

Brazil

Reform and investment driving growth

Brazil is set to attract \$50bn in investment in 2021 and 2022, generating 22,000 new jobs, President Jair Bolsonaro told a forum of foreign investors in May 2021. Bolsonaro's government is pushing forward pro-business reforms to strengthen the economic environment in Latin America's biggest economy, moving the country closer towards meeting its huge potential. In 2019, the country was the world's fourth-largest recipient of foreign direct investment.

"Brazil is prepared to offer unique opportunities to investors from all over the world due to its potential, as well as its legal and economic security," Bolsonaro said, adding that Brazil "has already resumed its growth and job creation," in the wake of the covid-19 pandemic.

Investment is playing a central role in the economic recovery, with gross fixed capital formation rising by 4.6% in the first quarter of 2021, the third consecutive quarter of growth, pushing GDP up 1.2% quarter-on-quarter.

The International Monetary Fund has forecast that Brazil will achieve stellar growth of 5.3% in 2021, with the organisations most recent consultation on the country noting that "good policies had positioned the Brazilian economy to take off in 2020" before the pandemic hit. That take-off is now taking place; the Fund has praised the government's rapid response to the pandemic and global recession, and its reform efforts, as well as the country's sound financial system.

Bolsonaro was elected on a platform of economic liberalisation and boosting growth, trade, and investment. He has pledged to make Brazil one of the top 50 countries in the world to do business by the end of his first term in office, which is due to conclude at the end of next year.

"We wish to govern by example and we want the world to re-establish the trust and the confidence it has always had in us," Bolsonaro has said. "We will work to lower the tax burden, streamline rules and make life easier for those who wish to produce, and do business as entrepreneurs, invest and create jobs. We shall work to foster economic stability, while respecting and honouring contracts by means of privatisation projects and by balancing government accounts."

Bolsonaro highlights Brazil's strength in industries including agriculture; the



Jair Bolsonaro
President of Brazil

country is the world's largest producer of foodstuffs, providing food security to one sixth of the world's population, the President told the UN General Assembly last year. Agricultural production and the supply chain to feed more than 1bn people across the world continued to function throughout the pandemic, a testament to the strength of Brazilian farming and logistics - and the commitment of its workforce.

The private sector's confidence in Brazil's future is clear from the flood of investment in the country, and endorsements from the likes of McKinsey. The global management consultancy, which last year published an "opportunity tree" highlighting 23 areas with particular potential, including energy, insurance, sports, and innovation. In energy, the

solar segment in particular is attracting attention, and McKinsey expects capacity to grow by 18% a year in 2019-29, with wind and natural gas also expected to clock up double-digit growth rates. Brazil aims to invest \$120bn in electricity transmission and distribution over the next decade, creating more opportunities for international partners as well as the best local businesses. These developments, and structural reform, will make electricity tariffs cheaper, supporting the expansion of energy-intensive industries such as metallurgy and food and beverage manufacturing.

Brazil's technology sector leverages its skilled workforce, with nearly 250,000 new graduates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics every year, while labour costs are lower than most large developed markets, and even China. The rise of the tech industry has dovetailed with Brazil's traditional strengths in agriculture, with the country being "the natural test bed for 1000+ AgTechs globally". Meanwhile, Brazilians have the second highest level of online engagement worldwide, which combined with the rapid rise of internet penetration, is creating huge opportunities for consumer-focused companies. McKinsey has also highlighted the way that a new wave of Brazilian multinationals has brought innovation to the world.

A growing range of local companies are using the huge and thriving Brazilian market as their springboard to international expansion. "I am a strong advocate of Brazil," says Ricardo Tavares, president of agribusiness Montesanto Tavares Group. "Our government is transparent, it is pro-business and pro-growth. It's a very good country for investors, with opportunities in many sectors - agriculture, energy, infrastructure. We have a large domestic market, and great growth momentum."

Grupo Montesanto Tavares - A Global Leader in Quality Coffee

Brazil's economy "recovered strongly" at the end of 2020 and is set to hit 3.7% growth in 2021, despite the covid crisis, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development in a May 2021 report. The OECD expects that exports will continue to benefit from rising global demand for food and minerals, as well as stimulus in the US. The world's largest economy accounts for around 10% of Brazilian exports, worth a total of nearly \$22bn. Domestic consumption is also expected to grow, as households unwind some of the savings made in 2020.

