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Accademia Perduta | Romagna Teatri
an example of the importance of a solid network

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ACCADEMIA PERDUTA | ROMAGNA TEATRI:

AN EXAMPLE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF A SOLID NETWORK

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Introduction

The subject of the dissertation is the company Accademia Perduta, the willing is to understand which are the organizational aspects that make it such a peculiar and efficient example of working network.

Accademia Perduta is a multipurpose theatre organization specialized in one hand in production and distribution of original plays, in the other in managing of theatre venues. The company, despite the dimension of the business and the importance, has not a clear definition of the internal structure and the aims at which it tend are more than vague. The research has originated from the desire to understand the internal logics and, consequently, clarify the implications.

We will now briefly see which are the main characteristics that make Accademia Perduta an interesting case to study. If we consider the ability to survive and grow through years as criteria to measure success, this organization has for sure a story to tell. The company members managed to follow a consistent path that step-by-step brought them, in thirty years, to evolve from a little production company to a well establish theatre institution that enjoy a really good reputation within the field. This aspect becomes even more impressive if we contextualize the exception in the Italian suffering Alive Performing Arts panorama, afflicted by a chronic lack of funds and an operators' tendency to a static attitude. As aggravating factor, we also should consider the economic crisis and the consequent cut of the public grants on which almost every single institution rely in order to keep working, to survive. We will demonstrate that Accademia Perduta has been able to develop collateral strategies, exploring also different patterns, in order to overcome the complex economic juncture. We will try to identify which have been the key moments of the Accademia's history, how they have been faced using the knowledge and awareness enhancement to boost a collective improvement process. We will, then, focus on the structure that is the tool used to maintain and improve their relations, underlining also the challenges that such a complex network imply. Mostly, the dissertation will discuss the managerial and organizational features, rather than focus the attention on the high aesthetic and dramaturgic level of the productions. Nevertheless the quality of the products the company produces and promotes is surely one of the premises on which the entire research is grounded. In fact, without it Accademia Perduta

wouldn't be the nationally recognized example of remarkable quality and accessibility, opinion that is largely shared among the community and the insiders.

In the first chapter we will recall the most important steps of the Accademia Perduta history, explaining chronologically the main events. The over thirty years of activities of the organization will be divided in two blocks. The first is the description of the primitive stage of the company characterized by a low level of structure and aims complexity. The second block is, instead, the introduction of the multiple business model shifts occurred while the company was growing and the matter of competences enriched. An analysis of the point in common between the national development of the theatre for children and youth and the Accademia's one will complete the first chapter.

The second section represents the core of the research. In this chapter we will discuss the most important aspects of the structure and the setting of the organization under analysis. We will try to define the core activities of Accademia Perduta, and then a deep discussion of their organizational scheme will follow. The aim is to understand how the internal model can be considered a source of competitive advantage. Moreover, in the same chapter, we will introduce the main partners of the company focus our attention on the public ones and discussing the influence they exert on Accademia Perduta. The core section will end with an analysis of the customer sections that the company addresses providing an index of their expectations and the strategies adopted in order to satisfy them.

The last chapter will be all about the exogenous network. A description of the main artistic partners will be provided trying to deploy the effects they have on the service provided by the institution under analysis. The criterion used to divide the nodes of the network is the nature of their artistic production. The idea is to clarify the multifaceted character of the projects in which Accademia Perduta is involved. In this section we will also see which are the strategies that the organization adopt in order to strengthen its links. The very last part of the dissertation will be dedicated to describe the international connections obtained during the years.

In the conclusion we will finally sum up the most important findings underlined by the research.

Research Tools

Participant Observation In order to understand the social and organizational rules I spent few month working with and for Accademia Perduta. As insider I had the chance to observe the relationships between colleges and the working process in the everyday context, the mundane routine and the workload division as it is. This has been the starting point of the research itself, without this first part of discreet but accurate observation this study would suffer of a serious lack of basis. For almost six months I worked in the organization headquarter, side by side with the key people forming the administrative and the organizational team. I learned from each of them the critical aspects of their specific duty and which are the strategies they developed during years in order to overcome or these problems. I've to underline here that each component of the staff has been encouraged to collaborate with me and sharing their knowledge, without this highly collaborative environment the participant observation would have become a counterproductive job, a simply waste of time, but indeed it revealed itself as a true learning opportunity.

Data Analysis The administrative transparency along with the collaborative environment above mentioned allows me to access to every kind of document I ever asked to examine. In fact I collected a quite impressive amount of data. The nature of the research, mostly focused on the implication that the network model have on the functioning of the organization, guided the selection of the useful information. Therefore the most important documents that have been used for the draft of the dissertation are: the agreements between the Accademia Perduta and the municipalities, the contracts signed by the artists, and the reports written for the ministry and the region.

Interviews I also had the opportunity to interview the members of the staff and I met some of the institutional and artistic partners of Accademia Perduta. During the interviews the stress has been mostly pointed on the institutional set-up perception, the relationships system, the dynamic tasks division scheme, and the history of the organization in order to understand the business model creation path and adjustments.

1 Accademia Perduta | Romagna Teatri, from a little production company to the nowadays versatile institution

In the first and second paragraphs we will recall the most significant stages of the organization's evolution process: from the origins to the current set-up; then a picture of the Theatre for children and youth development in Italy will be provided in the following section.

1.1 The early days: from production to management

The theatre production company Accademia Perduta has been created in the early '80s: it was formed by a little group of young actors coming from drama academies. Since the beginnings the theatre branch chosen was the Theatre for children and youth. The project got off thanks to an arrangement with the municipality of Lugo¹, the town government decided to grant a loan to the company and to ensure them a space for rehearsals in order to sustain the production of their first original script. Being it a loan, the group was suppose to return the amount of money provided by the municipality, therefore the parts agreed to use as payback the 10% of each cachet earned by the company with the funded show. This arrangement soon turned unprofitable for the company: the 10% of the revenues of each rerun has, since the first season, largely outreached the amount of money granted by the municipality. Starting from the second year the agreement slightly changed, in fact it was specified that the negotiated revenue percentage would be due to the city of Lugo just until the company would have covered the amount of the loan obtained. The popularity of the group grown so fast that a journalist, impressed by quality of the performances, informed them that behind the Forli's Casa del Popolo² some voluntaries had just completed to build a medium size theatre that, once finished, remained with the artistic direction vacant. The journalist suggested to

¹ Lugo, Ravenna, Emilia Romagna.

² Casa del Popolo were spaces initially fostered by the Italian Social Party (end of XIX century) then acquired by the Italian Communist Party, structures mainly used by party members in order to promote activities with recreational, cultural, cooperative and charitable purposes. They used to be in each little community also to suggest the attachment of the Party to local community. Nowadays with the dissolution of PCI the Casa del Popolo are been turned in different business or in Democratic Party department. The idea behind those institutions is pretty similar to the one behind the French Maison du Peuple or to the German Volkshaus.

Accademia Perduta components to submit a project to the theatre owners in order to get the management of the season portion dedicated to children and youth, and they eventually obtained it. It is how the first brick of the Accademia Perduta penetrations in the Romagna territory has been placed: it was still the 1982. After just one year of collaboration, Accademia Perduta signed a contract with the owners of the Piccolo Theatre, the Casa del Popolo administrators as beforehand mentioned, to rent the venue. In a competences growing perspective, the members of the group decided to undertake this new challenge. They suddenly had to learn how to manage a venue considering all the aspects: from the artistic one to the regular maintenance that a structure requires. They started to organize the prose, the ballet, and the comedy seasons, making a further step along the path that brought them to become the institution they are nowadays. The natural implication was the urgency of a network development at an upper level: in fact, in order to present an enjoyable season a theatre manager must have connections with other similar institutions that he trusts in in terms of quality of the products and reliability. The components of Accademia Perduta had to learn how to simultaneously keep improving the artistic performance and acquire the set of skills needed for the new venture. With hindsight, we can assert that they succeeded in it since they still successfully manage the Piccolo Theatre, and the contract ruling the relationship between the owners and the company is still pretty much the same it was thirty years ago.

It was the 1983 when, with the rental of the Forli's theatre, they basically changed the business model of their venture shifting the focus from the pure theatre production to the more complex management of venues, even if they still carried on staging new creations.



Figure 1 Chronological development of Accademia Perduta (first stages)

1.2 The growth: the development of the network

We will now see the development of the network of Accademia Perduta in Romagna that brought this group to become the leader in the management of theatres in the zone, and one of the biggest in the whole Italy.

With the first successful seasons of the Piccolo Theatre of Forlì the managerial talent of Accademia Perduta started to be recognized by locals. It arose the interest of the mayor of Meldola³, that just few years later involved the group in a new challenge. He offered to Accademia Perduta to administer the, just renovate, theatre of the town. We will consider the starting of the collaboration between Accademia Perduta and the Meldola Municipality as a further step in the business model development of the group. In fact, if with Forlì they enlarged their matter of competence adding management to production, accepting the proposal of the Meldola mayor Accademia Perduta became automatically the embryonic version of what they are now: it was the first elementary unit of their, nowadays wider and articulate, network. Here we are just discussing the chronological development of the organization, we will later analyse which have been the implications of the network growth and how they coped with the different public texture they have found in each city they gained during the years.

Following the Meldola example many municipalities, during those thirty years of activity, have signed management agreements with Accademia Perduta. Not each of these collaborations has lasted for long though, some of them have been actually pretty short experiences. This is not to be considered an unsuccessful result, at the contrary, it is totally coherent with the organization principles where a qualitative relation weighs more than a quantitative accumulation of meaningless contracts. We will now list the bonds that last for the longest time, the one that has been included in the network since the very beginnings and are still part of it, what we can consider the pillars of Accademia Perduta.

³ a little centre in Forlì-Cesena province

| Theatre | Municipality | Year of acquisition | Accademia Perduta involvement typology |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Piccolo | FORLÌ | 1982/1983 | Entire Program |
| Dragoni | MELDOLA | 1985/1986 | Entire Program |
| Alighieri / Rasi | RAVENNA | 1991/1992 | Program of children and youth theatre and comic theatre |
| Goldoni | BAGNACAVALLO | 1992/1993 | Entire Program |
| Masini | FAENZA | 1994/1995 | Entire Program |
| Comunale | CERVIA | 1994/1995 | Entire Program |

Table 1 Theatres of Accademia Perduta Network updated to 2013

Each of the agreement has his own specificity: it depends from the fact that Accademia Perduta is interested to develop a different collaboration considering the specificity of each situation, to find a match point between the needs of the public institution and the competences of the group for the sake of both. Accademia Perduta penetrated so deeply the territory, that it has been involved with a number of projects with many other towns. We want to underline the fact that a number of other municipalities – such as Brisighella and San Leo – have designed events with the group during the years hosting, in the majority of the cases, summer theatre festivals. Moreover the group has been involved in some significant collaboration with the role of consultant thanks to the skills they acquired along the path. One of the most meaningful examples is the Valmarecchia Theatre Network⁴. The organization under analysis was asked to supervise the designing of the network sharing their knowledge in order to help the Valmarecchia theatres to adapt the Accademia Perduta business model to their peculiar environment.

From an institutional point of view one of the most important occurrence happened in 1988 when the organization under analysis was recognized by the Ministry as an “Organismo Stabile di produzione, promozione e ricerca teatrale per l’infanzia e la gioventù”⁵, and included in the related official list. It meant that they received the quality approval from the State that is not just a mere qualification: it allows the organization to receive more economic and logistic help from the Central Government. Moreover, being included in the just

⁴ <http://www.teatrivalmarecchia.it/homepage.asp>

⁵ “Theatre Company of theatre production, promotion and research for childhood and youth” that is the qualification name given to the groups included in a State list published every year.

mentioned list represent quite a remarkable benefit in terms of reliability, it is a certification signed by the most important institution of the country. I will later frame the birth and the development of the Theatre for children and youth in Italy in order to contextualize the group development in the related frame.

To complete the overview about the history of Accademia Perduta we should also mention the enrichment of the typologies of its artistic experiences. In fact, even if its core production activity is still concentrated on the theatre for children and youth, the company has been involved in many collateral projects. In 2001 they promote a number of show of civic theatre in order to renew the interest about the Ustica disaster. Furthermore, they also have been collaborated in some short films production in the early 2000 and the organization of public events is one of their most successful ventures. A deeper focus on the artistic partnerships will follow later in the last part of the research.

1.3 Theatre for children and youth: Development and Poetics

One of the most important characteristic of the theatre for children and youth is for sure held in the name itself, in fact, is the only theatre branch named after the typology of the public. The stress is on the target to reach, not on the language used as it is usually.

Theatre for children and youth in Italy started to emerge in the end of 70s, is fundamental to have in mind the particular historical period, it was a season of global strong political struggles: a fertile, as much as complex, ground to grow ideas and poetics. We should remind it because it had its influence on the developing of this form of theatre. The belief was to use theatre as a tool for a more aware personal growth recognizing in the children a quite preconception free approach to social and life dilemmas. The original concept was to produce the shows in collaboration with the public itself involving children in the project development process: to create a debate around a topic coming from a shared narrative. The innovative approach to the creative process described is the reason why in the ministerial wording the theatre for children and youth is bundled with the theatre of innovation: it is, in fact, basically considered as a branch of it.

Although during the years this innovative attitude has been slowly abandoned and the productions have become more traditional, especially for what concern the script draft, it is still important to consider the theoretical premises in order to understand the distinctive path that this theatre has followed. These particular conditions of development have also deeply

influenced the distribution on the Italian territory. The willingness to achieve a different and large public brought the companies to work in their own cities and regions, avoiding the well-known phenomena of the centralization of production. Accademia Perduta was one of those little companies surfing the novelty. The story of the group perfectly fits in those just mentioned characteristics: they were a group of young enthusiastic actors interested in developing a dialog with the young public of their own region. They wouldn't be that different from a number of other similar experiences if they didn't last and grow that much acquiring quite quickly the stable identity. The members of Accademia Perduta have been able to build solid roots: to lay the foundations for a long lasting project intended to survive despite the adjustment they did along the way.

Another specificity of the Italian case is that the theatre for children and youth has developed a particular stable vocation. Unlike the other countries tendency, in Italy the companies dedicated to this theatre branch production are often also engaged in venues management. In such a way they tend to become a leading figure for the community around them, they basically acquire an important and recognized social role in the territory. Also in this case we can identify the national trend in the Accademia Perduta model: they are managing a number of theatres in their zone – Romagna – and they definitely have a social role within the community that is more related to all the initiative they encourage, with different levels of involvement, rather than just to the performances they produce.

At the moment the theatre for children and youth is facing a renewed set of problems:

- the economic crisis imposing a relevant decrease of the public grant for culture;
- the fact that the entire sector is getting old, it seems that it doesn't have the same appeal that it used to have for the new generations of actors and in such a way the level of innovation is decreasing;
- the quality of the performances threatens, theatre for children and youth compartment has to pay specific attention not to cross the edge existing between theatre and entertainment.

We actually find Accademia Perduta dealing with the same issues. It recently had to cope with a conspicuous decrease of public grants, especially for what concerns the part coming from municipalities directly, and to develop new strategies in order to maintain the level of their market performances: both from the plays quality and an efficiency point of view. Moreover the artistic and the administrative staff is more or less the same since the beginnings: if from one hand it means a solid stability and harmony, from the other it also limits the innovation boost

because they don't have the chance to confront their beliefs with different fresh perspective during the mundane activities.

For what concern the last point of the above list we should underline that it always has been one of the most important matter for the company. They put a lot of effort in order to avoid trivializing their scripts, consistently taking in mind the difference existing between a theatre drama and an entertainment show. During the research it has been possible to attend personally to more than one discussion about this topic. The arguing about the quality level of each play is an underlying work that starts before the script draft and keep growing during the whole process: the preparation, the rehearsals, the opening, and it goes on even after each performance, in an attempt of continuous improvement.

