# Building relationships within the Russian Toys& Baby-Goods Industry

**Dr.Marina Sheresheva,** Professor, State University – Higher School of Economics, Faculty of Management, Department of Marketing, Moscow, Russia.
E-mail: m.sheresheva@mail.ru, Phone: +7 495 949 41 80.

## Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the case of building relationships within the Russian toys & baby-goods industry. After all the macroeconomic and political changes of the past decades in Russia, the industry was heavily damaged. At the beginning of the decade Russian toys & baby-goods producers seemed to have no competitive advantages at all. Their market share has fallen to less than 10% of the fast growing Russian toys & baby-goods market (14 to 20% per year).

The situation in the market began to change recently: the most active firms of the industry started to build intensive relationships aiming to raise competitiveness in Russia and abroad. Russian toys & baby-goods producers and retailers started to create win-win situations considering each other as collaborators, not as adversaries. There are some obvious results of such activity. Relational assets built by actors which now appraise the role of intensive relationships helped them to strengthen their consolidated position and to gain governmental support of their initiatives as well as to create new value by combining complementary assets and key competencies.

In the paper we present the results of our preliminary research, carried out by means of in-depth interviews conducted with top managers, as well as interviews with industry experts. The study is based on the IMP network approach which offers a solid ground to observe network relationships in which economic actors are involved. Looking at the changes in the industry and analyzing the recent evolution of inter-firm networking, we aim to find out which forms of long-term relationships are the most promising for the industry in modern conditions. What forms of inter-organizational cooperation can better help Russian toys & baby-goods enterprises to gain sustainable competitive advantage and to fight the problems brought by the world economic crisis?

The paper is organized around the following topics. Firstly, we focus on the literature on the subject, especially on the papers of the IMP network approach. Then we give a brief overview of the developments in the Russian toys & baby-goods industry pointing out some industry-specific and country-specific features and showing the trend to reappraisal of long-term inter-organizational relationships, regarded now as one of the main factors of success. We also aim to discuss some results of our research paying the main attention to recent initiatives in building inter-firm relationships within industry and their possible effects on the competitiveness and profit-generating capacity of the cooperating actors. Finally, suggestions for future research will be discussed.

**Keywords:** relationships, networking, competitiveness

**Work-in-Progress Paper**

# Building relationships within the Russian Toys& Baby-Goods Industry


## Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the case of building relationships within the Russian toys & baby-goods industry. After all the macroeconomic and political changes of the past decades in Russia, the industry was heavily damaged. At the beginning of the decade Russian toys & baby-goods producers seemed to have no competitive advantages at all. Their market share has fallen to less than 10% of the fast growing Russian toys & baby-goods market (14 to 20% per year).

The situation in the market began to change recently: the most active firms of the industry started to build intensive relationships aiming to raise competitiveness in Russia and abroad. Russian toys & baby-goods producers and retailers started to create win-win situations considering each other as collaborators, not as adversaries. There are some obvious results of such activity. Relational assets built by actors which now appraise the role of intensive relationships helped them to strengthen their consolidated position and to gain governmental support of their initiatives as well as to create new value by combining complementary assets and key competencies.

In the paper we present the results of our preliminary research, carried out by means of in-depth interviews conducted with top managers, as well as interviews with industry experts. The study is based on the IMP network approach which offers a solid ground to observe network relationships in which economic actors are involved. Looking at the changes in the industry and analyzing the recent evolution of inter-firm networking, we aim to find out which forms of long-term relationships are the most promising for the industry in modern conditions. What forms of inter-organizational cooperation can better help Russian toys & baby-goods enterprises to gain sustainable competitive advantage and to fight the problems brought by the world economic crisis?

The paper is organized around the following topics. Firstly, we focus on the literature on the subject, especially on the papers of the IMP network approach. Then we give a brief overview of the developments in the Russian toys & baby-goods industry pointing out some industry-specific and country-specific features and showing the trend to reappraisal of long-term inter-organizational relationships, regarded now as one of the main factors of success. We also aim to discuss some results of our research paying the main attention to recent initiatives in building inter-firm relationships within industry and their possible effects on the competitiveness and profit-generating capacity of the cooperating actors. Finally, suggestions for future research will be discussed.


