid growth and strategic efforts in global brand building, BYD encounters a complex constellation of challenges that test its operational and strategic agility [18]. These challenges are multifaceted, encompassing cultural and regulatory barriers, logistical constraints, difficulties in achieving brand recognition abroad, and sensitive concerns related to technology transfer. Analysing these obstacles reveals not only the intricacies of BYD's internationalization pathway but also the broader tensions faced by emerging market multinationals striving for global legitimacy amid geopolitical and market uncertainties.

5.1. Cultural and Regulatory Barriers

Cultural nuances and regulatory environments in target markets present foundational hurdles for BYD's international expansion [18]. Cultural differences, often underestimated in global strategies, affect consumer perceptions, brand acceptance, and labour relations. For instance, BYD's experience in Brazil highlights the ramifications of such cultural disconnects, where translation and cultural mis-

understandings contributed to serious reputational issues following allegations of “slavery-like” labour conditions at a Brazilian subcontractor’s site. Although BYD swiftly severed ties with the implicated firm and reiterated its commitment to compliance with Brazilian labour laws, the incident underscores the delicate interplay between corporate practices and local socio-cultural expectations on international soil.

Regulatory barriers compound these cultural challenges, varying widely across different jurisdictions and often evolving unpredictably [26]. In Japan, for example, BYD confronts regulatory dynamics shaped by recent modifications to government subsidy programs for EVs, complicating its ability to compete effectively in that market. Similarly, European Union investigations into BYD’s factory operations in Hungary reflect the rigorous scrutiny international regulators apply to Chinese manufacturers, highlighting the compliance pressures stemming from intricate safety, quality, and trade policies. These regulatory frameworks, while aimed at protecting domestic industries and consumers, pose a daunting labyrinth for BYD’s global ambitions, requiring sophisticated adaptive strategies to align operational models with diverse legal landscapes.

5.2. Logistical Constraints

Logistical challenges represent another critical impediment to BYD’s smooth international operation and expansion [18]. Despite BYD’s strengths in vertical integration and supply chain management, unexpected supply chain disruptions and quality control deficits have affected overseas markets. Reports of BYD vehicles arriving with defects—including chipped paint, warped roofs, and Mold—have surfaced publicly, challenging the brand’s reputation for quality and reliability in foreign consumer markets. Such issues point to the difficulties inherent in scaling production and distribution across multiple geographies, where maintaining consistent quality amid complex coordination and varied local supplier ecosystems proves demanding.

Moreover, geopolitical tensions exacerbate these logistical constraints. BYD’s planned manufacturing plant in Mexico illustrates this vividly: the project has experienced significant delays as Chinese authorities hesitate to grant approval over concerns that advanced smart vehicle technologies could inadvertently transfer to the United States due to Mexico’s proximity. This techno-geopolitical caution reflects a broader confluence of supply chain security concerns and international trade tensions, which restrict BYD’s ability to fast-track overseas manufacturing, thereby limiting its operational flexibility and market responsiveness. As a result, BYD must navigate not only conventional supply chain complexities but also the emerging imperative of technology containment—a formidable barrier constraining global deployment of innovation.

5.3. Brand Image Building Challenges

Building a credible and resilient brand image in international markets remains a

critical and ongoing challenge for BYD [27]. Although BYD has made significant strides in scaling its product portfolio and establishing local manufacturing footprints, global consumers often associate Chinese products with lower quality, a stereotype that BYD must actively combat. The publicized quality complaints abroad intensify this image problem, creating a credibility deficit that risks slowing market adoption and alienating potential customers. Consequently, BYD's branding efforts must transcend product performance alone, requiring deliberate investments in reputation management, customer trust-building, and transparent communication to overcome entrenched biases.

Addressing this image challenge includes not merely responding to negative incidents but proactively demonstrating commitment to international standards of quality, service, and corporate responsibility [28]. BYD's strategy involves strengthening after-sales networks, fostering local partnerships, and employing tailored marketing campaigns that emphasize technological innovation and environmental contributions. However, this journey toward brand recognition and acceptance is gradual and punctuated by setbacks, illustrating the latent tensions between swift international growth and the cultivation of sustainable local consumer confidence [29].

5.4. Technology Transfer Concerns

The most sensitive challenge in BYD's internationalization is the concern over technology transfer, which intertwines with political considerations and national security apprehensions. Chinese authorities have delayed approvals for BYD's overseas manufacturing projects, most notably in Mexico, due to fears that the company's sophisticated electric vehicle and smart-car technologies could leak to the United States, given Mexico's geographic closeness. This predicament arises amidst escalating Sino-American trade tensions and intensified scrutiny over the transfer of strategic technologies.

Such technology transfer concerns create significant operational uncertainty for BYD, compelling it to revisit investment schedules and location decisions [30]. The delays in Mexico not only stall potential production capacity but also dampen market momentum and raise costs associated with extended project timelines. Furthermore, these apprehensions illustrate how geopolitical dynamics increasingly penetrate corporate strategies, particularly for companies operating at the forefront of technology in contested sectors. BYD's situation highlights the fragile balance emerging market giants must strike: to internationalize and scale technologies globally while navigating the restrictive policies of their home governments and host countries.