2 The businesses Model and Institutional Setting

The term Business Model is shrouded in a cloud of fuzziness. Many scholars during the last 20 years have given their own definition of what it is, and what is the purpose of it (Timmers 1998; Hammel 2000; Linder And Cantrell 2000; Well & Vitale 2001; Magretta 2002; Osterwalder 2004) some of them are more focused on the inward dynamics of companies, other are more interested to the mechanisms ruling the service/good delivering to customers. In our analysis we will apply the Osterwalder et al. (2005) definition:

“A business model is a conceptual tool that contains a set of elements and their relationships and allows expressing the business logic of a specific firm. It is a description of the value a company offers to one or several segments of customers and of the architecture of the firm and its network of partners for creating, marketing, and delivering this value and relationship capital, to generate profitable and sustainable revenue streams.”⁶

Starting from this definition we will discuss the Accademia Perduta business model dividing it in four main blocks. First there will be a description of the core activities of the organization in order to clarify which are the most important characteristics of the service delivered. Then the organizational structure through which they manage the inner network will be explained, paying particularly attention on the mechanisms that enhance their success providing value to costumers. The third paragraph will be entirely dedicated to the key institutional partners and how they are relevant for the Accademia Perduta sustainability, providing a noteworthy slice of the fund needed for the organization running. Finally, we will see an analysis of the segments of public that the group targets and the strategy they use in order to meet their demands. The aspects of the internal network nature are going to be the focus of this portion of the analysis, while the links Accademia Perduta established with external realities will be the protagonist of the last chapter, which is meant to integrate this one in order to design a final exhaustive image of the ramified network of the company under analysis.

The total lack of a defined structure and the vague criteria used for the allocation of roles within the group seems to be the most important reason at the basis of this research. It will be

⁶ Osterwalder Alexander, Pigneur Yves, Tucci Christopher L.; Clarifying Business Models: Origins, Present, and Future of the Concept, Communication of Association for Information System, Vol. 15, Article 1, May 2005, p.

discussed how this human resource attitude can be considered simultaneously the most important strength and weakness of Accademia Perduta.

We have to underline here that this is critical analysis developed by an observer, that is not part of the staff, on the bases of a participant observation, data collection and deep focused interviews. It can be taken in consideration to understand if the perception of the organization's values and mechanisms coincide, or diverge, with the ones in the minds of the group members. The aim is to clarify some aspects that in the mundane running of the company are somehow inferred.

2.1 Core Activities

In the first chapter we introduced the two main activities of the company: Accademia Perduta is an institution that, in one side, manages a quite large network of theatrical venue and, in the other, produces original plays of theatre for children and youth.

Being in charge for the functioning of six theatres, in as many cities around the Romagna territory⁷, entails a number of logistic and artistic implications. In order to deliver an enjoyable service to public they have to invest the needed attention to structures maintenance, to ensure the additional services, and to plan and realize the theatre seasons for each venue. This last aspect, the development of the theatre programs, is for sure the more onerous for Accademia Perduta. To meet the customer tastes⁸ and satisfy their expectations is a complex task, being the social fabrics of the different centres in which their structures are located so diverse, Accademia Perduta has to carefully weigh each choice. They learned that a show that is likely to please the audience of one of their theatre won't necessarily satisfy the public of another. In their network they have very different towns, from Faenza to Meldola for example, where the first has a long story of contiguity with arts in general, and the second is a small centre that is basically known for the quality of the restaurants, so not so used to cultural entertainment. The territorial vocations influence greatly the preferences of the citizens and it is fundamental to know and consider them while building the theatrical offer. Caring on with the two towns that we have taken as sample, with the premises we posed, we

⁷ Listed in the first chapter

⁸ "Economists use the term "taste" as a shorthand way of referring to the system of preferences that so clearly affects the pattern of every consumer's demand." Heilbrun James, Grey Charles M.; *The economics of Art and Culture*; Cambridge University Press; 2001 p. 74

can notice how in the season designed for Faenza⁹ we will find an higher level of experimental shows, with many titles of contemporary dance or theatre of research, a complete cultural offer that goes from prose to musical. Looking at the Meldola program¹⁰, instead, we will find a more traditional approach expressed by a combination of classics and comedies. The same accurate work of selection is reproduced for each of the network venues. We should here underline that to plan so many different programs, to meet the different tastes, Accademia Perduta is forced to invest a remarkable amount of energies. They tend to avoid to just replicating the shows in each different location: the idea is to identify the right event and to match it with the correspondent audience. This work implies a multiplication of the plays they buy and present and consequently, at an administrative level, an increased work to manage. The contracts, the promotion, the accounting department are affected by this strategy.

We will later see, more in depth, which are the organizational and administrative implications for Accademia Perduta when their inner network will be presented.

The other core activity of Accademia Perduta is the production of Theatre for Children and Youth plays. Two distinct crews of actors and technicians compose the branch of the company engaged in this activity. One led by Claudio Casadio¹¹ and the other formed by the two actors Maurizio Casali and Carmela Coppola¹². Those two groups are interdependent one to the other at a certain extent because: if it's true that they normally produce their own shows separately, is even more so that they are often involved in the quality evaluation of the final product or to support in the project's development of the other crew. Within the community the performances of those formations are particularly valued and it gives to Accademia Perduta the artistic prestige¹³ that necessary to stay competitive also in this section of the business.

They participated to a number of national and international festivals and won more than one price over time¹⁴ principally thanks to their most famous script: *Pollicino* (2004), interpreted by Claudio Casadio and written by Marcello Chiarenza. But it is not the only successful production they can claim, just to quote the most relevant: *Cipì, il nido incantato* (1991); *Hansel e Gretel* (2000); *I Musicanti di Brema* (2003); *Bandiera, ballata per una foglia* (2006); *Il Pifferaio Magico* (2008) *L'Orchetto* (2010); *Il Bosco delle Storie* (2012) and *Sotto la Neve*

⁹ <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/teatri/teatri.asp?IDTeatro=3>

¹⁰ <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/teatri/teatri.asp?IDTeatro=4>

¹¹ Claudio Casadio is also the vice-president and the co-Artistic Director, together with Ruggero Sintoni, of Accademia Perduta.

¹² <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/chi/staff.asp>

¹³ It is possible to take a look to an accurate press collection for each production <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/produzioni/produzioni.asp>

¹⁴ <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/chi/premi.asp>

(2013). This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of all the title they produced, it is just to give an idea of their consistent path, quoting the most notable works. To have a more complete image about the volume of their business, referring just to their production for children and youth, it can be useful to have a look at numbers. In 2012 the number of reruns of the original plays staged by these two crews in the only Italian market was 165¹⁵, and for the predictions for the 2013 say a total of 160¹⁶. In this case the quantitative data gives us also a hint about the qualitative level of the product. Although a landscape of theatre for children and youth so congested, with a multitude of new realities entering the market every year, making the degree of competitiveness pretty high, Accademia Perduta does not lose its weight in the field.

2.2 The Organizational Structure

In this paragraph we will look at the organizational system of Accademia Perduta. It is crucial to understand how the tasks and duties are divided among the team members: if and how they collaborate or are subordinated to someone else decisional power. Moreover we will try to understand which are the adaptive strategies they use in order to support their approach to the environmental incitements. Then the importance of the right employee recruitment will be examined as source of social and intellectual capital and finally we will see how Accademia Perduta exploits the scope economy without undermine the quality of the artistic results. A premise is needed here: the entire chapter is grounded on the data collected during the research (participant observation) and on the interviews done to the personnel.

The nature and the evolution of the Accademia's structure caused inevitably a gradual process of responsibilities delegation. Lets see which have been the stages of this transformation. At first Accademia Perduta was a small group of actors working together in order to produce theatrical plays, it implied a really low level of organizational and administrative duties that the components –actors and technicians – of the company were able to manage by themselves. The enlargement of their matter of competences as organization - theatre management, agreements with municipalities, creation of different artistic products and so forth – force them to enlarge their staff. In fact, step-by-step they understood when the load of work was becoming too heavy or when the competences of the team resulted not adequate in

¹⁵ Consuntivo Ministeriale 2012, Accademia Perduta | Romagna Teatri

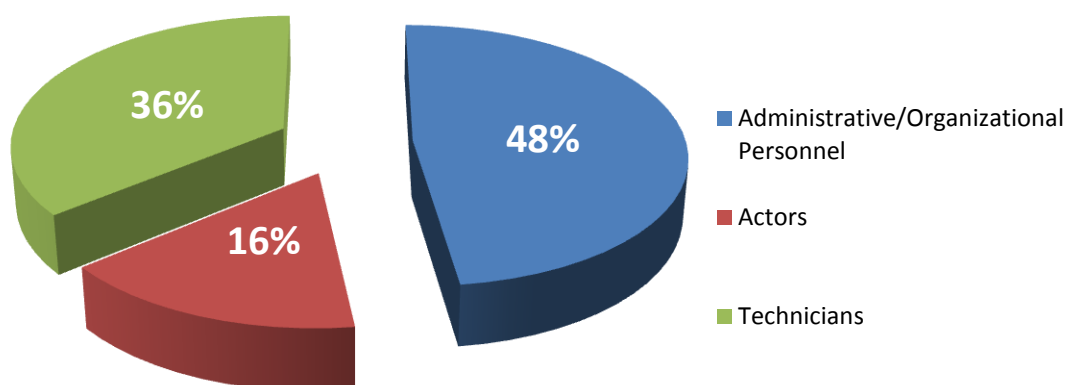
¹⁶ Preventivo Ministeriale 2013, Accademia Perduta

order to deal with the new set of problems arising and, along with the consciousness of their inappropriateness, the number of the members of Accademia Perduta have been increased.

At the time of the research, the staff is composed by 25 people in total. They are:

- 12 people employed in the organizational/administrative branch (including the president)
- 4 actors
- 9 technicians (of which 4 are responsible for the various theatre and 5 assigned to the companies in order to help them during the tournée)

Human Resources



Graph 1 Allocation of Human Resources

All the components of the team are linked with the others through a relationship based on the reciprocal dependence. The administrative/organizational branch has to rely on the production groups, at least for the quality of the performance, as much as the actors and technicians has to be confident about a smooth and efficient managerial work.

Considering the number of the Accademia's members we can define it as a medium-size organization. In the theatre field, at a national level, normally the companies are a way smaller than the one under analysis¹⁷. Its complexity is determined by the particular position they occupy in the market as "Teatro Stabile d'Innovazione – Infanzia e Gioventù". It explain also

¹⁷ <http://www.spettacolodalvivo.beniculturali.it/index.php/osservatorio-dello-spettacolo>

the unbalance existing between the quantity of employees of the organizational/administrative department and the artistic and technical one since the number of the venues they manage is greater (6) than their crews producing original plays (2).

Each person, within the group, has his/her own duty, and the level of specialization is quite high. The mundane running of the organization is based mostly on autonomous work, where each member of the team knows well what are her/his tasks and the target he/she has to achieve. In the meantime every stage of any project evolution is shared with the rest of the group. The attitude adopted is highly collaborative and even if normally everyone is engaged in a specific chore they all demonstrated, during the period of observation at least, a willingness to help the co-workers when needed. In order to do a step forward in the analysis of the power streams existing within the group we can take a look to the organizational chart (graph 2).

We can define Accademia as a Flat Organization, with a strict relation between the coordinators and the employees and a not such a sophisticated hierarchical scheme. The implied consequence is that the layers of authority that a decision has to go through before to be approved or rejected are really few, mostly just one. This typology of structure helps the fluidity of the organization, which can be considered really flexible. The exchanges between the staff are direct, so the time needed to adjust strategies is extremely short, a long process of approvals is not required at all and the work environment itself is conceived to suggest a continuous exchange of information.

The picture of the internal system of relation envisaged looks consistent with the ideology of cooperative, which is the juridical form that they have chosen. The belief is that a cooperative is set up by a group of people working together pursuing a common objective without a rigid hierarchical division of the roles and a high level of collaboration between the parts. It seems to go along with the just provided description of Accademia Perduta, but as always happens in real world there are also aspects that do not fit perfectly with the juridical form chosen. The most relevant ones for what concern this research are:

- the inadequate proportion between the real cooperative members and the pure employees;
- an excessive predominance of the leaders in the decision making process.

In regard to the first point we should underline the lack of balance between the real cooperative members and the ensemble of the employees forming the human capital on which Accademia Perduta rely. At the beginnings the situation was different and all the components of the group were actually part of the cooperative, but in a matter of 10 years

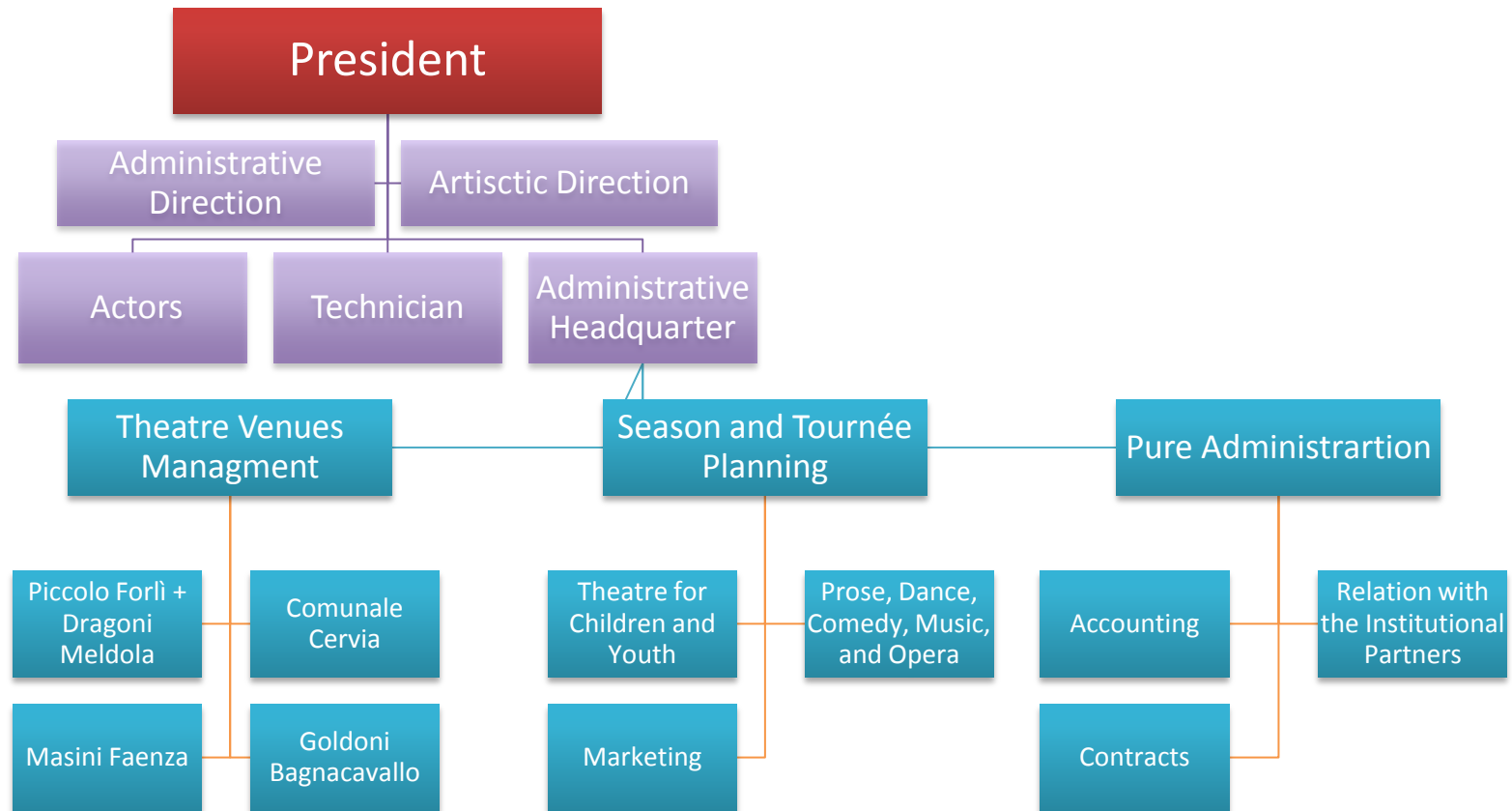
from the birth of the organization the pattern changed. It happened that some associates left the cooperative and the employees replaced the positions without being integrated as equal members but, instead, remaining formally subordinates. At the time of the research the members of the cooperative working for Accademia are three:

- The President, Ruggero Sintoni
- The vice-president, Claudio Casadio
- Member, Annarita Marconi.