**Keywords:** relationships, networking, competitiveness

## Introduction

The purpose of the paper is to analyze the case of building relationships within the Russian toys & baby-goods industry. Over the past decade, the industry damaged heavily in Perestroyka time has undergone numerous changes and began to grow fast. Recent crisis development in Russia pushes industry actors to self-organizing and networking which helps them to consolidate their efforts against crisis problems.
The paper takes network paradigm as a main basis of investigation looking at the development of Russian toys & baby-goods industry mainly under the IMP research tradition. In line with this tradition, the market can be described as networks of multidimensional exchange relationships between business actors. These actors control heterogeneous, interdependent resources and conduct inter-linked activities. Collaborative relationship management and procurement practices are of crucial importance (Ford et al., 2003; Håkansson, Ford, 2002; Håkansson, Snehota, 1995; Gadde, Huemer, Håkansson, 2003; Gemünden, Ritter, Walter, 1997; Ritter, Ford, 2004). An attempt to analyse interaction processes and changing minds and behavior of Russian managers within the context of Russian toys & baby-goods industry form the mainframe of this work-in-progress paper.

## The Main Topics Discussed

The paper is organized around the following topics. Firstly, we give a brief overview of the developments in the Russian toys & baby-goods industry which lead to changes in the forms of inter-organizational cooperation. We then investigate recent developments in inter-firm relationships paying the main attention to consolidation initiatives within the industry and their possible effects on joint competitiveness. In particular, there is an evident shift in the attitude towards network relationships. The problem is examined in this study using secondary data available as well as in-depth interviews with participants from the Russian toys & baby-goods industry. Finally, we make an attempt to highlight the structure of relationships within emerging toy cluster in Moscow region. The results of the exploratory study conducted are to serve as a first step leading to further research of the formal and informal connections of cluster members. So, some conclusions will be made concerning ways of further research.

## The Recent Developments in the Russian Toys & Baby-Goods Industry

Estimated potential Russian Toys & Baby-Goods market capacity is about $20-22 billion. The significant turnover share in children goods manufacture and trade is provided by clothes segment (growth 10% per year). The Russian toys market for kids is at the stage of development (growth 30% per year), and the Russian baby food market is at the stage of active development (growth 10-25%). The baby footwear market shows stable growth and has potential for further development (growth 7% per year).
So the Russian toys & baby-goods market is highly attractive. As to local producers, they can hardly capitalize on it. Local industry was heavily damaged in post-Soviet period. At the beginning of the decade Russian producers in all main submarkets, namely toys, clothes, food and footwear segments, seemed to have little, if any, competitive advantages. Their market share has fallen to less than 10%. At present the main part of this fast growing market (14 to 20% per year) is occupied by goods from China and South-West Asia (estimated market share 65-85%).
The situation in the market began to change recently: the most active firms of the industry started to build intensive relationships aiming to raise competitiveness in Russia and abroad. In order to highlight the changes in industry actors activity and their mindset

concerning role relationships in gaining competitive advantage, an initial case study was carried out by means of in-depth interviews.

## Research Methodology

The first stage of our empirical study draws on the case method (this statement is valid for the main study which is to be conducted in 2009-2010). From our point of view, cases often provide valuable theoretical insights, since the case study approach implies the detailed examination of every single example of a class of phenomena (Dyer, Wilkins, 1991; Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007; Flyvbjerg 2006; Yin 1984). It allows an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events, such as organizational and managerial processes.

In order to highlight the structure and quality of relationships within the industry and to emphasize the importance of long-term network interactions, an initial qualitative study was carried out in the form of in-depth interviews. So, the emphasis was on the qualitative methods which are the most appropriate if understanding and explanation are the main target of research. Additional data were obtained by means of observation and analyzing documents.

A convenience sampling approach was used. A sample included an amount of small and medium producers from different segments of the Russian toys & baby-goods industry as well as the main specialized retailers and wholesalers working on the market and some industry associations leaders. In total, twelve in-depth interviews were conducted:

| Company | Location | Sphere of activity |
|---|---|---|
| Distributor 1 | St.Petersburg | Remote control cars and battery operated railways |
| Distributor 2 | Moscow | Metal toy cars |
| Distributor 3 | St.Petersburg | Wide range of goods |
| Producer 1 | Moscow | Wooden board games |
| Producer 2 | Moscow | Toys facilitating mental development |
| Producer 3 | Moscow | Children’s garments |
| Producer 4 | Moscow | Creative sets |
| Producer 5 | Smolensk | Toys |
| Retailer 1 | Togliatti | Cash & Carry chain |
| Retailer 2 | Moscow | Specialized toys & baby-goods retail chain |
| Wholesaler 1 | Moscow | Balloons & toys |
| Wholesaler 2 | Moscow | Wide range of goods |