Coffee will play a leading role in burgeoning trade - Brazil is the world's largest coffee producer exporter, with the US its single largest market. The country exported 44.7m 60-kg sacks of coffee worth a total of \$5.658bn in 2020, according to Cecafe, the Council of Coffee Exporters of Brazil. Exports grew a further 10% in the first quarter of 2021 on the same period of last year.

Selling to more than 60 countries worldwide, Grupo Montesanto Tavares is playing a central role in this growth story. One of Brazil's largest coffee exporters, the holding company is the country's only vertically-integrated coffee company. Its brands include Ally Coffee and Coffee ++, which will be launched in the US later this year.

"We're an international brand with international quality," says Ricardo Tavares, president of Grupo Montesanto Tavares, and a prominent Brazilian entrepreneur. "We seek out the farmers with the best crops."

Coffee ++ is a speciality coffee brand focused on ensuring the highest quality from farm to the customer's home. It offers a range of products including whole bean, ground coffee, drip sachets, and capsules. All the company's products score a minimum of 84 on the Speciality Coffee Association's scoring system - meaning they are excellent or outstanding. Coffee ++ places a strong emphasis on the skill and commitment to coffee of its people. It engages some of the world's leading producers, including Luiz Paulo, who holds the record for the best-scoring speciality coffee on the planet and has become a global ambassador for Brazilian coffee. Paulo produces Coffee ++'s Mantiqueira de Minas line, while the Chapada de Minas line is made by Ricardo Tavares, another award-winning producer, who won the Cup of Excellence in 2018 with a 93.98-scoring coffee.

Grupo Montesanto Tavares continues to seek new opportunities for international distribution for Coffee ++, as the global market for speciality coffee grows.

Ally Coffee, meanwhile, is a green coffee company that connects roasters with speciality coffees sourced through a range of sustainable partnerships. Through its team of farmers, traders, and baristas, the company also provides open courses in topics including sensory evaluation, roasting, and food safety to industry professionals. It aims to "open up opportunities to move coffee forward". Ally Coffee sources beans from countries including Ethiopia, Costa Rica, and Guatemala, as well as Brazil. The company maintains inventory in its major consumer countries such as the US, Canada, European Union, Dubai and the UK, meaning that it can deliver quickly to clients in key markets.

Despite the global recession, Montesanto Tavares had an excellent year in 2020 - partly as coffee consumption remained stable - and expects even better in 2021, with coffee prices



Ricardo Tavares
President - Grupo Montesanto Tavares

rising. In the first quarter of the year, profits were up a remarkable 250% on the same period of 2020.

Ricardo Tavares is keen to engage international partners who are interested in participating in this growth story.

"We are interested in partnerships with companies worldwide," he says. "Potential opportunities include ventures with international trading companies who want to do business in Brazil and sell it abroad. We can provide services for them, mill the beans, and help them export."

The company is now in the third generation of the Tavares family, having been founded in 1953. In a sensitive sector, it places a strong emphasis on ethical business, as well as the hard work and dedication of its team, and the welfare of its employees. Of Coffee ++ profits,

1% goes towards Instituto Cafe Solidario, founded in 2011 by Grupo Montesanto Tavares to help improve the social and cultural condition of children and the elderly through classes, workshops, and assistance to the most needy.

The work affirms the group's commitment to Brazil, where Tavares sees huge opportunities awaiting international investors as economic growth returns.

"Brazil had a very good rhythm of growth until January 2020, interrupted by the pandemic," he says. "It's a very good destination for investors, with a large consumer base. The government is pro-business and pro-growth. Brazil has strengths in many areas, and has growth opportunities in sectors including energy, infrastructure, and particularly agribusiness."



Buritipar Group

Brazil's mining innovator meets growing global demand

Buoyed by a global re-opening that has seen demand for its exports soar, the Brazilian economy is rebounding better than expected. The Central Bank of Brazil recently revised its GDP growth outlook for 2021 to 4.6%, from 3.6% earlier in the year, citing successful government support to preserve jobs, strong stimulus spending, and perhaps most importantly, soaring global commodities prices as key factors underpinning its more optimistic outlook.

The mining sector is already benefitting from resurgent commodities prices, as well as rising demand from China, an upturn in investments, and positive foreign exchange effects. Brazilian mining revenues were up 36% year-on-year in 2020, reaching \$38.7 billion, and red-hot growth has continued into 2021: The Brazilian Mining Institute reports that mining sector sales surged by 98% during the first half of the year to reach \$29 billion, putting the sector on track to easily surpass last year's growth. Buritipar Group, a key player in the industry, is reaping the rewards.