These three people cover, in the internal structure of the organization, the managerial positions. Ruggero Sintoni is the Artistic Director together with Claudio Casadio, but while the second is mostly involved in the production for children and youth plays and the related artistic choices of the compartment, the first is more generically taking care of the artistic direction for the network as a whole. Moreover Sintoni is also quite involved in the more practical aspects of the organizational departments. Annarita Marconi is the chief of the administrative departments and is the figure that supervises the efficiency of the system. It is fundamental to underline how these three professionals achieved an intense synergy that allows them to collaborate in a really efficient way. They work together since thirty years and they developed an internal balance that let them work with authentic trust and respect. The equilibrium is so stable, but at the same time delicate, that is probably the reason why they decide not to enlarge the number of the member of the cooperative but instead to employ people in order to meet the managerial needs of the company. Introduce new elements in the group presuppose to also give them the same decisional power these three figure owns and it would probably highly damage the regular running of Accademia Perduta. A solid accord on values and principles is fundamental a priori. If the members of a cooperative do not agree on the premises of the business they would never be able to find a shared ground on which it can grow. So this mentioned unbalance between number of members of the cooperative and employees is probably a protective measure to defend the integrity of the project and to ensure a homogeneous point of view of the managerial group. This discussion about the first point of our two preliminary observations leads us to debate the second that can be considered a direct consequence of it. In fact, being Sintoni, Casadio, and Marconi the only components of the cooperative, juridically speaking, their decisional power is naturally increased compared with the regular employees one. A perception of this internal unbalance between the degrees of importance of the members can emerge in the outward image of the company. This picture of the internal equilibrium can results in an underestimation of the role played by the other employees of the company also in the everyday organization.

This undeniable condition can be particularly tricky because it might imply the existence of the institution itself just until leadership will remain the same and it considerably jeopardize the future evolution of the group.

Organizational Chart



Graph 2 Organizational Chart

The geographical location of the venues managed is naturally creating the first, basic, level of the multilayers network that is the most important specificity of Accademia Perduta. We will see how the physical division of the offices in different cities corresponds to a division of the competences.

The employees that are in charge for the mundane running of the various venues have their own offices in the reference theatres. The headquarter, the place where the majority of the people work and where the president, vice president and administrative chief have their offices, is geographically situated in Bagnacavallo. It's interesting to see that in this location are concentrated the most of the organizational/administrative personnel, but not all of them. In fact, in Bagnacavallo, we will find the people in charge of the pure administration duties, the directors, the employee managing contracts and the planner of the seasons and tournée for the theatre for children and youth. In Faenza within the Masini walls, instead, we will find the employee taking care of the other typologies of theatre seasons planning –dance, concerts, prose etc. – and the marketing/press office. This partial fragmentation seems to suggest also a complex collaboration between the parts; actually it has been thought like this in order to find the balance between make the staff of the theatre perceived as accessible from the citizens, being physically present in the territory, and, in the meanwhile, divide the organization following a system of duties separation. Although the co-workers keep a constant connection through technologies – phone calls, skype, internet, mail exchange – a partial fail has to be noted in communication since the dialog between the parts it is perceived as partially inefficient by the employees. There is not a regular agenda of meetings with the whole staff together and being dislocated in different offices gradually compromises the contamination between them. Anyway this substantial distance de facto lends to Accademia Perduta the network model basis on which, as we will now see, is grounded its peculiar development and success. Such a composite matrix imposes us a focus on the necessity of adjustments that the company had to apply during the years in order to stay competitive, effective and efficient. We will analyse which has been the managerial choices and strategies that allowed Accademia to grow and prosper. The attention will be focused on the human capital and on how it represents probably the most important asset for the organization.

2.2.1 The structure building process

The allocation of responsibilities among employees appears quite chaotic to an external observer. The reason of it is probably traceable in the system used to assign the duties; the logic followed is in fact based on the precise willing to go along with the vocations shown by the single individual. It is a process grounded on the investigation and enhancement of the personal talents, but it lacks of a systematic framework a priori. We will now describe the mechanism behind this attitude.

According to Miles et al. (1978) every new venture a company decides to undertake implies an adjustment in the structure of the organization. This argumentation concerns Accademia Perduta since it has always demonstrated a quite strong interest in new challenges from the artistic and managerial point of view. The underestimation of the needed adaptive strategies when an evolution in production occurs entails detrimental consequences turning frequently an improvement attempt in a loss of efficiency in service/good delivering and the wasting of the opportunity itself. In order to avoid these negative outcomes it is necessary to be particularly careful with the management of the organizational structure.

First, it is fundamental to assess if in the staff there is already the person owning the adequate knowledge to manage the new experience challenges. Then, an analysis of the cost and benefit equation is indispensable. Besides the economic cost/revenue stream is crucial to take in consideration also all the non-monetary aspects entailed in the venture such as a prospective increased visibility, the innovation boost, the market enlargement and so forth. Eventually the result of those a priori inquiries will give a clearer idea of how to integrate the organizational system activating in such a way the adaptive process. In order to develop efficient strategies leaning toward the accomplishment of this process is important to understand which is the behaviour of the institution when placed in front of a novelty, and which is the managerial approach that they follow for the Human Resources administration. Following the Miles et al. (1978) logic, it seems that the attitude to new projects of Accademia Perduta fits quite well in the "Analyser"¹⁸ description: that consists in a double attitude. To maintain a high degree of stability with the audience that they already gained thanks to the regular cultural offer and, in the meanwhile, be flexible enough to try different path in order to gain other portions of audience. From one side the standardization of the routine is the more comfortable answer; in

¹⁸ MILES Raymond E., SNOW Charles C., MEYER Alan D. and COLEMAN Henry J.; Organizational Strategy, Structure, and Process; The Academy of Management Review, Vol 3. n. 3, July 1978, p. 554

the other it ought reveal itself as a detrimental attitude. Therefore for what concern the top manager the dilemma is:

“[...] how to locate and exploit new product and market opportunities while simultaneously maintaining a firm core of traditional products and customers.”¹⁹

and for the administration the duty is to translate the managerial decision in policies so:

“[...] how to differentiate the organization's structure and processes to accommodate both stable and dynamic areas of operation.”²⁰



Figure 2 Adaptive Cycle steps

For what concern Accademia Perduta the pillars on which this cycle is based are the following beliefs:

- trust in the capabilities of the staff, each one for their own set of competence;
- remarkable level of delegation that the top managers applies to the mundane running;
- collective decision making process.

¹⁹ Op. cit. p. 555

²⁰ Ibid.

These premises give to employees the sensation of being fundamental for the success of the institution. The outcome of this feeling is measured by the desire of the members to give their best in order to maintain the business healthy. The ideal situation is to create the impression of a group where the normal, end extraordinary, running is supported by the mutual collaboration of each unit: to make the individual feels as a piece of a whole. This is why every member of the team of Accademia has its own specialization, making him indispensable, but at the same time he is also asked to show an adaptive behaviour and make an effort improving his competences in order to take part in the new experience fostered. The managerial role here is crucial as much as delicate. The president and the directors of each branch are supposed to be the facilitators in this process: pursuing the enthusiasm needed for engage a new challenge, empowering employees and, at the same time, coordinating the whole process without showing an intrusive attitude (Human Resources Model²¹). These results wouldn't be successfully achieved without the positive output ensured by the Social Capital variable.

“Social Capital resides in relationships.”²²

as Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) argue, and in the way these relationships are favoured. Basing their analysis on previous literature they try to explain how the social capital increases efficiency if supported and enhanced. Relations between people cannot be owned by one of the parts because they are grounded on the codes that a community recognizes, the rules it follows, the system of meanings through which it encodes reality²³. An accurate attention to this aspect of the human resource department results in an enhanced cooperative attitude. If we already talked about the dimension of the company, in terms of staff, and we also outlined the hierarchical scheme of it, we didn't yet consider the most unpredictable and pivotal factor of this model: the people. The personal relationships existing between the components of the team cannot be forgotten when an organization like this one is under examination. Each person of the group has its own reason to work there and its own personality, situation from which the individual behaviour its naturally affected. In our case we have some peculiar feature influencing the relationship among the staff members:

- the long-lasting character of the collaborations, in fact the core part of the staff is working together at least since 20 years

²¹ Op. cit. p. 559

²² NAHAPIET Janine, GHOSHAL Sumantra Social Capital; Intellectual Capital, and the Organizational Advantage; The Academy of Management Review, Vol. 23, No. 2. (Apr., 1998), p. 205

²³ Op. cit. p. 244

- the artistic nature of the company, that in one side is obviously crucial for the artistic/technical employees and, in the other, is important also for the administrative/organizational one for the particular set of rules and standards implied.

A long-lasting collaboration has been largely indicated as evidence of a pleasant environment. Furthermore a group of people collaborating for long time tend to emotionally and personally invest in the relation with colleagues. It often leads also to transform the link from a job-based one to a friendship-based one, with a willingness to cooperate naturally increased. The artistic aspect, indeed, is a characteristic we should always remind throughout the research because it imposes the already discussed peculiar pattern where the quality of the final product is a concern for all the departments. In fact, the employees feel their role as a fundamental contribute to the development of the service, even if they are not directly involved in the artistic performance. An extremely high trust on the capabilities of each co-worker is fundamental at this extent.

We should also consider, in social capital development perspective, the freedom that the managers have in hiring who they believe is the best candidate for a certain position. During the recruitment is also considered the overall advantage that an employee can represent for the company. In order to clarify this concept we should support it with some real life example. One, quite self explicative, is the choice to hire a well know citizen of the Cervia community, that is already working from years in a position in constant contact with people, in order to manage the local venue. The directors identify the right profile that could satisfy their demands: someone that has follow a consistent academic path, he studied theatre, having in such a way already gained a certain degree of formation, that was available to sign a part-time contract (vertical one, just for the winter months) and that pre-owned a solid personal network within the community. Another is the case of the employee in charge of schedule and manage the theatre for children and youth seasons both: for what concern the planning of the tournée of the Accademia Perduta production companies and also for the companies they host in their theatres. A predominant reason why she have been hired is that she was already well known within the field, she worked for decades as actress, with another company, before beginning to work in the administrative branch for the organization under analysis. Accademia Perduta, hiring her, considered the advantage of acquiring also the network she built during the years of her previous experience. The most important task she accomplishes – plays selling and buying – is mostly managed through phone calls, having an employee that has met in person most of those contacts implies an increased reliability. These two example

are supposed to give an idea of how the selection of the personnel leans toward the achievement of two fundamental targets: to find someone that represent a additional source of competences and, in the meanwhile, is capable to help the entire group to improve the performances of the team sharing his knowledge. Recruiting the right employee means to build an environment suitable for exchanges, at the contrary if the team is not correctly assembled the entire functioning of the organization is deeply compromised. If relationships are the ultimate unit of Social Capital, the equivalent for Intellectual Capital are the know-how and know-what hold by a company. Therefore the selection of team members has to be considered crucial also in this domain. Annarita Marconi, currently the chief of the administrative branch, has been hired after just few years from the birth of the company (1989). Her position in the staff scheme became fundamental to cope with all the new set of problems coming from the enlargement of the network and the deriving institutional implications. Accademia Perduta members understood that they needed a professional. Annarita Marconi was not in any way part of the theatre community; the decision to choose her was explicitly linked to the competences she acquired before to get in contact with the company. She gave to the group a new set of knowledge and she obtained a position in a field from which she was intrigued. The relation has grown so much that she is now covering a head position and the collaboration last almost three decades. The objective of these real life examples is to prove the importance of the recruitment policies in the creation of a staff that is then able to collaborate and evolve. Nahapiet and Goshal in their research argue that intellectual capital is created by two phenomena: the combination and the exchange of knowledge; the implication of social capital is to create the favourable environment to accomplish these two attitudes. Accademia Perduta, with the scheme we exposed in the first part of this paragraph, is for sure suggesting a method of continuous confrontation that is the highway for make combination and exchange happen. They alternate a rigid routine, made by formats that they developed over time, and an enthusiastic approach to novelty that pushes constantly the employees to gain new competences. It is a never-ending process of formation in which all the members, directors included, are engaged. The incentives for the employees are not represented by a monetary gratification nor by the prospect advancement of their hierarchical position, instead it is the sensation of being part of a group where they cover a special, and not replaceable, role. The entire structure and functioning of the organization is basically based on personal fulfilment. This is, in the same time, the most important strength and the greatest weakness of Accademia Perduta. In fact, in one hand it determines a

particular attachment of the members to the performances of the company, but in the other the dissatisfaction of even just one employee can cause serious efficiency problems.

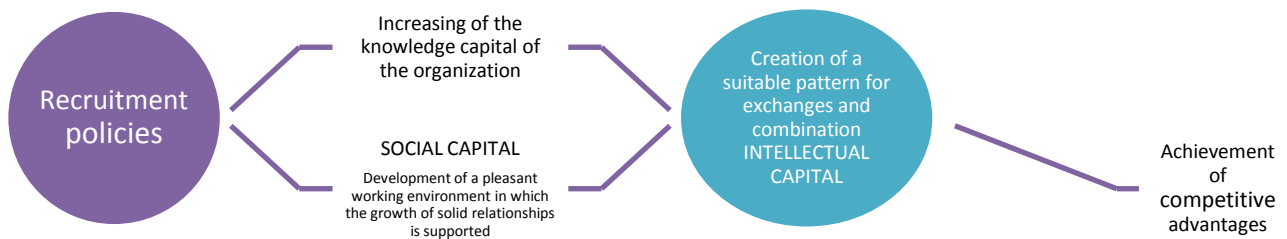


Figure 3 Social and Intellectual capital building process

This argumentation about the inner environment of the group leads us to discuss about another pivotal feature of the organization: their ability to reproduce the economy of scope model in the cultural field.

2.2.2 The Economy of Scope

The relatively new concept of Economy of scope emerged from the researches of Panzar and Willing (1975), it is an economic theory stating that the average total cost of production decreases as a result of increasing the number of different goods produced and it occurs:

“Whenever the costs of providing the services of the sharable input to two or more product lines are subadditive (i.e., less than the total costs of providing these services

for each product line separately), the multi-product cost function exhibits economies of scope."²⁴

This definition provides the framework for this section of the research. First is fundamental to remind that we can talk of economies of scope only if the firm we are analysing produces more than one product. Since Accademia Perduta is the focus of our attention we should now explain why we consider it a multiproduct company. Even if all of the services Accademia supplies are related to theatre or, more precisely, to entertainment, the great variety imposes us to consider them separately as different services. Moreover, when we described the core business of Accademia Perduta (cf. 2.1) we argued that for the planning of the seasons of each theatre of their network they use a customized approach, creating in such a way additional product lines. These are the lines of the production of our organization obtained thanks to a set of shared inputs. The point is that they do not apply economy of scale principles because the service they provide do not consist in a mere replication of the performance and so the economic advantage is not represented by the lowering of the average cost originated by an increased scale of the business.

The key concept entailed in the economy of scope theory, leading to obtain a concrete economic advantage, is the subadditive quality of the production. It is fundamental to consider if the additional service would be convenient enough for the multiservice provider to enable it to perform better than a firm specialized in the same specific production.

"Most important, the new literature has introduced as a complement to the old concept of "economies of scale," the new concept of "economies of scope," which measures the cost advantages to firms of providing a large number of diversified products as against specializing in the production of a single output"²⁵

In our case, the multiplication of tangible and intangible assets needed for achieving the same level of service provided by Accademia would be remarkable if every single season prepared for each theatre would have been managed by a different organization. Physical spaces (offices and theatres), personnel and knowledge are the inputs that Accademia Perduta spread out on the production of the diversified outputs described.

The most important assets that the organization under analysis own to accomplish economy of scope are the skills that they gain during the years. As Bailey and Friedlaender (1982) argue:

²⁴ Panzar John C. and Willing Robert D.; Economies of Scope; The American Economic Review, vol. 71 n. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Ninety-Third Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (May, 1981) p. 268

²⁵ Bailey Elizabeth E. and Friedlaender Ann F.; Market Structure and Multiproduct Industries; Journal of Economic Literature, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Sep., 1982), p. 1025

“Another major class of cases leading to multiproduct diversification comes from a sharing of intangible assets, such as research activities or other forms of business knowhow.”²⁶

The knowhow and the network Accademia Perduta developed through their evolution are the most important intangible assets on which their cost advantage is grounded. Therefore, for example, Accademia Perduta can produce both seasons of prose and dance at a lower average cost than two separate institutions producing the same services.

The premises we have done about their structure and the economic frame we just outlined lead us to observe that the economy of scope of this specific organization emerge thanks to the savings they operate on the administrative/organizational expenses.

In real life terms, the company under analysis has perfected the organizational structure at the point where all the figures needed for the administrative department have been reduced to the minimum: the machine is working with an extremely restrained number of people. It implies that the intervention has been operated mostly on the capital invested for the long-term salary contracts. It has been possible also thanks the system of empowerment of employees, explained in the previous paragraph, allowing the concentration of responsibilities managed by each single member of the highly skilled team.