On average each interview lasted one hour. The most interview respondents asked that they be kept anonymous in the research. The interviews with the suppliers helped to give a general idea of suppliers' thoughts and visions, as well as views on partnerships with retailers, wholesalers and other industry actors, and vice versa. The interview guide was prepared which helped to discuss all the needed topics with every respondent and still to allow respondent as much freedom in their answers as possible. All interviews were first taped and later transcribed to allow for a detailed analysis. The interpretative reports were returned to the respondents for their comments. To improve the quality of the analysis, all the secondary data available were used to verify the general market situation and some questionable statements of the respondents.

## Developments in the Russian Toys & Baby-Goods Supply Chain: Preliminary Results

We have gained a lot of primarily information, some information is still to be analysed. Some of the results are to be reflected in this work-in-progress paper.

First of all, all the respondents pointed out the decrease of actors' number in their supply chains. A reduction in the number of suppliers results now not from implementing a specific supply chain strategy but mainly due to bankruptcy of firms. At the same time, most respondents are sure that such development leads to improving mutual relationships between Russian toys & baby-goods supply chain members and thus delivering appropriate value to customers, since the main part of actors leaving market due to bankruptcy were opportunistic firms oriented at "fast money".

Children goods in Russia are realized both in the "open markets" and through networks of specialized baby shops, hypermarkets, discounters, drugstores, stock-centers, etc. The main role in the industry supply chain belongs to wholesalers and retail chains. They are the leading actors with great bargaining power. During a couple of years, up to 2009, retail chains practiced more and more tough policy concerning suppliers. Nowadays there are still very hard agreement conditions for suppliers: suppliers have to deal with price markups up to 70-80%, and also pay additional bonuses up to 20-30%. At the same time, incentives to collaborate are very strong. In the Russian toys & baby-goods industry one can now observe a lot of mutually oriented interactions between two reciprocally committed parties tending to become multilateral.

> **Wholesaler**: "We are ready to be more open to our partners, to be upright. And we look to them for the same behavior".
>
> **Distributor**: 'It's time to consolidate, it' the only way to go through the crisis"
>
> **Wholesaler:** "We need to overcome the "crisis of trust"… We are ready to share information with our suppliers. For example, we have some new survey results (more than 3 500 wholesalers from all regions completed our questionnaire). We will readily pass the data to our supply chain partners".
>
> **Retailer**: "There are two tendencies: some suppliers having huge credit problems are sinking; most suppliers are now engaged in conjoint planning (of sales, stocks, etc.). Information flow is much greater than before. We say to our suppliers: let's discuss what goods to sell, what prices should be, how to prevent flight of consumers from organized retail to open markets"

Still, the flow of information in the supply chain is far from easy. Many respondents underline the fact that they often regard the information from their partners as something needed additional analysis and examination. Respondents are also quite skeptical about franchising in baby-goods sector, since goods matrix in this sector is remarkably wide and may contain about 10 000 positions. Firms which practice franchising admit that they usually <u>recommend</u> suppliers to the partner, but it is no worth to insist on the recommendation.

Our findings show that the main barriers to developing relationships in Russia are the lack of trust and the lack of professionalism.

> **Producer**: "If only some our Russian firms could supply raw materials like those we buy abroad… Our suppliers cannot give us most of modern raw materials needed to produce quality goods for children. That's why we have to stop production in Russia and go abroad looking for professional partners".
>
> **Wholesaler**: "Many firms delay their payments now, that's a great problem"
>
> **Producer:** "We made a great mistake when trusted Banana Mama and Trial (companies owing huge debts to many of Russian toys & baby-goods producers – M.Sh.). Now we cannot get our money and have no turnover means. Next time we shall thoroughly examine our partner's condition and won't be kind and wait if payments are delayed".

We also revealed some new "emergency" trilateral forms of collaboration – e.g., a kind of "supplier-retailer-bank" round table meetings.

> **Retailer:** "This form, when bank answers the questions of supplier in the face of retailer, proved to work. This new form of relationships helps us to optimize scarce financial resources".