6. Recommendations for Improvement

The globalization journey of BYD, a prominent player in new energy vehicles, is marked by both significant achievements and formidable challenges. To sustain and amplify its international momentum, BYD must adopt comprehensive stra-

tegic improvements that address foundational aspects of global business operations [18]. These improvements encompass enhanced market research, refined brand storytelling, strategic hiring practices, strengthened global research and development (R&D), and bolstered supply chain resilience. Collectively, these recommendations form an integrated framework to elevate BYD's capacity to navigate complex international markets, reinforcing its competitive edge and long-term sustainability.

Enhanced Market Research: Building Deep Local Insights

A cornerstone of successful internationalization lies in the precision and depth of market research. BYD's current expansion across diverse regions inherently exposes the company to varying consumer preferences, regulatory frameworks, and competitive landscapes. Therefore, BYD should intensify its efforts in comprehensive market intelligence gathering with a focus on cultural, economic, and socio-political intricacies unique to target countries. This entails deploying localized research methodologies such as online surveys with foreign consumers, in-depth competitor analyses, and detailed industry studies that contextualize market dynamics beyond surface-level metrics.

By gaining a nuanced understanding of local regulatory constraints and consumer behaviour, BYD can better tailor its product offerings and service models, pre-emptively identifying risks and opportunities. Moreover, this enhanced research approach facilitates agile decision-making and adaptation of marketing strategies, offsetting the cultural and regulatory barriers that previously challenged BYD's global endeavours. Such market-oriented insight, coupled with a strategic SWOT analysis, will enable BYD to position its new energy vehicles more effectively and to forecast growth trajectories with greater accuracy.

6.1. Improve Supply Chain Resilience: Ensuring Agility and Continuity

Supply chain resilience stands as a critical capability for BYD given the complexities of global manufacturing, coordination, and geopolitical uncertainties. To mitigate disruptions and sustain operational excellence, BYD must adopt a multifaceted supply chain resilience strategy focused on flexibility, diversification, and technological integration.

Mapping the supply chain comprehensively will illuminate vulnerabilities, allowing BYD to proactively develop alternate sourcing strategies and logistic routes [31]. Expanding relationships with multiple suppliers and incorporating near-shoring options reduce dependency on singular geographies and ease transit bottlenecks. Simultaneously, implementing real-time tracking and centralized information sharing enhances supply chain visibility, enabling rapid responses to delay or quality issues. Integrating advanced forecasting and inventory management techniques balances demand uncertainties with cost considerations, while strategic buffer inventories safeguard against sudden disruptions.

Moreover, BYD's embrace of flexible warehousing, asset-light logistics solutions, and ecosystem partnerships bolsters agility and cost-effectiveness in diverse markets [32]. The digital transformation of supply chain operations through sophisticated analytics and automated workflows not only expedites decision-making but also reinforces data integrity necessary for regulatory compliance worldwide. These measures collectively underpin BYD's capacity to deliver high-quality products consistently across international borders, preserving brand reputation and customer satisfaction amid challenges.

6.2. Strengthen Global R&D: Driving Innovation and Localization

Robust research and development underpin BYD's technological leadership in the new energy vehicle sector [33]. To maintain this advantage, BYD should expand and coordinate its global R&D efforts, harnessing diverse pools of scientific talent and regional innovation hubs to accelerate product development attuned to local market demands.

A decentralized R&D model synergizing the expertise of centres dispersed across key regions supports the development of adaptable technologies tailored for diverse regulatory and consumer contexts. This approach not only promotes innovation efficiency but also circumvents trade barriers and technological transfer risks by incorporating local standards and preferences directly into product design [34]. By investing in innovative battery technologies and vehicle electrification features within global teams, BYD strengthens its vertical integration and ensures quality consistency worldwide. Additionally, collaboration with academic institutions and industry partners globally can augment BYD's innovation ecosystem, promoting sustainable competitive differentiation.

7. Conclusion

In summary, BYD's brand internationalization strategy embodies a calculated response to both internal imperatives and external market dynamics, illustrating a nuanced interplay between growth ambitions and operational pragmatism [35]. By addressing the saturation of the domestic market, leveraging favourable policy frameworks, capitalizing on technological maturity, and executing a visionary global expansion plan, BYD has effectively positioned itself as a formidable contender in the international new energy vehicle landscape. However, the journey is not without its complexities, as cultural and regulatory barriers, logistical constraints, challenges in brand image cultivation, and technology transfer concerns continue to test the resilience and adaptability of the company [36]. To navigate these challenges, strategic improvements such as enhanced market research, compelling brand storytelling, strategic talent acquisition, coordinated global R&D efforts, and robust supply chain resilience are vital. These measures will not only strengthen BYD's competitive position but also enable it to build enduring connections with diverse global markets, fostering sustainable growth. Ultimately, BYD's internationalization trajectory underscores the importance of aligning technolog-

ical innovation with localized market insights and operational excellence, paving the way for its evolution from a domestic market leader to a globally recognized automotive powerhouse poised to influence the future of sustainable mobility.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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