Above all, the most important consequence of the mechanism explained is that Accademia Perduta actually represents the opportunity for the municipalities, entrusting the organization for the management of the town theatre, to exploit the economy of scope at an upper level. In fact going back to the premises a company specialized in the production of one single service that Accademia Perduta provides would not be competitive in such a market, and consequently it wouldn't represent an opportunity of savings for a municipality. The point here is that the company offers the opportunity to share the assets not just among the production lines but also over the entire geographical network it manages.

However it is also necessary to remind the adjustments that Accademia Perduta has been forced to implement every time it enlarged the service production with an additional unit. The enlargement of the business volume sometime required the relative increase of staff dimension. In these critical moments is fundamental to consider if the additional production justifies, in financial terms, the investment on the input side (new employee means additional salary).

This increment of the team members have been imposed by the emerging of two needs:

²⁶ Ibid. p. 1027

- of someone with specific competences not yet owned by the staff.
- of an additional person in order to overcome the load of work that had become too heavy.

Every time Accademia Perduta managers understood that the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization was jeopardized by the lack of human resources they pursue the same specific ploy: they invested in the formation and integration of a new element of the team with the aim of transforming him in a stable resource.

Also for the exploitation of the economy of scope Accademia Perduta relies on the two main intangible assets it holds: the network pattern and the human capital.

2.3 Key Partners

2.3.1 How Public institutions influence Accademia Perduta

For what concerns the institutional setting Accademia Perduta is in a particular situation. We are now going to outline it analysing why the organization even if it is private is strongly dependent by public partners, and how it affects the management.

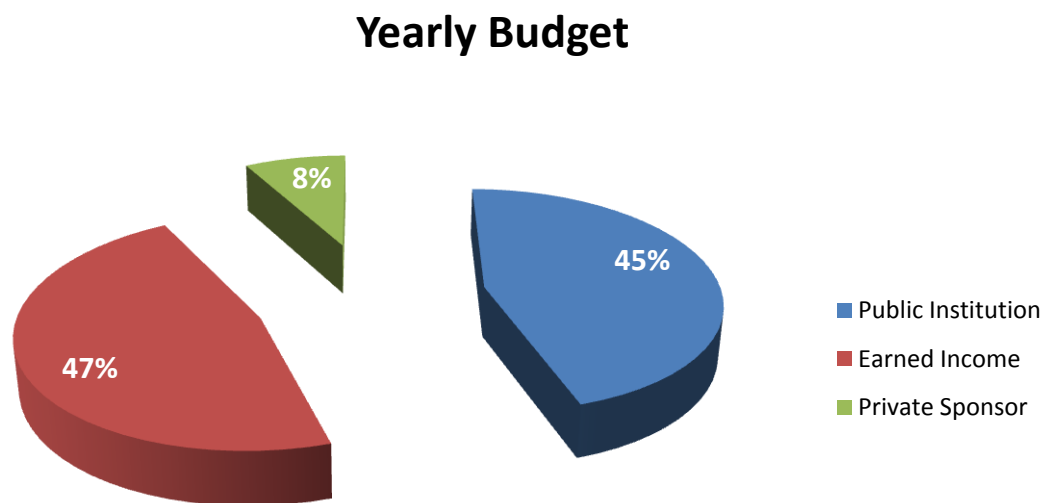
There are two fundamental conditions enforcing the link between Accademia Perduta and public partners:

- The venues they manage are public properties (belongings of the municipalities)
- Public Institutions – State, Region and Municipalities – provide almost half of the yearly budget needed to the company to be considered sustainable.

For the first point it is necessary to consider the political aspect implied. In fact, Accademia Perduta is entrusted for the managing of the venues through public contracts with the reference municipalities in an externalization of services perspective. Every three/four years these agreements are re-discussed and the local government has the power to renew or not the concession. We are going to describe the specificity of the contract between the two parts in the next paragraph, what is crucial now is to understand how important is the political factor when we talk about the venues management. The institution protagonist of our analysis cannot expose itself too much siding with one or the other party since it can have detrimental after effects. A public endorsement of a specific political side would consequently ruin the relationship with the opponents. Thinking in a long-term perspective Accademia Perduta has always maintained a neutral attitude that allowed them to overcome every political overturn

without losing any of their network units. They point to present exemplary artistic results, building in such a way an extremely solid reputation among professionals and locals and becoming unimpeachable. For sure the strong charisma of the president – Ruggero Sintoni – is one of the advantages on which Accademia Perduta can count, he is extremely skilled in public relationship and has been able in more than one occasion to get the best even in quite complex situations. Anyway, a strong manager could do nothing if not supported by an estimable work of the organization. This is why we argue that the success of Accademia Perduta in keeping a healthy relationship with the local government is probably held in the achievements they obtained in terms of public and prestige. They demonstrated to be able to ensure to citizens a complete service tailored on their tastes.

The second point, instead, needs a more complicated explanation. The yearly incomes of Accademia Perduta are represented by a 47% coming from the market – box office, show selling etc. –, an 8% of private sponsors, and a 45% provided by public partners – State, Region and Municipalities.



Graph 3 Yearly Budget

The chart displays clearly how public institutions provide almost the half of the yearly budget on which Accademia Perduta relies in order to be considered sustainable. This high percentage of the total imposes us a discussion about the reasons why public partners support them, which is the expected benefit, and how this specific circumstance affects the behaviour of Accademia Perduta. Scholars often debated about the appropriateness of public

subsidy to private organization in cultural field. The most important element to support this behaviour has been found in the so-called collective positive externalities that an artistic product is supposed to produce. The belief is that a large involvement of the population in cultural activities results in a social benefit that deserve to be sponsored by the public entities since, often, the individual willingness to pay for such a commodity do not match the expenses needed to produce it.

Accademia Perduta is one of the most important provider of cultural service in the Romagna zone: if it's true that the participation to an art event is a fundamental part of the construction of a liberal education²⁷, it is consequently clear that the organization under analysis has a pivotal role in giving to locals opportunities in this sense. The subsidies are thought to allow Accademia Perduta maintaining an ample artistic offer made by a number of different exhibitions and shows among which citizens are free to choose along with their own tastes. Without the public money the theatre programs would have been much more lean and the liberal education aspect deeply compromised. Behind this argumentation there is the assumption that the greater is the number of the experiences that an individual can access the better is the result for personal growth since he can shape his own education following his personal path. In this sense the grants has to be seen has a support to maintain the cultural offer diversified on the territory. This argumentation becomes even more important when it comes to innovation promotion. Fostering new form of expression and pursuing the development of them is an expensive task and the short-term payback is totally unpredictable, and often absolutely not adequate to cover the investment. However, the support of innovation is fundamental for the development of new languages and the evolution of the society itself. To reduce this uncertainty a public grant could be crucial. If a company knows that can count on a sure certain amount of money can display an increased attitude toward experimentation without worrying too much about the box-office results.

Furthermore, another reason pointed out by economists to justify the need of subsidies of this industry is that Arts production and promotion are Public Goods,

“Goods that are **pure public goods** are characterized by two traits. First, they are **non-rival in consumption**: that is, my consuming or making use of the good does not in any way affect your opportunity to consume the good. Second, they are **non-**

²⁷ BAUMAL William J. and BOWEN William G.; *Performing Arts – The Economic Dilemma: a study of problems common to theatre, opera, music and dance*; 1993 p. 385

excludable: even if I want to deny you the opportunity to consume or access the public good, there is no way I can do so.”²⁸

Being the public good market non competitive, the implied market failures lead to an inefficient allocation of resources. The public funding supporting cultural and arts production aims to correct these market failures and to redress the allocation of resources. Subsidize organizations on the territory is the strategy of the public institutions to ensure an appropriate cultural offer, in quantitative and qualitative terms, and to reduce the ticket price as much as possible in order to make it affordable for the largest portion of the population. In order to favour the “non-rival consumption” vocation of arts, the organizations of this industry are financially supported to ensure a remarkable number of artistic opportunities, using a quantitative approach to avoid the public competitiveness. The more the artistic occasions are in the territory the bigger is the prospective audience achievable. Subsidy is the tool used by government – local and national – to boost the sector. The “non-excludable” consumption is a complex economic issue. In fact, no one can deliberately be prevented to benefit from the consumption of an art product, but being, mostly, not a for free good the people that cannot afford the entrance fee or have a lower willingness to pay of the actual price of the ticket, are automatically turned in denied attendance. Public grants are thought to be a remedy to this problem. The price of a ticket, if it was a regular good, would have correspond at the marginal cost of production, but being the arts production a declining cost industry this market rule is violated. To break even the organization of the field should set the entrance fee equal to the average cost: creating in such a way a typology of market failure. The result will be a decreased accessibility opportunity for audience caused by an exaggerated price of the ticket. The subsidies are thought as to cover to the deficit between the production costs and the average willingness to pay of the audience. Accademia Perduta having the production and promotion of cultural activities has to face the same problems just explained and is indeed financially support by public organization for these reasons. In fact, according with the definition of public good above: theatre pieces staged by the company are enjoyable simultaneously from a quite high number of people – depending from the number of the venues' seats – without decreasing the individual level of accessibility to the service and the overall quality of the performance, and being public venues the access to the theatre cannot be denied to anyone.

²⁸ GRUBERG Jonathan; Public Finance and Public Policy; Worth Publishers, 2011, p 182

If these are the reasons justifying the public subsidize it has been argue, as possible detrimental side effect, that receiving this kind of support can cause a de-attachment to market logics leading to an increased inefficiency of the sector. Behind this argumentation there is the idea that not being completely dependent by the box-office results the industry actors tend to loose the contact with the territory and, consequently, with the audience itself compromising the achievement of the aims above mentioned. For sure it might be a threat and the incidence of it must be considered case by case because it depend a lot from the approach of the private organization. In our specific case the public it doesn't seems like this. The fact that Accademia Perduta manages six venues concentrated in a relatively small area – Romagna – put it in a peculiar situation under the market exposition point of view. The reader could think to it has a kind of monopoly but the highly concentration of possible substitute in the zone impose them to evaluate the competitors and to develop accurate strategies in order to maintain the business volume. Along with the picking of high quality shows for their programs, and the technique exposed in the first part in the chapter while we were talking about the core activities of Accademia Perduta, they also demonstrated a scrupulous attention to their pricing strategy. The range of the Accademia's ticket prices goes from € 5, single entrance for children shows, to € 22, the most expensive seat that is possible to buy, the average is perfectly fitting with the national one (13,50)²⁹. Nevertheless Accademia is particularly sharp in the subscription packages' creation, the spectator has a large number of options among which he can decide according with his preferences and personal income. It is a strategy that has a double result: it allowed people to save money picking the solution they prefer and, in the same time, arise the level of loyalty of audience that in such a way feels pandered and not bounded. This is just another of the strategy they adopt to stay competitive in the market, but the level of confirmed subscription from a year to another demonstrate that it is a noteworthy one because this result has to be read also in a reduction of uncertainty perspective. Even before the beginnings of the season Accademia Perduta has already covered, thanks to subscription a remarkable part of the amount of money invested to realize it. The opportunity to tailor the subscription gives to organization members clues, largely in head, about which are the more requested shows so they can also plan focused advertisement campaign in order to promote the weakest titles of the program. The examples just provided do not seems to suggest a detachment to market logics at all.

²⁹ <http://www.progettocresco.it/numeri.php>

Now that we have seen why public partners financially support Accademia Perduta we are going to see who are those institutions and how the relationship between the two is regulated. We will see which are the policies developed by the State, Region and Municipalities to achieve the target mentioned above and which are the criteria that the company has to meet in order to get the funds.

2.3.2 Public Partners: Rules, Laws and Decrees

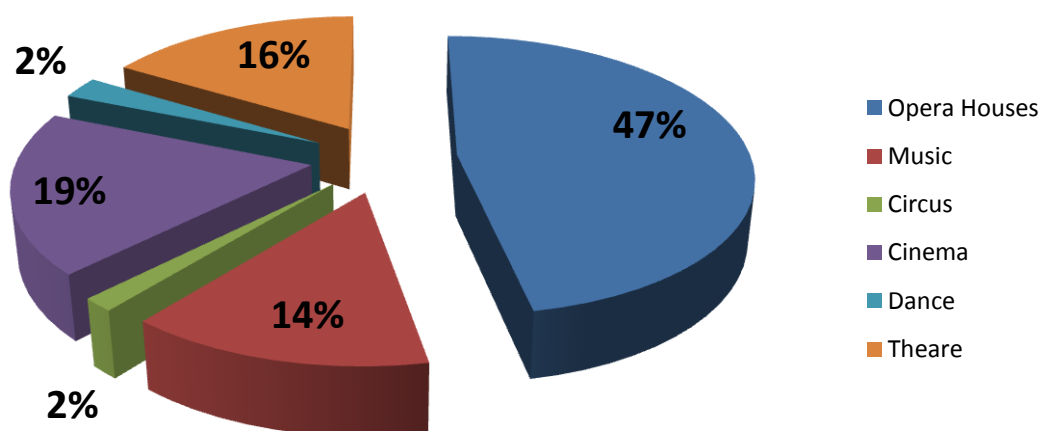
From what concern the public institutional links Accademia Perduta is basically interacting with three main partners: the State, the Region and the Municipalities. We will now recall the set of criteria that Accademia Perduta must meet in order to keep receiving the benefit from each partner, we should remind them throughout the entire research because they are fundamental for the management of the organization, and frequently they influence the administrative choices as beforehand mentioned. As we already introduced, these partnerships with the public sector are even more important because they are crucial for the economic sustainability of the company under analysis.

We will now analyse the two main aspects that such a relationships entail: the bureaucratic and the economic.

State The Governmental Fund for Performing Arts and Cinema in Italy is the F.U.S.³⁰, it has been established the 30 April of 1985 with the law n. 163: its amount varies and every year the Parliament approves the allocation. The graph 4 shows the allocation of the fund and which are the activities subsidized.

³⁰ Fondo Unico per lo Spettacolo

F.U.S. Allocation



Graph 4 F.U.S. Allocation

As we can see in the chart above, the 16%³¹ (around 66 millions of Euro) of F.U.S. is destined to the theatre organizations. In order to get a portion of this grant each group must meet some rigid criteria. The law (30 April 1985, n. 163) sets a number of quantitative and qualitative standards with the aim of measuring the liability of each organization. The article 11(30 April 1985, n. 163) sets the specific characteristics needed to be considered “Teatro Stabile d'Innovazione - Infanzia e Gioventù” so it is the reference one for Accademia Perduta:

³¹ Relazione sull'utilizzazione del Fondo Unico per lo Spettacolo 2012, Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo, 2012

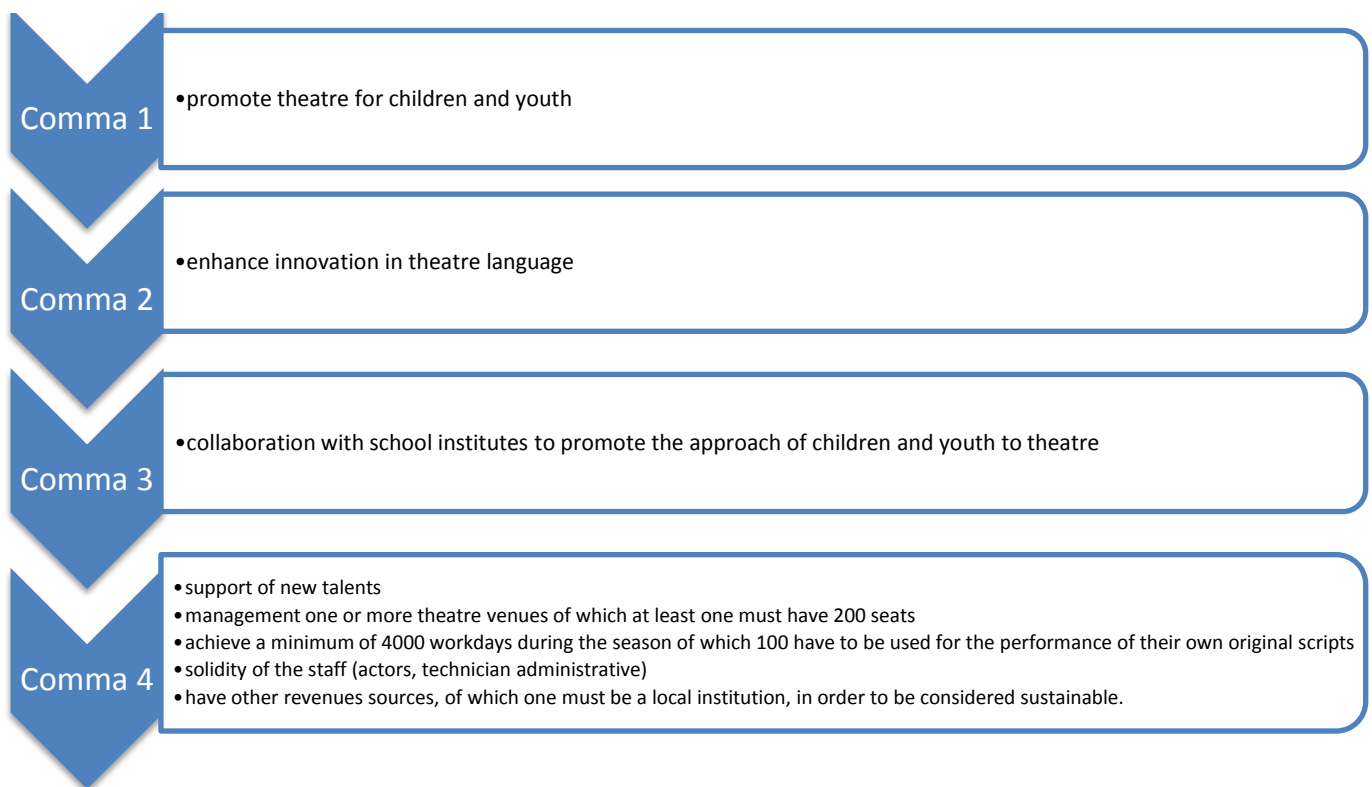


Figure 4 Article 11, Law 163

Every year the Ministry of Culture compile a list with the organizations that met these standards: Accademia Perduta is included in it since 1988, and until now they have been always reconfirmed.