Our hypothesis concerning such trilateral relationships is as follows: they won't be sustainable since their only aim is to help parties live through the crisis. At the same time, emerging networks of inter-organizational interactions may result in long-term and sustainable multilateral "cluster-type" relationships.

## Emerging Business Clusters in Russian Toys Industry

The Russian government and industry self-managed organizations have now turned to the cluster concept (Porter, 1990; Porter, 1998) as a means to improve the competitiveness of several specific business sectors and to stimulate regional economic growth. The initial definition of a business cluster (also known as an industry cluster or competitive cluster) as a geographic concentration of interconnected businesses and associated institutions in a particular field made by M.Porter is widely accepted.

Having network paradigm as a main basis of investigation, we propose to define business cluster as a specific type of ***inter-organizational network***, "bargaining configuration" (Ruigrok, van Tulder, 1995) of quasi-integrated actors and therefore as *a system of close long-term relationships causing synergy*.

Defining business cluster as an inter-organizational network presumes that the cluster effect is by its nature the network effect (Ditter, 2005; Villarreal Lizzarraga, 2006). Once established, a cluster tends to grow through a process of cumulative, self-reinforcing development based on elaborating of internal norms, regulations, and routines. All the members are embedded in some sustainable framework "examples of interaction" (Doerre, 1997).

Being a network, cluster may be either the result of an emergent process or on the other hand the result of an explicit engineering activity of a so-called triggering entity (either a public institution, a single person or a company): "The first involves emergent processes, developing from changes in the environment and a common interest and similar views among potential members. In the second, the process appears to be engineered - a triggering entity actively recruits potential members to join in the consortium" (Doz, Olk, Ring, 2000). In Russia the "governmental design" way is now prevailing: local administrations initiated the process of clustering in St.Petersburg, Zelenograd, Dubna, Samara, Irkutsk, Chelyabinsk, Angarsk, and some other regions (Sheresheva, 2008; Tretyak, 2005; Tretyak, Sheresheva, 2008).

From our point of view, it makes little sense to speed up clustering if there are no economic motives or goals for the firms to interact. On the other hand, if potential members of cluster have clear motives to elaborate a network of relationships, then clusters (emerged or being established), although different in their formation processes, may show the same characteristics.

As to Russian toys and baby-goods industry, the tendency to clustering is now observed mainly in toys sector. There are about 650 Russian companies producing toys, most of them are localized in Moscow region, as well as St.Petersburg, Leningradsky region, Rostov region, and Kirovsky region.

Our study registered intensive mutual relationships in Moscow region supported by the Russian National Toy Association (RNTA) and guided step by step towards system of explicit and implicit contracts between local actors dealing with toys production or related and supporting industries. RNTA and Association of Children's Goods Industry (ACGI) are public non-commercial organizations which unite the professional industrial communities of manufacturers, retailers, and distributors in the Russian children goods market. Actually RNTA and ACGI make up the second level of Moscow toys cluster structure. Main mission of both assotiations is to encourage business relationships on the Russian toys & baby-goods market. They represent the interests of the industry as a whole when dealing with public institutions to define the common strategies for the entities (see ex.1). For example, they demand the outright and immediate abolition of the tax on children's goods, fight for the recognition of the industry on the state level as a single whole. There are also RNTA and ACGI successful efforts to develop national brand “Russian Toy”, the all-Russia action “Year of Russian goods for children” supported by government, International Week of Quality, RNTA Inventors Club, and so on. They are very active in assisting companies in their search for suppliers and customers, supply potential partners with adequate information about each other.

Moscow producers appreciated RNTA ideas concerning Trade Centers which are very attractive but too expensive selling points:

> **Producer**: “Successful Trade Centers know their own worth. They charge too high a rent nominated in Dollars or in Euros which means grow of charge in Rubles up to 15%, and they won't take a penny less… National Association of Baby-Goods Producers proposed an idea which proved to be very fruitful. Now we cooperate with other producers and “land together” in the big Trade Centers: we rent an outlet for children's clothes, an outlet for baby footwear, an outlet for toys, etc. Our consolidated bargaining power helps to achieve easier terms”.

Due to RNTA efforts participation in exhibitions and fairs is now partly financed by local government. In 2007 Nair Expo, a subsidiary of RNTA, has signed a cooperation agreement with Spielwarenmesse to jointly arrange the Toy Russia fair (held twice in Moscow in March 2008 and in March 2009). Ernst Kick, CEO of Spielwarenmesse, said: “Our long-term plans are to jointly develop the market, establish fairs and offer the toy industry new services in Easter Europe… The Russian National Toy Association with its organising subsidiary and its profound market expertise is an ideal partner for us. We look forward to a close and successful cooperation.” As a result, the international marketing and fair service provider assist the Russian industry increase supply.