Founded by businessman and engineer João Araújo, a civil engineer and entrepreneur with more than 20 years of professional experience, Buritipar Group got its start investing in operating assets in the base sectors of the Brazilian economy, through the acquisition and development of companies in the mining, metallurgy and agribusiness sectors. The business grew quickly from there by pursuing a three-pronged approach to building and sustaining the business, as Araújo explained:

"We have always sought to prepare the company for the coming years. We have reserves, we have people, and very importantly, we have logistics. There is a proverb that says 'when commodities are high you sell commodities, and when commodities are low you are a logistics company.' So, we have put together the entire package: reserves, talented people, and good logistics, which will allow us to remain agile during the business cycle."

WHAT BEGAN AS A PROJECT AND INVESTMENT PLATFORM QUICKLY GREW TO BECOME A LEADING GROWTH DRIVER ACROSS MULTIPLE KEY SECTORS OF THE BRAZILIAN ECONOMY.

It has also acquired the Barcarena Port Terminal in the state of Pará. When the port project is completed, it will have the capacity to handle up to 12 million tons within the next decade.

But the crown jewel in its portfolio is undoubtedly Buritirama Mineração, Brazil's largest manganese producer, and the fourth-largest such producer globally. Buritipar holds a controlling stake in Buritirama, which produces roughly two million tons of ore per year, supplying products for materials including ferro-alloys, micronutrients, fertilizers, batteries and water treatment stations. The company's core is internationally recognized as some of the world's best, and its portfolio extends beyond manganese into mining of copper, potassium, titanium and rare land. Copper, nickel, lead, and zinc mining, meaning it will play an increasingly critical role in domestic and global supply chains.

For example, BloombergNEF recently increased its predictions for annual demand for lithium-ion batteries by more than a third, with electric vehicle production expected to drive surging demand in the Chinese market. Demand is forecast to exceed 2.7 terawatt hours annually by 2030, with passenger vehicles representing more than 70%

of the overall market. This translates into a massive global need for critical raw metals including manganese.

Araújo is ready to meet that demand, despite rising competition in the industry, with a tried-and-true strategy that remains focused on people and preparation.

"There are only five big manganese companies in the world and we are one of them. It can be extremely difficult to operate in this market and we most certainly have strong competition, but I have been preparing for this for the last 20 years. I also have an amazing team with me that works very hard, that is the basics."

Other important mining firms active in the group's portfolio include Paranapanema, which operates in casting, refining, and production of semi-manufactured copper and alloys. It is the sole company in Brazil to cast and refine copper into metal, another competitive advantage for the group. Kalium, whose purpose is the use of potassic rocks (Verdetes) for potassium production, magnesium, iron and aluminum oxide salts. Meanwhile, is active in producing potassium, magnesium, iron, and aluminum oxide salts from potassium rock. Buritipar's portfolio is impressive, and a growing group of foreign investors, including one of the world's highest-profile automakers, has taken note.

"Foreign interest in us came naturally, because we have manganese, copper and potash; we have the main important commodities. We have been discreet with our work, but companies are eager to work with us. Tesla, for example, signed an important partnership with us for mining

in Buritirama. The Buritirama manganese mine, in Pará, is likely to be the first in the world to work with 100% renewable energy. For this, it will have a photovoltaic energy unit and batteries supplied by the technological giant Tesla, said Araújo.

ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES UNDERPIN ALL OF THE GROUP'S OPERATIONS, AND ESG ACTIVITIES HAVE PLAYED AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, WITH ARAÚJO UNDERTAKING A UNIQUE DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGY IN AN EFFORT TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES.

This was particularly evident in 2018 when, in a turning point for the group, it founded three new companies: Avanti BR, Nexon Mining, and National Farms.

Nexon Mining acts as an investment platform aimed at diversifying the group's portfolio, while Avanti undertake similar activities in the real estate, logistics and infrastructure segments. National Farms is unique because it is the result of a desire to ensure that agriculture and mining can co-exist, as Araújo highlighted:

"We started in this business because we always saw tensions between farms and mining areas. Many times, we had to buy or lease the farm to develop mining, so why not buy it and develop agribusiness there? I connected the agribusiness and the mining company and also applied our technology to reduce costs and improve environmental practices."