For the season 2011/12 (last data available) they obtained from the State a grant around € 230.000³². The recognized “Teatri Stabili di Innovazione – Infanzia e Gioventù” in Italy are 18 in total, of which 4 are situated in the Emilia Romagna region, this highly competitive environment is the reason why a closer look to the local legislation is needed.

Region The regional law ruling the relation between local government and companies working in the cultural field is the n. 13 of the 5 July 1999. The objectives that the local authority wants to pursue are all related to the involvement of a larger portion of population in cultural activities (art. 3), the development of projects suitable for the education of the youngest slice of public, the promotion of a diversified cultural offer, the research, with a particular willing to help in the renewing of the structures: both hard – venues – and soft –

³² Consuntivo Ministeriale 2012, Accademia Perduta

archives, IT and so forth (art. 4). The amount of the contribute for each organization is set up considering two different criteria:

- the 75% is calculate on the previous year performances of the group applying
- the 25% is the result of an evaluation of the company's general behaviour through a system of quantitative and qualitative indexes.

We should remind that the artistic landscape of Emilia Romagna is pretty vibrant: for the only Alive Performing Arts department has been counted around 266³³ realities in the 2010. This is an indicator of how competitive is the environment: it is a quantitative data that gives an idea of the complexity to stand out in such a territory. One of the most problematic aspect is, indeed, to develop a network with those realities and to maintain it as a source of richness instead of falling in a, for sure much more frequent, unproductive individualism.

Municipalities In the case of Accademia Perduta a further element is involved in the equation: the municipality. Sometimes the terms of the agreements change slightly from a town to another, but basically they all follow a similar scheme. What is important for the municipalities is, as in every other field, to get the best result with the lower investment; to find the more convenient balance between monetary costs and revenues, in this case represented by the dwellers' consent. The organization that we are analysing has developed, during the almost thirty years of projects, a format that permit them to achieve this goal efficiently and effectively, later in the thesis we will understand better which are their strengths, and how they built this system. Here we just want to underline that also the municipalities are economically involved in the Accademia Perduta financing. Even if it seems just another source of cash flows it also imply some relevant responsibilities and constrains. One of the most important aspect is that those money coming from the municipalities has to be invested in the related theatre, it has to be really clear in the income statement where and how the money come and where they go.

We can group the typology of contracts in two main sets: the ones that just collaborate with the company for a specific part of the theatre season management and the ones that have completely gave to them the venue management maintaining just the formal control. In the first case the agreement it's pretty simple, the theatre gives a certain amount of money decided by the city council and Accademia Perduta will just worry about the promotion and

³³ Il Teatro Ragazzi in Emilia Romagna 2010 - 2011, Studi e Ricerche, Osservatorio dello Spettacolo della regione Emilia-Romagna, p. 21

the organization of that specific portion of the theatre offer. It often happened that it represent the first stage of collaboration with the local governance, a way to build trust between the partners and to test the group competences and liability. The more common ones are the second types, in which the core of the Accademia-Municipality agreements is the commitment that the theatre organization undertake:

- to plan the season offering an adequate season that comprehend different typology of theatre expression (prose, dance, theatre for children and youth, sometimes opera);
- to ensure the accessibility to the structure;
- to promote the theatre activities;
- to develop an always bigger slice of citizen in the cultural life.

Mostly the agreements has a long-term nature, another peculiar aspect in private-public institutions relationships, they normally last three/four years. It allows the organization to have a long run planning power.

Entrusting the management to Accademia Perduta they obtain the result to provide a service at a level that they couldn't provide if they had to direct the venue by themselves. As we said it is a typical example of a successful externalization³⁴: being part of such developed network allow little cities to provide to their citizens a cultural offer worthy of a bigger centre, a condition that wouldn't be possible if they were all managed by different companies or entities.

To maintain this complex network of relationships imply an high non monetary cost in term of time and knowledge acquisition. Although the experience that Accademia Perduta has achieved during the years represent a remarkable competitive advantage, it is still important to remind that behind a well-oiled machine there is a complex pattern of rules and context that has to be consider and face everyday.

2.4 Costumer analysis

Now that we have seen the main activities of Accademia Perduta | Romagna Teatri and we went through the internal structure, we should shift our look to another fundamental aspect of the Business Model: the target they address. Here we will consider which are the portions

³⁴ Gestione "convenzionata" GALLINA Mimma; Organizzare Teatro, Produzione, distribuzione, gestione nel sistema italiano; 2007 FrancoAngeli, Milano p. 283

of the population that represent the group's audience and how the company catches their interest.

First is necessary to divide the analysis in two distinct blocks: the regional and the national audience. The national one is reached just through the tournée that the production companies do in the national and international territory. In this case children, youths, teachers, and the families basically represent the public.

| Segments ³⁵ | Expectations | Strategies adopted by Accademia to meet expectations | Service Provided |
|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Children (3 - 14) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to theatre; • Entertainment; • Unconventional experience. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and presentation of high quality theatrical plays under the dramaturgic and performance point of view; • Involvement during and after the performance • Organization of ad hoc programs | Plays of theatre for children and youth |
| Teachers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to approach new topics with children in a • Different and more enjoyable way; • Unconventional experience; • Acquisition of new knowledge; • Teaching support; • Entertainment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and presentation of high quality theatrical plays under the dramaturgic and performance point of view; • Pre-discussion about the topics treated by the play; • Involvement during and after the performance: • Organization of ad hoc programs. | Plays of theatre for children and youth |
| Families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to approach new topics with children in a different and more enjoyable way; • Acquisition of new knowledge; • Opportunity to share an unconventional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production and presentation of high quality theatrical plays under the dramaturgic and performance point of view; • Involvement during and after the performance; • Organization of ad hoc | Plays of theatre for children and youth |

³⁵ The range of attenders' age has been detected thanks to surveys done by Accademia Perduta | Romagna Teatri to their costumers

- experience with their children;
- Entertainment.

Table 2 Costumers Analysis (theatre for children and youth)

These segments of costumers are obviously very important in the regional territory as well. We always should remind that the theatre for children and youth is their core activity. In the table above in fact we also consider some strategies that are adopted just in the venues they manage, such as the organization of some ad hoc programs³⁶. During their tournée they just enact their roles on stage but the channels through which those plays are distributed are not their competence. In their theatre, instead, is their own duty to ensure the greatest accessibility possible to the venues and the plays designing special path for the youngest attenders. We consider the teachers and the families as national and international costumers because to similar organization correspond similar strategies, so as Accademia Perduta pursue a targeted approach so do the hosting organizations with analogous initiatives engaging these categories in the service consumption.

When we take in consideration the regional audience, we should add to the above-mentioned categories, other slices of potential public. In fact, in Romagna, the cultural offer promoted by Accademia Perduta is wider in terms of typology.

| Segments | Expectations | Strategies adopted by Accademia to meet expectations | Favourite Service |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Adults (20 - upwardly) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural enrichment; • Introduction to theatre language; • Acquisition of new knowledge; • Entertainment; • Escape from the mundane; • Social opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rich seasons of diverse typology of theatre; • Affordable ticket price; • Possibility to choose the subscription between different solutions; • Accurate selection of the hosted plays. | Plays of Prose, Dance and Theatre of innovation; Concerts. |
| Adults (50 - upwardly) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural enrichment; • Introduction to theatre language; • Acquisition of new | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable ticket price; • Possibility to choose the subscription | Plays of Opera and Plays in dialect |

³⁶ Such as “A teatro con Mamma e Papà”, “Teatro Scuola”, “Le domeniche a Teatro” <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/programmazione/default.htm>

| | | | |
|---------------|---|--|---------------|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> knowledge; • Entertainment; • Escape from the mundane; • Social opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> between different solutions; • Accurate selection of the hosted plays; • Strict relation with local groups acting in Romagna's dialect. | |
| Locals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment; • Requalification of urban spaces; • Social opportunities; • Escape from the mundane. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free entries; • Public spaces used as stage; • Show with an high spectacular impact; • Audience involvement in the performance. | Public Events |

Table 3 Costumer Analysis

The *segments* and the related *expectations* has been identified thanks to a survey that Accademia Perduta does every year at the end of the season in each of their theatres; here the 2012/2013 has been used as indicator. The *strategies adopted*, instead, has been determined through an analysis of the organization behaviour.

It is necessary to underline that for the cities in which they manage theatres often they represent the most prestigious cultural opportunity in the area. It happens not just because they have rights on the venue itself, but because Accademia ensures to the community a proper cultural offer worthy of more prestigious centres with rich and diversified programs to please a vast range of tastes. The cultural enrichment expectation is hold in the nature of the service they provide that is generally perceived as an opportunity to personal fulfilment. Moreover, the opportunity to escape from the routine is as well quite simple to understand: a night at theatre is an alternative to the mundane activities, a different experience that gives not just the chance to achieve new knowledge or a personal growth, but that represents an option to spend enjoyable time with people out of the domestic walls. It is in fact linked strictly with the expectation of having social contacts through the attendance to a theatre performance. This is a double demand, actually, because it imply social contacts with: the people that are already part of the group that purchased the ticket together – friends, family, colleges and so forth - and with the rest of the audience that is suppose to have homogeneous interests since they have chosen the same show. It has been observed that this second aspect is even more decisive when the matter of the play includes a social implication.

The public events deserve a special argumentation for they peculiar feature. The point here is that a relatively high level of involuntariness is implied in the audience attendance, since the show take place in the urban spaces the spectator can also just stumble upon the performance

without the precise willingness to watch it. It can have a positive or a negative consequence, depending if they like it or not, but still their physical presence is not necessarily the result of a choice. Those public events are fundamental for Accademia in an enlargement of costumers perspective, if an unintentional attender likes the performance he might become consequently interested to be a consumer of the regular activities that the organization promote. It is a showcase opportunity to reach portion of locals that haven't yet been gained. A certain degree of involuntariness is entailed in the youngest audience power of decision as well, in fact, normally who buys the tickets for them are the relatives or the school and children just attend to a pre-select show. It allows Accademia Perduta to establish a really early relationship with a unintentional audience that might became, growing, an attached portion of public, shifting from one category to the other – from children to adult: it is a way to cultivate a possible future slice of followers.

A combination of affordable price, multiple subscription solution and accurate choice of plays proposed is the main tool used to achieve and maintain the audience: it is equation behind the success of the company.

Now that we have seen the business model most significant parts we will now look at the last layer of the network structure of the company represented by the external nodes of it. Only having a more clear idea of which are the internal balances and connection, the core activity and costumers we can understand how they interact with the environment and the other realities.

3 The Network

The previous chapters have provided to the reader an overview of the functioning of the organization; we have seen the history, the business model and the institutional setting. Here we will look at the outward network.

The nature of the organization itself is a form of network as explained in the second section they gather together a number of venues geographically spread on the Romagna territory. This specificity designs a consequent mind-set in the organization members' behaviours. They always have to think in terms of network management, even when they deal with internal issue. It is a benefit that represent an important competitive advantage when applied to the outward network; being accustomed to this pattern the costs of adaptation are minor that they would have been in a centralized company. This is one of the aspects that we have to consider when we talk of the network of Accademia Perduta because it increases the level of complexity. Moreover we will also consider the number, and the variety, of the collaborations that the group have been involved in over time. For those reasons it was fundamental to divide the analysis giving to each group of links the proper space and separating them in thematic blocks. Until now we have seen their inner network and the institutional one.

Starting from the Bogatti et al. (2003) definition of network:

“A network is a set of actors connected by a set of ties. The actors (often called nodes) can be persons, teams, organizations, concepts, etc. [...] When we focus on a single focal actor, we call that actor “ego” and call the set of nodes that ego has is ties with “alters”. The ensemble of ego, his alters, and all ties among these (including those to ego) is called ego-network.”³⁷

we will set as our ego Accademia Perduta and the nodes will be divided in category.

This picture of the Accademia Perduta Network cannot be consider complete since it does not consider the artistic collaborations. Therefore, a focus on it is now fundamental.

During the over thirty years of work, the company under analysis built many strict relationships with artists individually. These specific nodes won't be listed or discussed singularly because they have diverse nature and the way with which they have been established are very different, mostly informal and spontaneous. This is why an analysis of

³⁷ BOGATTI Stephen P., FOSTER Pacey C.; The Network Paradigm in Organizational Research: a Review and Typology; Journal of Management; 29(6), 2003, p. 992

them would result not just extremely complex, but also totally inconsistent with the aim of the research itself: give an idea of the operational scheme developed by the organization. Anyway a peculiar form of Artistic Residency will be briefly recalled in the final part of the chapter since it allowed Accademia Perduta to increase visibility becoming a cut costs strategy used frequently by the company. We will mostly focus on organizations and groups since the collaboration with them are more structured and stable.

3.1 The Artistic Network

Along with the theatrical venues management and the production of plays for theatre for children and youth, Accademia Perduta has been involved in a number of different artistic productions. It depends by the fact that the approach of the company to novelty is fluid: they tend to enjoy the exploration of innovative languages. This is why during the years they worked using many different artistic tools that we can divide in:

- Theatre
- Video
- Public Events

Here we will recall the most significant experiences in order to understand how broad is artistic network of the group.

Theatre In 2000 Accademia Perduta enlarges his range of interest producing their first original script of theatre with social vocation: *I-tigi, canto per Ustica*. The project has been developed in collaboration with the famous actor Marco Paolini. The topic of the piece was the flight disaster of Ustica³⁸. It has to be considered as the result of a longer path that the company started in 1993 with the project "Teatri per la Verità": a number of venues around Emilia Romagna that made a commitment to plan shows of theatre celebrities and to devolve all the profits of the reruns to the association of the victims' relatives, in order to help them to pay the trial's legal expenses. The Paolini show became quickly very popular and it brought the national television broadcast to buy the rights to broadcast it (RAI 2), with extraordinary results in terms of audience. Stimulated by this first successful experiment, the organization

³⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aerolinee_Itavia_Flight_870

kept on fostering those kinds of projects. In 2004 they produced another show: *Maggio '43* by Davide Enia about the bombing of Palermo during the II World War. Few years later, in 2007, it was the time to refocus their attention on the Ustica massacre and they produced the show *Ultimo Volo – Orazione Civile per Ustica* by Pippo Pollina, that has to be frame again in the set of initiatives linked to the Teatro per la Verità network.

Since then Accademia has abandoned the social theatre production stream due economic reasons and lack of stimulating projects. There is a last play that deserves to be mentioned here. In 2012 Accademia Perduta signed a contract of co-production with the Teatro Stabile del Veneto for the development of the script *Oscure Immensità* written by the author Massimo Carlotto, with Claudio Casadio and Giulio Scarpati as protagonists and directed by Alessandro Gassman. It is a step forward for the establishment of the company name that is now also pertinent when pronounced in the prose theatre sector, another brick added to the popularity building process.