All this helps to raise competitiveness of cluster members, on the local market and abroad. The RTNA has the top growth market in Eastern Europe with sales growing by nearly 30 per cent each year while current sales are estimated to be about $4 billion. Among products having a ready sale in Russia are plastic model kits, table top and board games produced by ZVEZDA, developing toys and games and creativity sets made by Clever Ltd, ELF MARKET; toys made by Stellar, NORDPLAST and some other Russian producers gained competitive advantages over Chinese ones on the East and North European market (Bzesinsky, 2008).

### Ex.1. Emerging Toys Cluster in Moscow Region

**Components Production** | **Equipment Production** | **Raw Materials**

**Market and Nonmarket Support Services:**

Development support
Design & package
Certification services
Warehousing logistics
Transport logistics
Customs logistics
Marketing & PR
Research institutions
Specialized mass media (13)
Exhibitions & fairs supporting services (8)
Tech consulting
Financial consulting
Law consulting

***Toy Producers (divided by kinds of raw materials used):***

*1. Plush & Fabric toys (30).*
*2. Plastic toys (25).*
*3. Paper & Cardboard toys (25).*
*4. Wooden toys, papier-mâché toys (22).*
*5. Rubber toys (6).*
*6. Metal toys (3).*
*7. Ceramic, Porcelain & Faience toys (3).*
*8. New Synthetic toys (3).*

**Industry and Professional Associations:**

- RNTA (1)
- ACGI (1)

**Specialised education:**

- College of games and toys (1)
- Industrial handicraft Colleges (5)

**Higher edication:**

- No (0)

**Museums:**

- State toys museum (1)
- Private toys museum (1)
- Doll's and puppets (3)

**Firm-level competitiveness:**

- Market knowledge
- Innovation
- Factor availability
- National brand

**State Government Strustures:**

- Moscow Local Department of SME Problems
- Moscow Local Department of Production
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry

**Selling & Export Agents:**

1500 firms

**Joint Production Value in 2008: 3,1 billion Rbl (104,4% against 2007 in comparable prices)**

## Conclusions

Our main conclusions are as follows. Russian toys & baby-goods producers, wholesalers and retailers are now facing the new reality. Producers have to struggle with foreign competitors from China, South-West Asia and Europe, distributors need to balance interests of both foreign and local producers as well as end customers. They are strategically committed to building long-term relationships within supply chain. Problems caused by crisis raised incentives to collaboration: we observed growing incentives of actors to develop mutually oriented interactions as well as some hybrid forms of trilateral relationships and intensive processes of clustering. There are obvious results of such activity, especially in toys industry. Relational assets built by actors which now appraise the role of intensive relationships help them to strengthen their consolidated position and to gain governmental support of their initiatives as well as to create new value by combining complementary assets and key competencies, and thus to gain competitive advantages. Still, the long-term perspective of these forms is not the same. Trilateral relationships, such as “supplier-retailer-bank” round table meetings, have little chance to last long since their aim is to help parties live through the crisis time; on the contrary, emerging network of inter-organizational interactions within cluster tend to be long-term and sustainable.

## Further Research Issues and Results to Be Obtained

The results of this exploratory study contribute to understanding the formal and informal connections of industry actors, many of them now members of National Association of Baby Goods Producers, and can be useful as a first step leading to further research of business clusters within the industry which is now being planned and will be conducted in 2009-2010. Our further research aims to investigate more closely cluster form of networking on Russian toys & baby-goods market.

Thus, the main questions of our research are:

- What types of inter-organizational networks emerge in Russian toys & baby-goods industry and in which ways do their features differ?
- what norms, regulations, and routines are crucial for their sustainability and efficiency?
- what steps, if any, have RNTA and ACGI members to take in to establish/re-establish consumer confidence, and what effects of these steps are the most probable?
- What engineering efforts could stimulate developments that are mainly self-emerging? What mechanisms are required and what are the main constrains to make an "engineered" constellation to become a “self-emerging”?

On the next stage of the research priority will be placed on identifying a research context suitable for testing our hypotheses and exploring our research questions. We are therefore going to collect data in form of in-depth interviews as well as in form of survey using structured questionnaire.