Diversification and enhanced ESG activities will help keep the group resilient during commodities cycles, but rising global demand is arguably the biggest single factor driving growth at the moment. This is particularly true for China, where the General Administration on Customs reported that manganese ore imports to the country hit 2.25 million tons in May 2021, up 7.1% year-on-year.

Buritipar's long track record of successful client relations has helped it forge stronger ties with Chinese partners. For example, the group recently signed a 10-year manganese contract with one of China's largest firms, Minmetals. Under the agreement, Buritirama will receive \$400 million during the first year of the contract, and will supply 1.5 million tons per year of manganese, will be used in steelmaking.

The group continues to diversify,



João Araújo
President - Buritipar Group

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establishing an investment arm in the technology sector, Buritibeta, in 2019. Buritibeta is an incubator that will support adoption of new technology, helping attract new talent to the group.

More recently, it inaugurated a sintering plant in Marabá, Pará. The project increased the group's operational capacity by 150,000 tons, and ESG principles are once again evident: dam tailings from the project are reused to transform them into high value-added products. Innovative processes allow the ore to be compacted and superheated, eliminating contaminants and producing changes in the microstructure of the base element, with the end result being a coherent solid material. Metallurgical recovery of these tailings added 150 direct jobs, and more than 3500 indirect jobs when the plant opened in November last year.

These projects stand as another example of a forward-thinking approach that will keep the company sustainable in the decades to come - profits are important, but preparing for the future is priority. As Araújo argued, this approach makes the group an attractive option to potential future partners, and it remains open to new deals.

"We are strong competitors in all four lines of business: We are very competitive in the metallurgical segment, which is very important in energy and technology. We are a strong competitor in the mining sector, we have one of the largest reserves in the world. We are also strong competitors in the agribusiness sector. We are working to have good foreign partners in the technology segment, we want this knowledge. We are not investing in technology to make money, but to be surrounded by good professionals," he explained.

Furthermore, he argued, Buritipar's biggest competitive advantage lies in its location: Brazil, a country offering vast resources, a young and hard-working population, and profitable opportunities for savvy investors:

"I invite people to come to Brazil and see it with their own eyes, first of all because the world needs Brazil to sustain global food and mining supply chains. Secondly, we have shown in the last 30 years that we have stabilized our economy and people can trust our laws. Third, we have the Amazon, which is the lung of the world, it really is the future. That's why my outlook about Brazil is so positive," he concluded.



Grupo Buritipar
Investimos no progresso

Vulcabras - Technology and consumer-focus

Strong investment growth and exports helped power Brazil through the first months of 2021, according to a July report by professional services firm Deloitte. The company noted that GDP grew 1.2% quarter-on-quarter in Q1 2021, despite continued covid-19-related restrictions weighing on economic activity. Gross fixed capital formation rose by a striking 4.6% in the quarter, clocking up the third consecutive quarter of growth as business confidence in the country's outlook continued to strengthen. Exports, meanwhile, rose 3.7%.

Brazilian footwear giant Vulcabras is particularly well placed to ride this wave, and has been playing a leading role in the recent surge in investment in the country as it looks to the future. The company has been operating in the Brazilian footwear sector for more than six decades. Vulcabras uses all the knowledge already acquired together with the constant search for innovation, to bring to the Brazilian consumer the best proposal for technologically developed products and fashion icons.

During this period, the company consolidated itself as the largest athletic footwear industry in Brazil and has become a leading brand manager in its respective segments, such as Olympikus, the national sneaker sales champion, Under Armour, one of the largest major apparel, footwear and athletic accessories brand in the world, and Mizuno, the brand that believes in the value of sports and supports the journey of all who give their best regardless of who they are, level and type of sport.

"We'd particularly welcome partnerships focused on innovation," says CEO Pedro Bartelle. "Today we have a portfolio with the mix of brands which cover all consumer needs. The mix of sports and technology is a big trend and what consumers are now looking for, so products focused on innovation would be very interesting."

Vulcabras already produces some of the leading technology in the sector in Brazil, including Under Armour trainers with Bluetooth chips that connect to a mobile application. It is also meeting the growing need for consumer centricity with a financing instalment scheme in Brazil that has opened access to state-of-the-art sports shoes to a wider market.

The company's partners benefit from its 70-year track record and an experienced, "humble and hungry" team, says Bartelle. That team can turn around a new product from the white board to the point of sale in just 120 days, while competitors takes more than an year and do not



Pedro Bartelle
CEO - Vulcabras

have the speed of response to changing demands of partners and the market.