Video Around the end of the first decade of the years 2000, Accademia Perduta has been engaged in a co-production with the film company Rosetta Film³⁹. The results are the two documentaries: *Itiburtinoterzo*⁴⁰ e *La notte quando è morto Pasolini*⁴¹. The first is all around a bunch of young inhabitants of a Roma's suburbs, telling their story on the edge: the criminal routine of the protagonists environment feeding their dreams of glory; the second is a long interview to one of the convicted for the Pasolini murder that try to retrace the tragic night of the assault. Those two documentaries had been part of the program of a number of festivals in 2009, one of which was the "Locarno Film Festival". The venture in the video production can be considered limited to it, even if not completely. The organization itself has never signed again a project of video or film but the vice-president, Claudio Casadio, has been chosen to play the protagonist of *L'uomo che verrà*⁴² by Giorgio Diritti. Even if the company was not directly involved in the project, as a recognized entity, the role it played before the engagement deserve to be remind: Casadio has been picked for the role because the director of the film, Diritti, was invited by the President to see a *Pollicino* performance⁴³. Moreover, the

³⁹ <http://www.robortatorre.com/robortatorre.html>

⁴⁰ <http://www.robortatorre.com/movie/Preview/i-tiburtino-iii.html>

⁴¹ <http://www.robortatorre.com/movie/Preview/la-notte-quando-e--morto-pasolini.html>

⁴² <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1351672/>

⁴³ <http://www.movieplayer.it/film/articoli/giorgio-diritti-torna-al-festival-di-roma-con-l-uomo-che-verra-6273/>

vague limit between the individuality and the whole of the Accademia's staff impose us to consider also this experience as part, in a certain way, of the group story.

Public Events In parallel with the beforehand mentioned experiences the institution has also pursued a number of public events in collaboration with the municipalities of Romagna. The nature of those projects is variegated; we will now recall the most significant ones.

La Notte delle Creature is the very first event that Accademia Perduta has designed in collaboration with Circo e Dintorni⁴⁴.

“[...]un nuovo, entusiasmante percorso artistico: la progettazione di una nuova forma di spettacolo dal vivo che consiste in un’originale forma di circo/teatro nelle piazze in cui acrobati provenienti da tutto il mondo interagiscono con monumenti, palazzi, torri e cornicioni.”⁴⁵

as the Accademia's website reports⁴⁶. The format worked pretty well, so the show, enriched over time, has been proposed again and again⁴⁷. In this case the organization under analysis has basically directed the logistic/organization part, enforcing in such a way their bonds with the city hosting the events and arising their visibility with locals.

In 2008, for the FAC⁴⁸, Accademia Perduta has presented an architectural visual show named *Natività a Faenza*. This project involved all the main contemporary art actors of Faenza, everyone was called to participate to the performance giving their own contribute. The result has been an innovative assemblage of very different artistic languages collaborating in order to tell the nativity story. The originality of the experience brought the teaser of the performance to travel around the world: in fact, it has been presented in Rome (2009) and in New York (2009). This is another interesting evidence of how relevant is the role of Accademia for choral venture, not the enthusiasm nor the validity of the project would be enough without the organizational guidance of the group, they exploit the contacts and relationships they built during the years in order to make it happen⁴⁹.

⁴⁴ <http://www.circoedintorni.it/>

⁴⁵ “[...] a new, exciting artistic path: the planning of a new form of alive exhibition that consist in an innovative form of circus/theatre performed in squares in which acrobats, coming from all around the world, interact with monuments, buildings and towers”

⁴⁶ <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/chi/storia1.asp>

⁴⁷ Ravenna 2004, 2005 and 2013; Forlì 2005; Faenza 2012.

⁴⁸ Faenza Contemporary Art Festival <http://www.festivalartecontemporanea.it/>

⁴⁹ Faenza: oltre 12mila spettatori per “Natività a Faenza”, Romagna Oggi

<http://www.romagnaoggi.it/cronaca/faenza-oltre-12mila-spettatori-per-nativita-a-faenza.html>

Probably the most ambitious and multifaceted event ever organized by Accademia Perduta is the *Circo della Pace*. From 2007 to 2010 Bagnacavallo has been the set of a singular artistic, social and cultural workshop. The town has been involved, as a whole, into a complex as much as intriguing project. During the Christmas Holiday a circus big tend has been placed in main square and there were laboratory and performances planned all days. The social interest is hold in the premises: every year a different street/circus young performers group, coming from problematic areas⁵⁰ of the world, was hosted and asked to be the protagonists of the entire event. The exceptionality of the plan was the large involvement of the different slice of the population. Being conceived as solidarity project the income was entirely donated to the associations taking care of the children and the local community was called to basically cover the costs. Everyone was engaged to this end, from the institutional organization – municipality, province, region – to the local entrepreneurs – giving their support in terms of sponsorships or hospitality (like restaurants have done offering the lunches) – to the singular citizens asked to host in their own houses the performers. The extraordinary response of the community is again a prove of how Accademia Perduta is entrenched in the social pattern: working for such a long time in a zone with remarkable results made them a reliable reality in which people believe and are willing to help. Again here the group has been always in charge off all the organizational aspects and they also provided the entire staff to coordinate the event in collaboration, also in this case, with Circo e Dintorni. Unfortunately for a serious lack of fund it has been impossible to replicate the experience in the last years. The success of this initiative has been fundamental because it put Accademia Perduta in the spotlight ensuring to the organization an unexpected visibility also in national press thanks all the celebrities that visited the pavilion⁵¹. A golden occasion to gain reputation with the entire set of institutional, artistic and private partners.

Finally, the strict relation that the group has with the local business is also attested by some events that they organized for private enterprises. Having taken part to the public events signed by Accademia the entrepreneurs decided to commit their own initiative as happened with the 25th anniversary of the Zerocento Cooperative (2012), or the celebrations of the 100th anniversary of Milano Marittima.

The aim is to enhance the relationship with the territory, being part of their story and emotions. Even if it can seems far from the core activity of Accademia Perduta, it is actually an

⁵⁰ Parada and the children of Bucharest (2007); Sarakasi and the acrobats of nairobi (2008); Circo Para Todos (2009); Mobile Mini Circus for Children and the artists coming from Afghanistan (2010).

⁵¹ http://bologna.repubblica.it/cronaca/2011/01/08/foto/napolitano_e_il_circo_della_pace-10989504/1/

essential completing part of their duty. They have to stay between people in order to get their moods, they always confront themselves with the streets in order to bring the nuances within the theatre walls, to avoid the quite frequent sensation of the theatre as a castle deserved just to a certain portion of selected people.

In order to create the artistic product we just listed Accademia Perduta had to create synergy with complementary partners that are the one where the skills and markets do not overlap. In these cases the partners join together their different competences in order to obtain a specific target that would be impossible to achieve if not together. Now we are going to see a different block of the network, the one represented by companies that are actually working in the same specific field of production of Accademia Perduta.

3.1.1 The Network of theatre for children and youth production companies

Here we will list and explain which has been the partnerships that they enabled over time in the theatre for children and youth production field. We will first provide an idea about the artistic characteristics of these groups; later in the paragraph there will be a focus on the partnership model through which they rule the collaborations.

Ferruccio Filippazzi Accademia Perduta and Ferruccio Filippazzi are working together since 1998, it makes this collaboration classifiable as really stable, especially if we frame it within the artistic field where long-lasting partnerships are particularly difficult. This actor has a great past of important experiences with many solid realities of the Italian panorama, he is engaged from decades in the theatre for children and youth production and he has explored a number of different narrative languages, evolving in an accurate work of research aimed at founding the most fitting one with his poetics. Relatively recently he has created a strict relationship with a performer that is now often supporting his plays: Massimo Ottone. The idea behind their performances is a sort of union between the narrative and the figurative elements of the storytelling: where the first is interpreted by Filippazzi reading the tale and the second is represented by Ottone creating images alive, using sand, which are in turn projected in the background. This mixture of techniques – video, recitation, drawing, music - provide to audience a really original experience, far from the narrative style normally adopted by the inner companies of Accademia.

*Tanti Così Progetti*⁵² is a group formed by Danilo Conti and Antonella Piroli that is specialized in what in Italian is called “Teatro di Figura”: a theatre kind in which on stage the actors use puppets, objects and shadows to perform the various parts of the play. The collaboration between this group and Accademia Perduta begun in the very 90' firsts years and they produce a remarkable number of plays together over time. They have been performed their pièce all around world and have taken part to many important festivals.

*Il Baule Volante*⁵³ The path the two actors, Andrea Lugli and Liliana Letterese, are following is turned toward the theatre of research. They provide an unconventional experience to children that are asked to look beyond the tales: the scenic design is bare on purpose, in order to point the attention on the movements and the dialogs that the actors execute during the play. The result are refined performances that do not aim to stimulate wonder but, instead, try to suggest discussion on the topics treated exploiting narration techniques.

*TeatroPersona*⁵⁴ is the latest group added to the network, they have been signed together, with Accademia, a contract in 2014 for the first time. They are particularly engaged in theatre of research. The interest of Accademia Perduta has been raised by their new production *Il Grande Viaggio* and they are now co-producing the French version of it. Unlike the just above-mentioned companies, it is not an Emilia Romagna based group, they have they headquarter in Tuscany.

3.1.2 The Artistic Residency as a form of partnership

To support smaller companies is one of the duties for “Teatro Stabile d'Innovazione - Infanzia e Gioventù” from which depends the opportunity to benefit of the financial supports from their public funders. It is a measure thought to delegate the control on territory in a perspective of decentralization of power. It reproduce the well-know scheme of the biggest organization fostering the smaller one, starting from the idea that geographical proximity allows also an increased power of judgment. This contiguity between different size groups operating in the same market has, as side effect, a natural process of reciprocal contamination that allows them to share and compare their researches. Accademia Perduta, having such a

⁵² <http://tanticosiprogetti.tumblr.com/>

⁵³ <http://www.ilbaulevolante.it/>

⁵⁴ <http://www.teatropersona.it/indexv.html>

long story, always has to be careful to not succumb to the homogenization of their product, establish fertile collaborations with independent organizations has been proved as a well-functioning strategy: it allow them to always have comparison with other actors of the same industry without the complication of a competitive relationship.

We will see which is the advantage that the groups above mentioned – *Ferruccio Ferretti, Tanti Così Progetti, Il Baule Volante and TeatroPersona* – gain from the partnership and what Accademia gets in return. The aim is to understand which are the reasons underneath in the willingness to cooperate with a costs/benefits analysis.

First we have to clarify that these companies are totally independent from Accademia Perduta from the artistic and the formal point of view. The connection existing between the two are shaped on partnership model: the both actors sign a commitment of reciprocal collaboration for the sake of the respective groups. It is the point where the needs of the first meet the demands of the second and vice versa. The Artistic Residency is the reference model, but here is applied with some adjustments. Accademia Perduta adds to the regular contract a further set of accommodations creating a quite interesting packet for the producing theatre company that is asked to join the network. They offer:

- the venue for the rehearsals: as the Residency Model imposes

but also:

- provide an economic contributes to the production of the original script
- ensure an arranged number of reruns
- furnish the necessary administrative and organizational support

All of those measures allow the little production company to reduce uncertainty on the final result. In fact if they, since the beginning, know that they can rely in such a set of sure opportunity they will be more relaxed about all the aspects that are not merely artistic: focusing on the quality of the creation. The economic support allows them to invest immediately a, more or less significant, capital on the production. Moreover, having a theatre for the rehearsals represent an important cut in expenses. Most of the production companies, in fact, do not own physical structures and they are forced to rent them, it automatically adds an item to the overall cost of production. Also in the reducing uncertainty perspective has to be considered the agreement establishing an arranged number of reruns: just a big organization, with their tangible (venues) and intangible (network) assets, can ensure such a certainty. On its behalf, Accademia Perduta is able to ensure those reruns relying, since the beginning, on the final result, thanks to the accurate work of research they do before to sign the contract, and they are confident to sell the plays without risk to compromise their name in

the field. Furthermore, we should consider that a number of reruns are already intended to be part of the seasons they design for their own theatres. Finally, but not less important, the administrative/organizational support is fundamental. The remarkable level of efficiency that an organization, as the one under analysis, achieved makes the partnership not just convenient but also desirable since it permits to the members of the little companies the access to specific patterns and technologies. The collaboration will ensure them a privileged channel through which they can learn strategies and improve administrative skills.

The most important payback coming from these investments for Accademia Perduta is the increased variety of the cultural offer. These partnerships give them the opportunity to improve the level of diversification of the artistic proposal released to the national and regional audience. It also represents the chance to accomplish contamination with different mind-sets, allowing them to evolve and improve their own productions. Nevertheless, it implies a risk of cannibalization of the value of the new company, it is fundamental in fact to avoid an excessive affinity of the poetics. This is why it is pivotal to leave a distance between the two actors: to ensure the artistic freedom and independency to the partner. In this sense Accademia Perduta has always demonstrated a rigid approach: they have never acquired a group with which they collaborated, privileging a project-base approach to avoid the alienation of the relationships. If two realities create a long-lasting relationship a consequence can be an overexploitation of the link itself. The managers of the institution know that collaborations do not last forever: it is necessary to feed them with reciprocal continuous check on quality and reliability. If they are compatible now it doesn't necessarily mean that they will be tomorrow. An accurate work of evaluation is the basis on which all of these agreements are built. In this sense has to be considered the recent adding of the *TeatroPersona* in the network. There is another factor that has to be weighed at this point of the costs/benefits analysis: the penetration of new potential markets. The actors involved in a partnership, like the one described, have as an additional fundamental reason to join the alliance: the opportunity to meet a new portion of public. For what concerns the little companies the motivations are basically geographic. Thanks to the collaboration with Accademia Perduta they will have the chance to exploit the national, and sometimes also international, network they gained over time, achieving physically new audiences that weren't available to them previously. The Accademia interest, instead, is more related to the typology of production: through the diverse artistic offer provided by these partners they will reach different slices of public, that weren't intrigued by their own productions.

In conclusion we should also point out that some of these little realities, without the consistent help that they receive by Accademia Perduta, would have probably disappeared years ago or, at least, would have never got to the opportunity to be known by the majority of the Italian theatres for a lack of implicit and explicit resources. The vocation of fostering new talents is, theoretically, one of the premises that Accademia Perduta claims. It might have been true for the past, and it is probably also true when it comes to the other artistic experiences they have done, but in the theatre for children and youth production this vocation seems to be a bit rusty. If from one side the long-lasting relationships are a good sign of stability and reliability, as already argued, in the other they can also be an index of stagnation. It seems that Accademia Perduta got stuck in a comfortable zone with the groups they already know, this behaviour can strongly compromise the incentive to innovation and, consequently, their performance. The recent enlargement of the network with the acquisition of *TeatroPersona*, can be read as a willingness to correct the biased routine, a proof that they understood the need of some novelty in their repertoire. Even if we surely consider it has good sign it is not yet enough to prove a radical change in attitude. The reasons behind this conservative approach can be various: it might be a consequence directly linked to the age of the members of the group. Analysing the trend of vocation toward innovation, it seems that the interest decreased proportionally with the aging of the managers. Maybe there is also a component of over-rigidity in the evaluation of the potential partner, it might happened that the Accademia criteria assessments have been raised at the point that are not anymore achievable for smaller companies, with fewer assets. It seems difficult to believe that between the new groups the talents to foster became so rare; it is more probable that it is the result of a potentially dangerous behaviour of the organization under analysis that will lead them to a depletion of their artistic richness.