The final research materials will be prepared and published first in Russian and then in English.

## References

Bzesinsky, M. (2008), ”Dien’ kolobka”, Der Spiegel Profil, No 13, pp.16-25.

Ditter, J.-G. (2005), “Reforming the French Wine Industry: Could Clusters Work?” Cahiers du CEREN, 13, pp. 39-54.

Doerre, K. (1997), "Globalisierung – eine strategische Option. Internationalisierung von Unternehmen und industrielle Beziehungen in der Bundesrepublik", Industrielle Beziehungen, Vol 4, No 4, pp.265-290.
Doz, Y.L., Olk, P.M., and Ring, P.S. (2000), "Formation processes of R&D consortia: Which path to take where does it lead?" Strategic Management Journal, Vol 21, No 3, pp. 239-266.
Dyer, W. G., and Wilkins, A. (1991), "Better stories, not better constructs, to generate better theory: A rejoinder to Eisenhardt", Academy of Management Review, Vol 16, No 3, pp.613–619.
Eisenhardt, K.M., and Graebner, M.E. (2007), "Theory building from cases: opportunities and challenges", Academy of Management Journal, Vol 50, No 1, pp. 25-32.
Flyvbjerg B. (2006), "Five misunderstandings about case-study research", Qualitative Inquiry, Vol 12, No 2, pp. 219-245.
Ford, D., Gadde L.-E., Håkansson, H., and Snehota, I. (2003), Managing Business Relationships, 2nd ed., John Wiley, Chichester.
Gadde, L.-E., Hümer, L., and Håkansson, H. (2003), "Strategizing in industrial networks," Industrial Marketing Management, Vol 32 No 5, pp. 357-364.
Gemünden, H. G., Ritter, T., and Walter, A. (1997), Relationships and Networks in International Markets, Pergamon, Oxford.
Gordon, I.R., McCann, P. (2000), "Industrial Clusters: Complexes, Agglomeration and /or Social Networks", Urban Studies, Vol 37, No 3, pp. 513-532.
Gummesson, E. (1999), Total Relationship Marketing: From the 4Ps – product, price, promotion, place – of traditional marketing management to the 30Rs – the thirty relationships – of the new marketing paradigm, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
Håkansson H., Ford, D. (2002), "How should companies interact in business networks," Journal of Business Research, Vol 55, No 2, (February), pp.133-139.
Håkansson H., Snehota I. (1995), Developing Relationships in Business Networks. Routledge, London.
Hines, P. 1996. Network Sourcing. A discussion of causality within the buyer-supplier –relationship. European Journal of Purchasing & Supply Management, Vol 2. No 1, pp. 7-20.
Porter, M. (1990), The Competitive Advantage of Nations. Basic Books, New York.
Porter, M. (1998), Competitive Advantage. Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance. The Free Press, New York.
Ritter, T., and Ford, D. (2004), "Interactions between suppliers and customers in business markets," in Håkansson, H. et al. (Eds.), Rethinking Marketing; Developing a New understanding of markets, John Wiley, Chichester.
Ruigrok, W., van Tulder, R. (1995), The Logic of International Restructuring, Routledge, New York-London,
Sheresheva M. (2008), "Klastery", in Regional'niye aspekty formirovanija natsional'noy innovatsionnoi sistemy Rossii, Statut, Moscow, pp.310-330.
Sheresheva M. (2006), Miezfirmenniye syeti, TEIS, Moscow.
Stake, R.E. (1994): "Case Studies," in Denzin, N.K., and Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.) Handbook of Qualitative Research, Sage Publications, London.
Tretyak O., Sheresheva M. (2004), "Developing Relationships with Suppliers in Russia: A network perspective", Paper presented at the 20th IMP Conference, Copenhagen.
Tretyak, O., Sheresheva, M. (2008). "Business Cluster as a Network of Relationships: An Empirical Study of Russian Industrial Sector", Paper presented at the 24th IMP Conference, Uppsala.
Tretyak, V.P. (2005), Klastery priedpriaty, August Borg, Moscow.
Villarreal Lizzarraga, C.L. (2006). Contribution au pilotage des projets partagés par des PME en groupement basée sur la gestion des risques. L'Institut National Polytechnique de Toulouse.
Yin R. K. (1994), Case study research: Design and methods. Sage Publications, London.