"I think the main thing about Vulcabras is that we are fast and we are flexible," says Bartelle. "From the whiteboard to the point of sale, we are best-in-class. We have studied a lot and we are well-prepared to compete on this market."

To maintain its competitive edge, the company has invested nearly \$100 million over the past few years, keeping its industrial park updated with the most modern technologies for the development and production of sports shoes. In February 2021, it acquired the Brazilian licence for Japanese brand Mizuno and one of its goals is to take the Olympikus brand worldwide, as well as selling more directly to consumers.

Vulcabras's financial performance shows that its strategy is bearing fruit: it achieved 20% growth in the second half of 2020 and was profitable for the full year, despite the economic impact of covid-19. Growth in 2021 thus far has been even stronger than before the pandemic, in the first quarter 2021 the company has registered a total growth of 30.7%.

The company sees its huge domestic market as a strong base for its expansion, with demand for sports shoes growing both as Brazilians become more health-conscious and as their popularity for casual wear increases.

"Brazil has a population of 220m, so there is a lot of consumer power," says Bartelle. "Growing employment and development will boost consumption, so we see a gold mine in the internal market. There are so many opportunities that appear every day, that our main challenge is to focus on all of them."

Bartelle sees his company's approach to business as typical of Brazil's business culture, and the commitment that entrepreneurs have to their hugely promising country.

"We have a culture in Brazil of investing in Brazil," he says. "We believe in the country. We have a lot of good companies in Brazil, and we do business here to develop our country."



Barbosa Mello Group

The name of reference in Brazilian construction

Accounting for more than 7% of annual GDP and valued at nearly \$140 billion in 2020, Brazil's construction industry will be a major engine of future growth. Although the sector contracted last year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is poised for a strong recovery this year. Activity will surge in 2021 as the state channels \$150 billion of recovery spending into the economy, with real estate and infrastructure projects set to benefit. Domestic leaders like Construtora Barbosa Mello (CBM) and its sister company, Barbosa Mello Participações Investimentos (BMPI), performed well during the pandemic, and they are ready for the coming boom.

Established in 1958 in Belo Horizonte, CBM benefits from a deep history and successful track record delivering high-quality infrastructure projects on time and on budget. As CEO Guilherme Teixeira explained, the company has thrived for more than 60 years - including during the pandemic - because of its sharp focus on capacity building, punctuality, occupational safety, highly-qualified staff, financial soundness, compliance and above all else, customer satisfaction.

"2020 was a challenging year due to Covid, but our industry was able to work, unlike some other sectors. We took all necessary measures to provide safety for our employees and we had a great performance last year; our revenues grew more than 20% with profitability. This left us very well-positioned for the future."

CBM offers engineering and construction solutions in the mining, road works, railway, airport, energy, sanitation, industrial and oil and gas segments. The company's emphasis on quality has earned it the highest international certifications, including ISO9001 (Quality), ISO14001 (Environment), ISO45001 (Health and safety), ISO37001 (Anti-bribery) and ISO19600 (Compliance). It was also voted one of the five most innovative engineering companies in Brazil in the 2020 Valor Inovação Awards, proof of a forward-thinking approach that has helped keep the group competitive and agile, and the company continues to invest heavily in practice in the communities where it works.

In 2013, the company underwent a major transformation with the creation of BMPI as its investment arm. Since then, it has invested in several concessions, rising to become a formidable player in public lighting, energy, water and sewage, and waste management projects.

"The construction business is quite volatile, so with the investment arm we could become stronger and have more sustainability. We have been resilient despite the market crisis, price fluctuations,



Bruno Costa Carvalho de Sena
CEO - BMPI Infra



Guilherme Moreira Teixeira
CEO - Construtora Barbosa Mello

and the Covid pandemic. Construction and investment in infrastructure are quite different businesses, but focusing on both gives us a lot of synergies, and this is another competitive advantage," added Bruno Sena, CEO of BMPI.

In June 2020, Brazil's National Bank for Economic and Social Development announced that it will act as guarantor of infrastructure projects, and may do the same in capital market operations, with the goal of reducing the risk of credit operations and boosting lending to the sector. The government has also announced that out of \$150 billion of planned recovery fund spending, \$11.25 billion will be invested in infrastructure. This presents considerable opportunities to experienced domestic contractors and their potential partners.