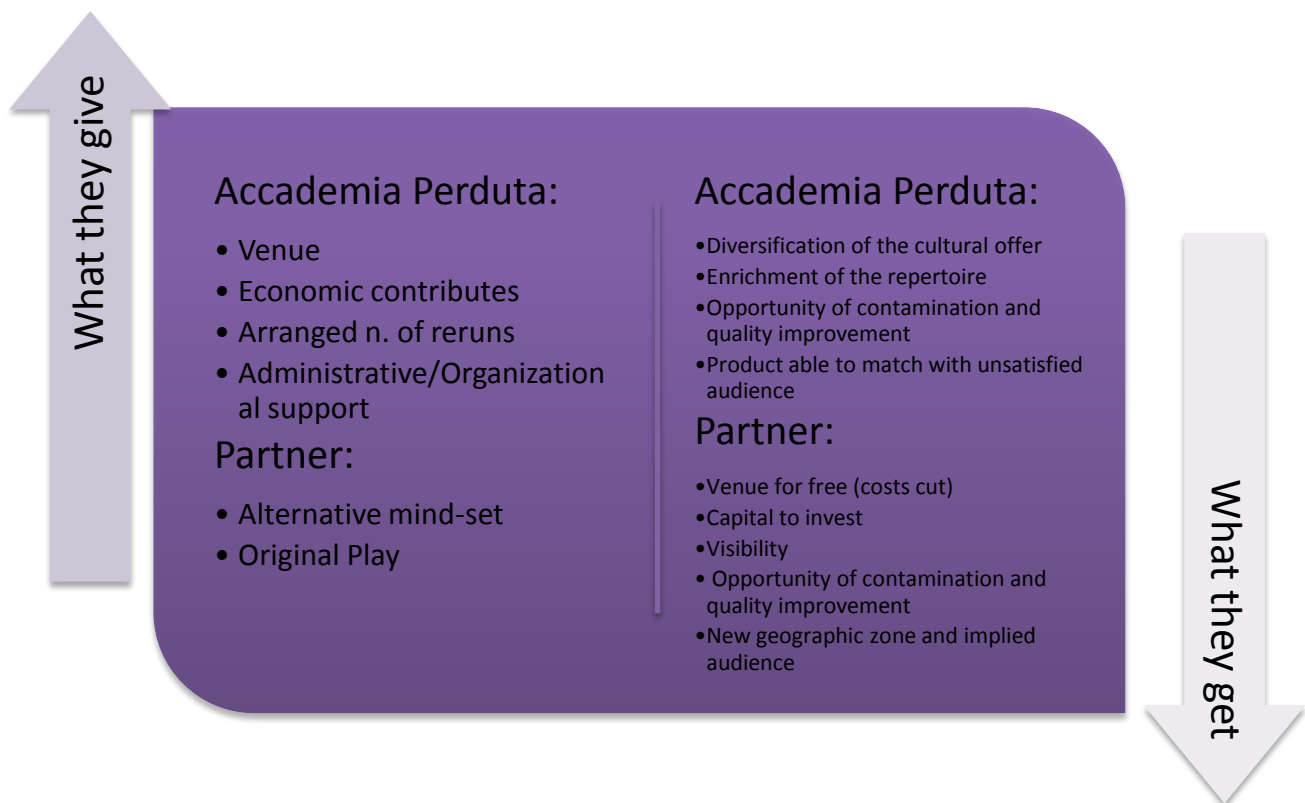


Figure 5 Artistic Residency (theatre for children and youth)

3.2 The International Network

Accademia Perduta has also developed an international portion of its network. We will first provide an explanation of the path followed to get and to develop connections, then we will focus on the strategies that the organization adopts nowadays in order to manage these links. Following the Italian attitude for international network creation, Accademia Perduta had a first approach to the foreign market that can be defined as spontaneous⁵⁵. This adjective is not indicating an informal overture, the intention to reach the audience abroad was planned but any public institution did not help them: not Italian nor foreigner, this is the sense under which we should read the attribute spontaneous. In 2004 the organization protagonist of our research started to collaborate with Gabriele Ferraboschi, whom has to be considered as a

⁵⁵ GALLINA Mimma; *Organizzare Teatro, Produzione, distribuzione, gestione nel sistema italiano*; 2007 FrancoAngeli, Milano, p. 357

proper asset for the group at this moment of their evolution. Ferraboschi, in fact, is a well-known person in the Italian theatre field and foremost he spent the last decades to create a complex and branched network abroad, especially in France. It is important to stress on the strategic role of this partner because he didn't just exploit his own contacts in order to promote the Accademia's products, he also has been fundamental to understand which were the most fitting plays for the international market, which one between the productions were the more willing to meet the foreigner tastes. One of the most commune mistakes is, in fact, to export a script that is not going to be enough affine to the hosting country narrative. At the opposite side, is also necessary to be careful not to turn the work in something totally different just to be successful with a different audience because, in such a way, it will probably lose the artistic meaning along with the transformation. For the intellectual integrity and the success of the company the role of Gabriele Ferraboschi was as much crucial as it was his acquired network. The point is not that without this key collaborator they wouldn't be able to gain the links by themselves, but the rapidity with which this venture became reality would be probably not replicable. The strategy followed was quite simple, at first: they invited some influent French and Spanish producers to attend to Festivals, where the Accademia's plays were presented. The scripts have been considerate interesting by the international buyers and they purchased them: this how they started to plan tournée abroad. The Spanish experience was short and intense (spanned from 2005 to 2009); thanks to the governmental policies pursued under the Zapatero administration the national market had a significant increase in the public financial investments in the cultural field for a while. Accademia Perduta have been able to take advantage of this renovated interest in international market, but as soon as the economic crisis touched Spain, in a quite strong way, the relationships between the two – Accademia and the Spanish buyers – has been suddenly interrupted. For what concern France, instead, the Festival system has to be considered just the first stage of a longer connection that is still working. A significant step forward has been made in the 2005/2006 when the plays of Accademia Perduta – *Hansel e Gretel* (2000) and *Pollicino* (2004) – has been introduced in the Onda list. Onda – Office National de Diffusion Artistique – is a French organization that, between the other goals, has the aim to encourage international exchanges. As they state:

“Onda participates actively in the development of artistic exchanges in Europe and encourages international exchanges.”⁵⁶

Being in that list meant that the distributors interested in one of these specific Accademia's titles received a percentage for the purchasing from the government. This has been the crucial stimulus needed for an effective penetration of the French market. Moreover, having the reputation building process started, also during the Rida – Rencontres interrégionales de diffusion artistique – the plays signed by Accademia Perduta were recommended. The Rida are national meetings organized for the managers of theatre in France, where the professionals discuss about the shows they attended and share opinions and suggestions. The name of Accademia Perduta started to be quite well-known in the field and it permitted to them to increase the network, and consequently the number of shows sold, in a very short period of time: from the 8 reruns of the 2004 to the more than 100 of the 2007. In order to maintain a profitable flow, managing competitors and a natural decrease in interest, Accademia applied some market strategy that we are going to explain and analyse in the next paragraph.

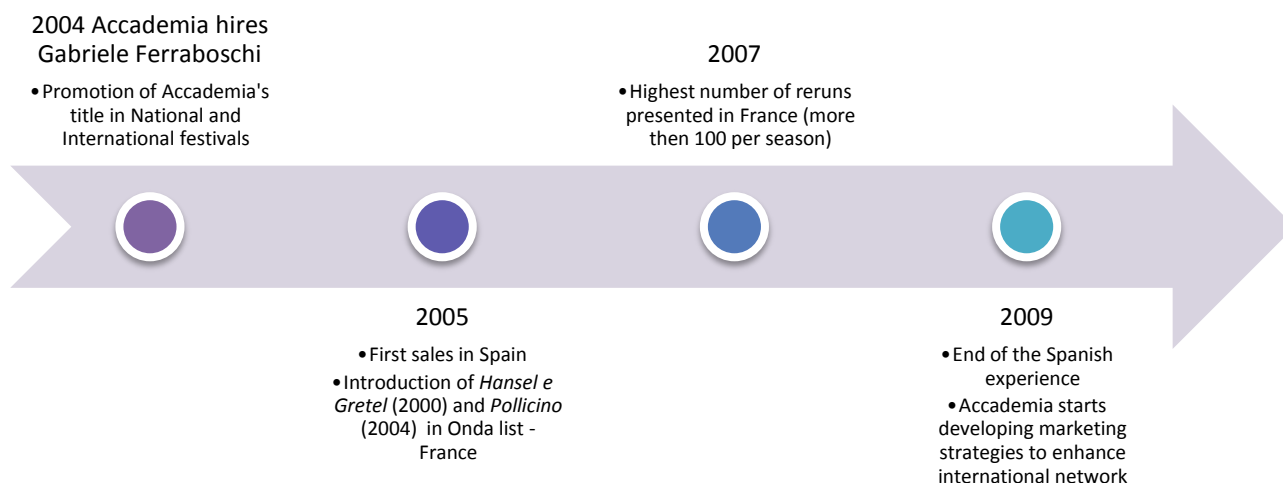


Figure 6 Chronological evolution of International Network

⁵⁶ <http://www.onda.fr/en/who-are-we.php?rub=5&page=17>

3.3 From Artistic Residency to Distribution Partnership in France: developing marketing strategies

With the progressive decrease of the sales in France, Accademia Perduta understood that the time to take countermeasure was come. The models that they decided to adopt are basically two: the Production Partnership and, in some cases, the combined Artistic Residency.

In 2009 Accademia Perduta signed with the Scène Nationale – Albi⁵⁷ the first agreement of artistic residency for the adaptation of the play *La Bella e la Bestia* – one of the titles actually co-produced with the company *Il Baule Volante*. From the French side the contract consists of:

- giving an appropriate venue for the rehearsals;
- taking-charge of all the expense related to the Italian company sojourn in the city during the adaptation of the play (accommodation, transports, food etc.);
- providing a professional figure for helping the company to translate the play properly, someone able to suggest them the best way to give to the French public the same experience the Italian one have had;
- ensuring a certain amount of reruns in their own theatre(s).

This kind of relationship has also a precious underneath implication: the French partner willingness of sharing the network . It means that, even if it was not explicitly stated by the contract, the hosting group is naturally prone to promote the play they supported within their list of contacts. In some cases the foreigner partners planned specific meetings for professionals – Rencontres Professionnelles – in order to present the pièce to the operators of the zone. It is a fundamental additional benefit that has been proved pivotal in the reputation building process. The word of mouth is an incredibly well working marketing strategy, and even more if the origin of it is an institution already established in the territory. For its part, the Italian group ensure to the partners:

- an high quality play to a very discounted price, allowing diversification in the cultural offer, enriched by an international point of view;
- the public certification of the partnership in promotional materials and official documents, particularly important to obtain the public grants.

⁵⁷ <http://www.sn-albi.fr/>

The experience with the group of Albi was so rewarding, for the both sides, that Accademia has been able to find a different partner for the same play also the year after, this time with the Espace Culturel – Vendenheim (2010)⁵⁸.

Artistic Residency Partnership

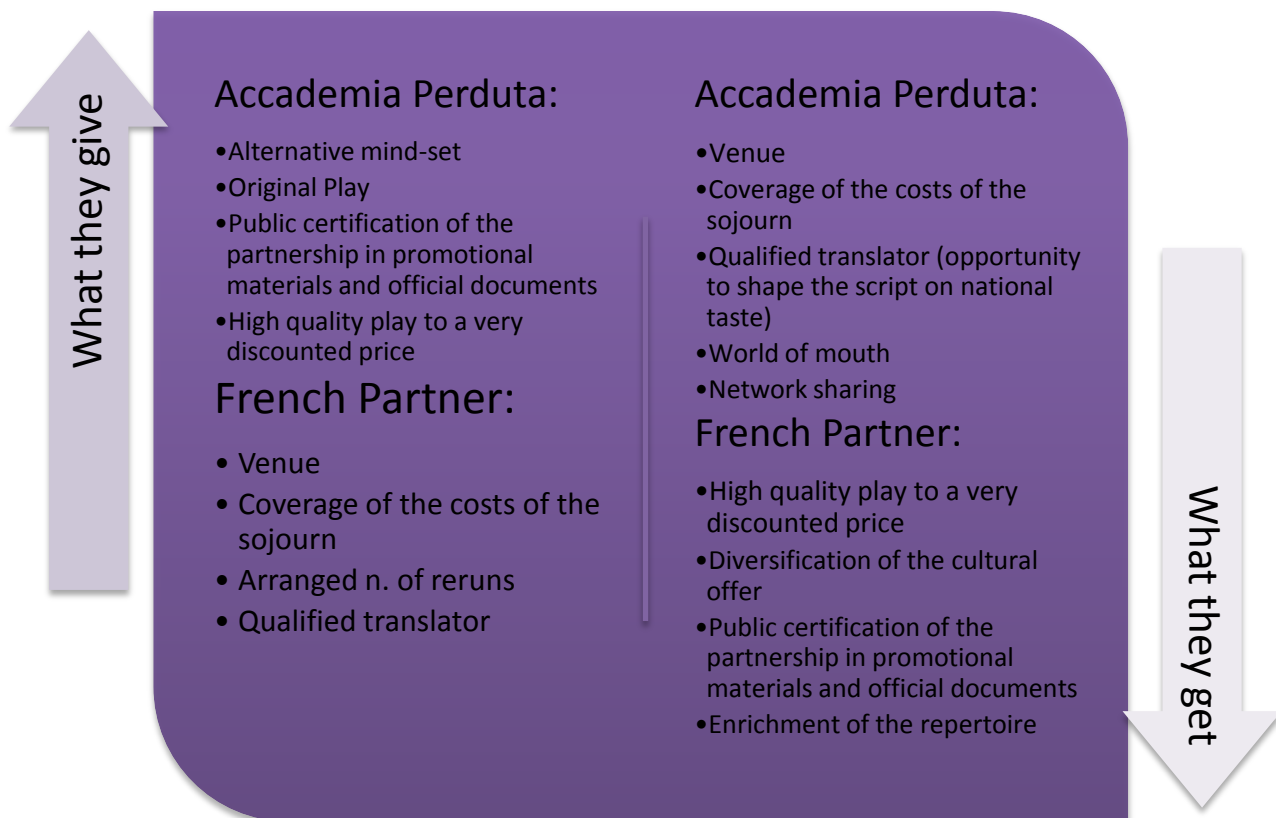


Figure 7 Artistic Residency Partnership model (International)

The artistic residency formula, with the same model used in the past for the *La Bella e la Bestia*, has been adopted also for the new coproduction of Accademia Perduta - TeatroPersona: *Il Grande Viaggio*. It has been recently signed a contract with the Espace Culturel – Vendenheim for the current year (2014), and one with the Maison des jeunes et de la culture - Saint Gervais Mont Blanc for the next one (2015).

Simultaneously, in 2010, Accademia was also applying another typology of collaboration for a different title of their repertoire: *L'Orchetto*. In this case the strategy chosen has been a particular kind of production partnership: the offer of the Italian company

⁵⁸ <http://www.vendenheim.fr/joomla/index.php/culture-loisirs/espace-culturel>

was basically the same, but the involvement of the French partners does not imply the artistic residency. To make it more clear: a number of French companies were asked to buy at a lower price the play ensuring a satisfying number of reruns in their theatre(s), in exchange they obtained the public certification of the partnership. For Accademia Perduta the target was to present their work in many different areas of the country in order to get a large audience, composed also by local theatres managers that might consider the purchase for the following season(s). The companies that signed this contract for the *L'ogrelet* – French version of *L'Orchetto* – were: Scène Nationale – Albi, Centre Culturel Jean l'Hôte - Ville de Neuves Maisons, Centre Culturel Pablo Picasso – Homécourt, Centre Culturel Paul Bailliar – Massy, Espace Culturel – Vendenheim, L'Espal - Le Mans, MJC Intercommunale – Ay, Théâtre de Vienne – Vienne. It is not just a mere list, it is functional to understand the dimension of the business and also it appoints the continuity of the relationship that Accademia established with its partners. We see, for example, that both the Scène Nationale – Albi and the Espace Culturel – Vendenheim, already mentioned before, have been also investing for this play: it implies a recognition to Accademia Perduta of an high artistic quality level.