CBM and BMPI are looking to the future, and a coming economic boom, as they further align their business strategy with the

needs of the market. On the construction side, they have been in discussions with international companies that can bring new technologies and engineering expertise to the Brazilian market.

Teixeira expects a major boom as a result of the government Infrastructure and Concessions Program, and it hopes to play an important role in helping deliver the recovery agenda. As a result, CBM and BMPI plan to channel their efforts into the government concession programs when seeking new investment partners.

"We are always open to discuss potential partnerships. We are ready to join forces with strategic investors and investment funds, so that we could leverage our participation in future government projects, because its program is huge. It is a good moment for both companies. We believe we are going to have a lot of money from foreign investors in Brazil," concluded Sena.



Unidas

Innovation and sustainability driving growth

As Brazil emerges from the worst of the Covid crisis and life returns to normal, all eyes are on the transportation and mobility sectors, which are set for a period of red-hot growth as travel and commuting resume. The vehicle rental market was already growing fast before the pandemic struck, with the total number of rental companies surging from 8033 in 2018, to nearly 11,000 at the end of 2019. The industry is forecast to record a compound annual growth rate of more than 6% until 2027, leaving Unidas, a fast-growing leader in car rentals and fleet outsourcing, well-positioned to profit.

The brainchild of two forward-thinking investors, Unidas emerged in 1985 with the merge of five separate Brazilian companies. What was originally a rental company with seven branches and 500 vehicles has since swelled to the second-largest car rental company and leading fleet-leasing firm in Brazil. It owes this heavy-hitter status to a sharp focus on sustainability, efficiency, and above all, customer satisfaction, according to CEO Luis Fernando Porto:

“We are an innovative company that seeks growth with a return constantly. We’re a company that takes care of its people and the environment. We’re in the new vehicle market, which is has the highest level of governance in Brazil, and our company is very active in social sustainability. These factors have all supported growth, and we are part of the big three now.”

After merging with listed firm Locamerica under the Unidas brand in 2017, the company has continued its expansion across the country, building up its fleet to 178,600 vehicles. Through its subsidiary Alphabet, it also outsources nearly 100,000 fleet vehicles, making it the largest such company of its kind.

Unidas has undergone aggressive expansion in recent years, acquiring firms including Best Fleet in 2013, Panda Meridional in 2017, and NTC Serviços Ltda in 2019, which created a new agribusiness division, Unidas Agro. More recently it acquired Zetta Frota, a fleet outsourcing firm, in 2020. This has resulted in significant operational, administrative and financial synergies, helping the company optimize its capital structure, and leaving it on track to meeting its goal of becoming Brazil’s top mobility company by 2023.

It has also helped underpin a strong recent financial performance, with consolidated net revenues rising by 17.5% y-o-y to end 2020 at \$1.1 billion and earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and



Luis Fernando Porto
CEO - Unidas

amortization (EBITDA) rising by 7.2% over the same period to hit \$270 million. Growth has been especially stellar in recent months, with recurring net income broke a new record in Q2 2021, hitting \$46.8 million, net margins reaching 32.7%, and EBITDA hitting an all-time high for the third straight quarter, at \$108.3 million.

Such strong financials certainly came in handy during the first wave of the pandemic last spring, as Fernando highlighted:

“Last year was hard on the business, especially because we lost 80% of our car sales and 65% of the rental business, but it lasted three months and we have a strong financial position. We opted to maintain all our investments and protect all of our employees, and we did not fire anyone. We still don’t have a clear picture because the pandemic is ongoing, but we have noticed it is generating business because Brazilians are increasingly choosing to rent cars rather than buying them.”

The company’s forward-thinking approach should keep it in a strong growth trajectory: as a new vehicle rental firm,

Unidas will be at the forefront of climate-friendly innovation in the coming years. It has already made good progress in this area, signing on to the Business Ambitious for 1.5C - Only Our Future initiative under the Paris Climate Agreement, and earning a gold seal in the GHG Protocol 2020 program by monitoring and disseminating greenhouse gas emissions in preparation for operating in the low-carbon economy.

Having already established the firm as an innovative and sustainable domestic leader, Fernando is now looking to take the company beyond Brazil’s borders:

“We want to see the company in the global market. We think it’s a great opportunity for us to work with the ecosystem of cars, and to serve customers with other products such as financial products. Within 2-3 years we think we will be working around the world and across many different segments,” he concluded.