Pure Partnership

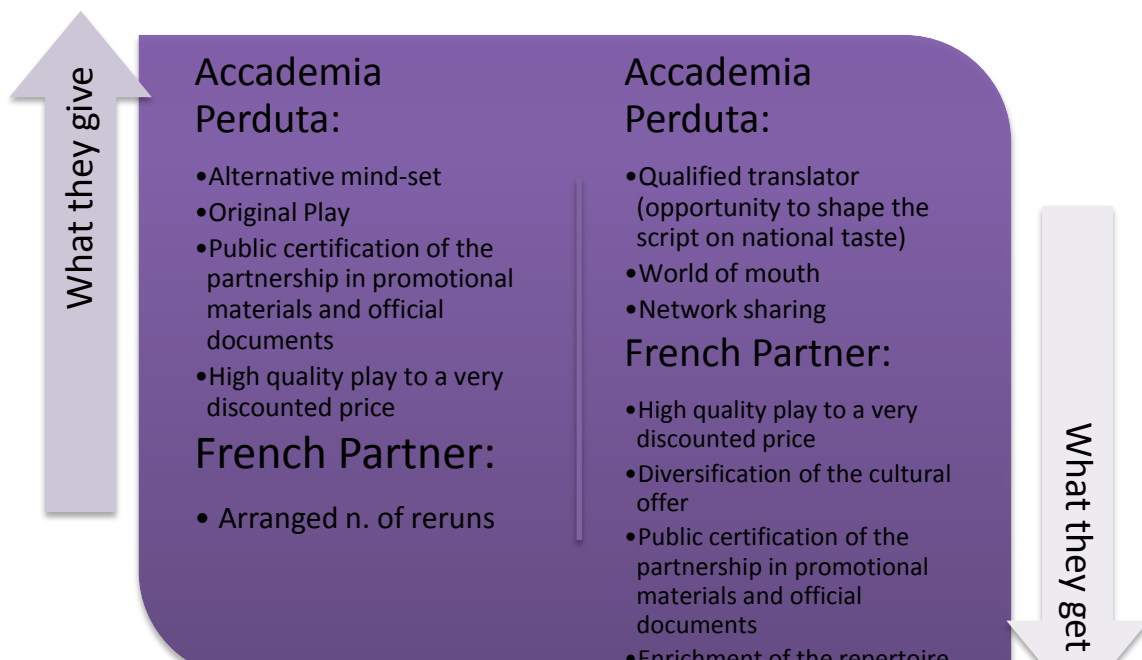


Figure 8 Partnership model (International)

During the last season Accademia has developed a new intriguing strategy: the distribution partnership. The idea is to sell the plays of their repertoire at cost price to any theatre that is interested; the only condition to get this particular agreement is to be the first venue presenting the title in the region. The cost price is calculated considering the expenses that they to afford in order to reach the place and perform the paly (transports, actors' and technicians' salaries, and hotels), they basically cut the profit share on the equation to evaluate the price they charge to the distribution partners. The idea is to geographically spread the distribution of the product in order, again, to achieve the largest portion of public possible, to reach every zone of the country making it available to as many agents as possible. So far the organizations that adhere to the initiative are:

La bella e la Bestia:

- Scène Nationale - Albi
- Espace Culturel - Vendenheim
- Centre Culturel Pablo Picasso - Homécourt

Il Grande Viaggio:

- Espace Culturel - Vendenheim
- MJC - Saint Gervais Mont Blanc



Considering that this strategy as been introduced this years (2014) it seems to be promising, as it is shows by the image they are trying to get all the different zones of France.

In general, the results obtained by Accademia Perduta in the foreigner market penetration can be judged as quite successful if we consider that nowadays they can count on an average of 40 reruns abroad per year. Anyway we should here note that there is still some margin of improvement. The promotional material, for example, is still the weakest aspect of the entire system. Being the buyers physically far it is fundamental to provide them captivating advertisement. It became even more strategically crucial when it comes to theatre field because often the most important support to prove the value of a product is the video, or at least the teaser of the play itself. The material that I had the chance to see is not adequate at all. The quality of the images and the sound is extremely low, and the picture that they give to a potential buyer is for sure not positive. A good quality video of their titles is an investment that Accademia should take in consideration, because as a counterweight to a really low expense they can gain a remarkable increase of the business volume. Moreover to enhance the international vocation some other tools can be used. For example, an extremely serious demonstration of inefficiency of Accademia Perduta is that they do not have an English version of their website. If any foreigner buyer decide to get information about the company will for sure be disappointed by the fact that the only language contemplated is Italian. Investing in these little improvements would mean for Accademia a remarkable achievement in terms of accessibility and consequently of reliability. Furthermore it seems inconsistent to invest so much time, money and expectations in the international market and then not support them with an appropriate set of tangible tools. It is true that the endorsement of

international theatres is one of the most important target at which they have to leaning toward, but it is not a good reason to underestimate these elementary promotional devices.

3.4 The Debuts: a peculiar form of Artistic Residency

Even if hasn't been used for the theatre for children and youth another strategy deserves to be mentioned because it helped a lot the company to gain national visibility: the debuts. Despite the name that might be linked, in the reader mind, automatically to some sort of strategy to promote young companies it is a technique used by Accademia Perduta with the aim of gain important names for their yearly repertoire. This term is adopted to label a short-term agreement that the organization uses in order to create new linkages and enhance the existing ones. The concept is pretty simple: they provide to companies a theatre venue for rehearsals for free for a period of time, that generally is around three weeks/one months, and in return the play is presented in first preview in the venue managed by Accademia⁵⁹. It cannot be considered a coproduction since an economic support is not offered; it is instead more like an Artistic Residency. This same scheme has also been used for singers that, instead of prepare their tour in big cities, were invited to prove their concerts in the theatres that Accademia manages and to have the first date in it.

The success of this model can be also explained by the environmental factor, in fact the province results less stressing and more quiet and gives to the performers a pleasant surroundings where they can face the first part of a prospective intense season. During the years the names that has exploited this opportunity have been many: Paolo Conte, Lucio Dalla, Luca Carboni, Dario Fo and Franca Rame, Francesco Guccini and lately Laura Pausini⁶⁰, just to mention some.

Through this technique Accademia Perduta achieved also some collateral benefits, beyond the opportunity of present original plays. First of all the decentralization of the cultural production transforming little cities of Romagna, naturally out of the circuit, in hot spot of cultural production. Consequently a great opportunity for the audience, that got the chance to enjoy performance of celebrities of cultural field in their own cities, to get the access to exhibitions that are sometimes not even touching more important cities of the country.

⁵⁹ This year: Faenza – Masini: Leo Gullotta *Prima del Silenzio*; Eros Pagni and Tullio Solenghi *I Ragazzi Irresistibili*; Lella Costa and Paolo Calabresi *Nuda Proprietà*. Bagnacavallo – Goldoni: Antonio Cornacchione and Lucia Vasini *L'ho fatto per il mio paese*; Silvio Orlando and Marina Massironi *La Scuola*.

⁶⁰ <http://www.accademiaperduta.it/multimedia/album.asp?IDTitolo=118&titolo=Hanno%20debuttato%85&flash=debutti.swf&sez=Amici%20e%20Debutti&IDSezione=1>

Moreover spending time in the venues and having the implied relation with the organization brought these artists to build a connection with the institution itself, links that, as positive side effect, made them more prone to get involved in Accademia's projects – such as happened for Teatri della Verità. Accademia Perduta members understood that ensuring a collaborative and pleasant work environment for the artists meant to create long-lasting relationship of mutual esteem, a sort of bind that has its after-effect in the long term.

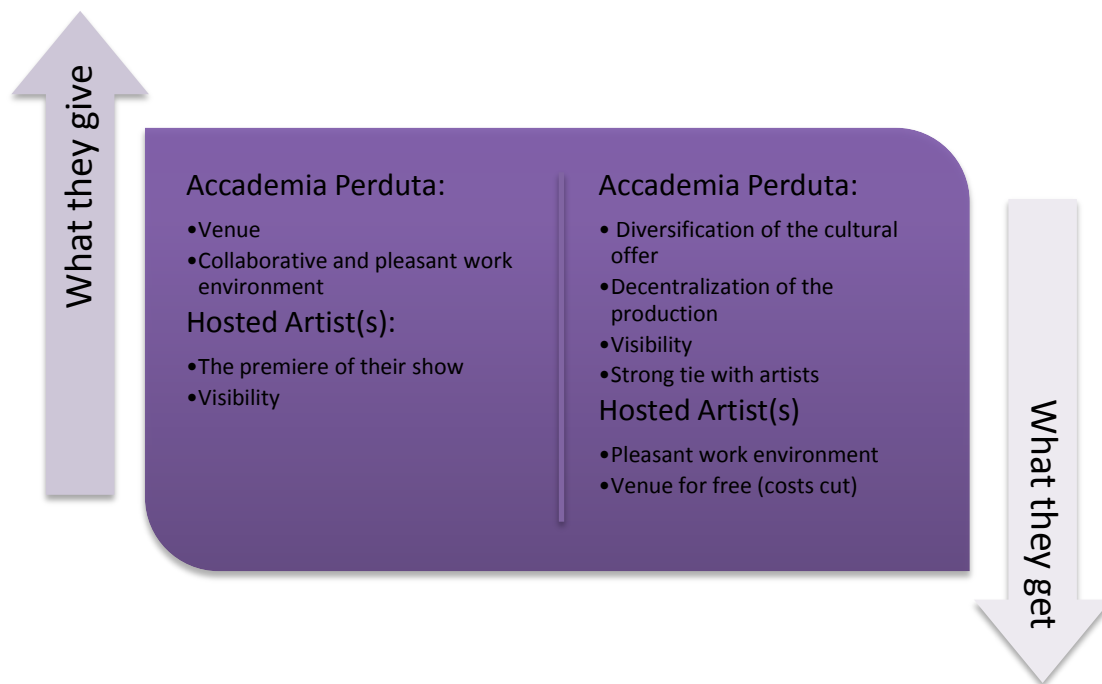


Figure 9 Debuts Model

Now that we described also the outward portion of the Accademia Perduta network we have a more complete picture of it that we can translate in a visual map.

Even if we tried to maintain the blocks divided and to list just the most relevant nodes of the Accademia Perduta ego-network, thanks to the graphical representation, we can easily understand the complexity of it. Such an elaborate pattern is, simultaneously one of the biggest resource and threat for an organization. The administrators have to constantly check if the costs needed to manage efficiently these relationships are not bigger than the benefits gained through it. When this trend turns unprofitable it is fundamental to understand it and to consider which are the measures to adopt in time: whether to cut a dry tie or to invest in the improvement of it.

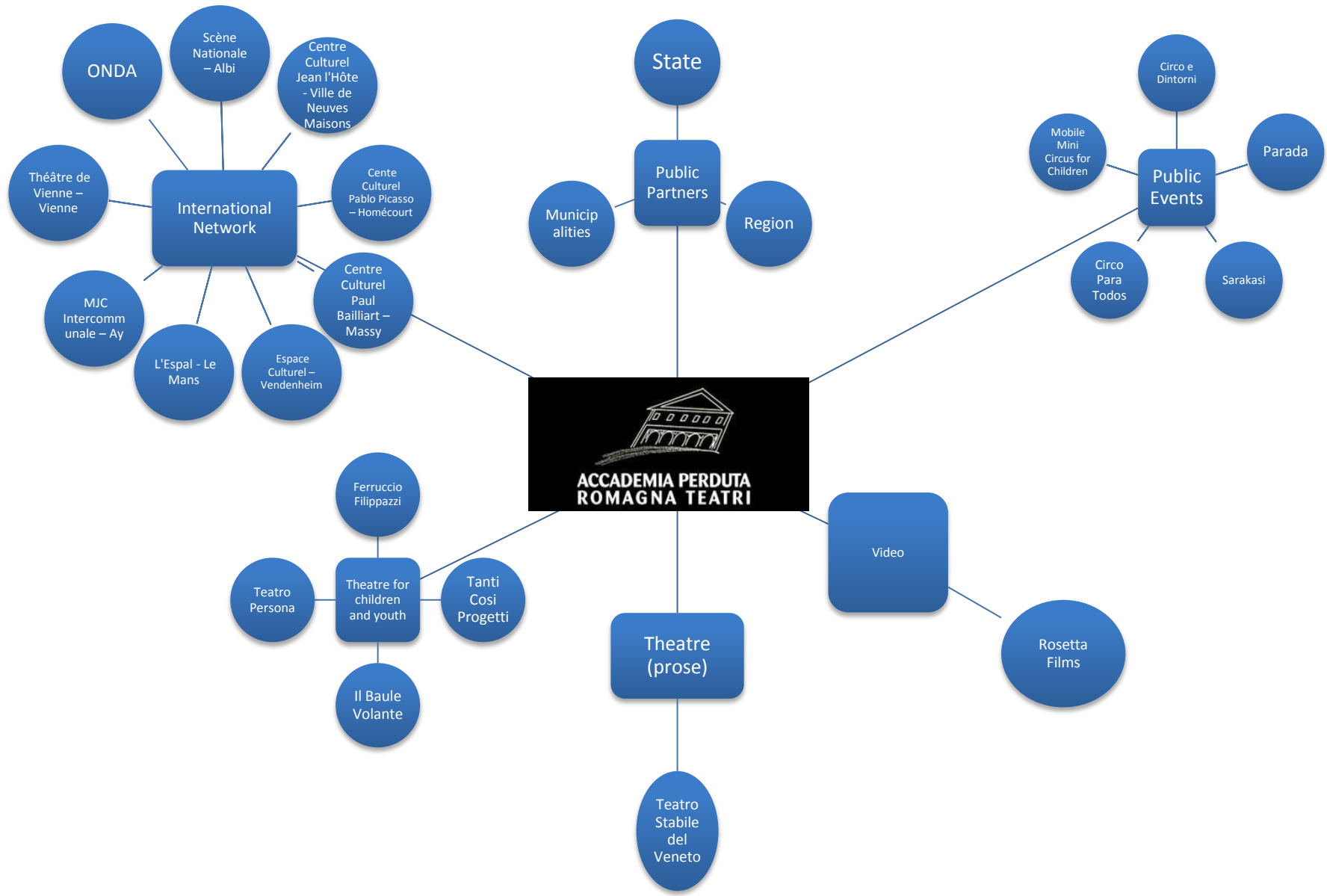


Figure 10 Network of Accademia Perduta

Conclusions

The aim of the dissertation was to offer a complete overview of the functioning of Accademia Perduta taking in consideration the multiple aspects of its activities. The idea was to see how the company growth over its thirty years of activities becoming the current consistent cluster of theatre venues and a fertile cultural performances producer, despite at the beginnings it was just a little cooperative of few actors. Particularly attention has been paid to the analysis of the strategies the organization implied in order to cope with the additional set of problems coming from the evolution of the business.

In cultural sector the measurement of a venture success is always a complicate task since there is no agreement on the index of reference, anyway the research pointed out the indubitably stability of the organization under analysis as the more tangible outcome in this sense. Their ability to adjust their model following the different nature of the experiences they have been involved has been deeply discussed. This versatile approach they have shown toward novelty and the enthusiasm they demonstrated in accruing links with diverse realities is one of their most important source of success but in the same time might create the premises for an involuntary, and uncontrolled, shift in the organization values.

Probably the most problematic aspect of the analysis was, in fact, to determine the real core activities of Accademia Perduta. This fuzziness about the service they actually deliver can create a failure in the communication with the audience, in long-term perspective it is necessary to consider the possible spillover on the audience expectations building process. The result of this situation of reciprocal misunderstanding has as concrete consequent risk a decreased reliability of the company. In the other hand to be involved in a wide number of different projects helps the organization members to exploit also different channels of exchanges with the locals, enriching the relationship and providing to Accademia staff clues about the social pattern outside the theatres walls.

Probably the countermeasure needed is to internally reconsider the priorities of Accademia Perduta systemizing the experiences that until now seemed more ensued from a spontaneous, and completely not structured, approach. In fact the file rouge connecting all the new venture beginnings appears to be the precise willingness of the president and the vice-president. Even if they both are, clearly, two wise managers and they are able to synthetize the real opportunities hidden in the premises of a project it doesn't mean that they should have this complete control on such an important portion of the company principles definition.

The analysis tried also to outline the sources of competitive advantage on which Accademia Perduta can rely in order to be considered more convenient and favourable for the partners. The role of the human capital has been proved pivotal in this sense. We have seen how the people running the organization make the difference in the ordinary, and extraordinary, management. Given that the inward and outward relationships of the company are the real assets on which the popularity, and probably the success, of the group are grounded we tried to look at the strategies used to build and maintain them. Moreover, also their peculiar way to exploit the economy of scope as been proved as one of the most important source of competitive advantage, even more if it is taken in consideration the opportunity of saving public money that they represent for the municipalities parts of their network.

Therefore, a considerable portion of the research was dedicated to the description of the influences that the public partners have on Accademia Perduta. We tried to investigate why the company depend so much from these institutions and the externalities that they are expected to produce for the territory. The financial implication of the behaviours described in this research deserves a deeper analysis, with the information we have collected we can argue that the approach followed is to try to control as much as possible the expenses on the organizational/administrative side in order to invest more on the artistic one.

Going back to the premises of this thesis, and even more to the title, we should explain how thanks to the analysis we are now able to understand the three levels of the Accademia network. The first is the geographical one: the venues that the organization manages are already creating the first layer thanks to their decentralized locations. This physical setting imposes to the staff to always apply the same pattern to their own organizational structure reasoning constantly in terms of network for the inner issues. The last and greatest, in quantitative terms, level of this complex model is represented by all the links that the organization has with the artistic field. The stability of each of these layers is fundamental to maintain the vertical stability and a problem at any level can have serious repercussions on the entire scheme. Given that is vital for the company to maintain the current standards of efficiency and effectiveness, they should consider to improve their internal structure considering the weaknesses underlined by the research being careful not to compromise the environment that they established though. Any top-down intervention on the division of the duties between the employees, that seems to be chaotic in more than one case, would presumably lead to the damage of the environment. In this sense it can be argue that this is actually the path that the company have chosen in order to suggest the dichotomous approach

among routine reproduction and dynamic arrangement of resources crucial for the mundane running of such a complex institution.

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