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Developing your export import business using Internet – Part I

By Nowshade Kabir

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Since most of the businesses throughout the world have access to the Internet, many astute entrepreneurs and trading companies are using the Internet as one of the primary means for developing their import and export businesses.

Already a big slice of global trades are taking place through the Internet. According to Forrester Research, a major marketing research company, worldwide online exports will escalate to US \$1.4 trillion in 2004, and cross-border e-marketplace trade will exceed US \$400 billion in this year alone.

However, cross-border trading will create a division between the companies that actively import and export using the Internet and those that don't. Companies that are slow in adopting the Internet will lose competitive edge to the more proactive Internet-savvy counterparts.

If you are already involved in international trade or planning to either import or export products, Internet could be your primary source of gathering data, researching prospective market, finding clients and, may be even, for doing your entire business online.

First, let's look into the export side of the international trade. Like any other business, exporting requires proper planning. Well-documented and clearly written export marketing plan will work as your road map to success. The following steps are essential for any export endeavor.

Identifying products for export

Although, in any given time you may find numerous products that qualify as exportable one, your chance for success will increase substantially if your chosen product met the following criteria:

- You have been handling this product for local market for several years
- You have full confidence in the quality of the product
- The value of the product matches or exceeds the imported

similar ones

- You have guaranteed availability of this product for export

If you don't have a product to export yet, and you are serious about export oriented business, consider checking out your local trade shows to seek out an exportable product.

Local online marketplaces are good options for finding products for export as well.

Identifying potential export markets for your products

To identify an export market you have to spend sometimes on gathering necessary information.

You will need export statistics of your country to see which markets are presently buying products similar to yours. This will give an idea which markets are viable for you to target. Apart from checking the statistics from you own country, you also should verify export statistics from several other countries that manufacture and export similar products.

After analyzing this information, choose couple of markets for further assessment. This time you will need more in depth information on these markets.

Doing market research

Market research is imperative in order to identify export potential of a product in a targeted country. There are two ways you can research your targeted market.

By getting first-hand information from the targeted market

This can be done by hiring a research company from the targeted market, participating in trade shows, contacting prospective customers, visiting the market personally, etc. Although, this method has a great advantage since you can get exact information tailored to your need. However, this might be very expensive and time consuming for most of the first time exporters.

Getting information from the Internet and other sources
Thanks to the Internet you can get almost all the needed information from various online sources. This includes: trade data statistics, country profile, demography and other market related data, list of prospective customers, etc.

To take an informative decision while selecting a market

you will need answers to the following questions:

- How big is the demand for your product or similar products in the targeted market?
- What is the ratio between domestic production and import?
- Who are the main competitors in this market?
- What is the growth potential of the market?
- How strong are they in comparison to you?
- What is the import duty structure for your product?
- Is there any incentive available to you from your country for exporting this product?

Answers to these questions will give you enough facts to compare the markets you have chosen for assessment. While taking final decision on export market, don't forget to study the business and social cultures of the specific country. This could be an important issue in selecting the right market for you.

Selling your products

Once you targeted the market you would like to pursue, you next step is to start selling your products to that market.

There are several marketing options available for you to choose from:

Hire an export trading house from your country

The advantage, if you find right export trading house, is the experience and knowledge the company may have. The draw back is they might not be interested in your products, and if they do, you have to pay a major share from your sales to them as their commission.

Find a distributor in the targeted market to sell your products

This is, no doubt, a very good option. However, finding a good distributor for a product which does not have a proven track record of sale in the market won't be that easy.

Sell products to customers from targeted market directly

Initially, you might have to stick to this option only. B2B exchanges and emarketplaces from the targeted market can be a good place to start your venture.

Here are the steps you need to take if you would like to

sell your products through E–marketplaces.

1. Seek out the largest emarketplace for the country of your choice. You should consider both vertical and horizontal marketplaces.
2. Register with them.
3. Create a Web Site, if you don't have yet, in the local language.
4. Add your products to the e–catalog of the emarketplaces.
5. Post your products for sale to the marketplace.
6. Post frequent sell trade leads.
7. Search for companies interested to by products similar to yours and contact them.

International trade business, same like any other business requires months, sometimes even several years, to bring anticipated profit. Aggressive use of the Internet will help you achieve your goal with lesser investment and faster result.

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Quicker Success Through Business Kits And Startup Guides

By Stephen Pope

You have always had an interest in starting a particular type of business. However, realistically you know that you lack the expertise required. How can you startup the desired business from scratch and begin making profits without the steep learning curve? Your answer might be to buy a business kit or startup guide.

For example, let`s say you wanted to start your own import and export business. You will find business kits and startup guides written by persons who have already successfully ran an import–export business. Sometimes these kits consist of actual books, courses, forms, videos, audio cassettes, and other media. Other times, the information may be in the form of a downloadable e–book or a website.

Whatever their form, business kits and startup guides can shave years off your learning curve. Find out the tricks of the trade for your selected business. Avoid costly errors and years of frustration by learning from the mistakes of others.

Some of the businesses covered in these business kits and startup guides include consulting, finder`s fees, drop shipping, import–export, bed and breakfast, mystery shopping (also known as secret shopping), various cleaning businesses, catering, day care, graphic and web design, crafts business, licensing, inventions, mail order, medical transcription, newsletter publishing, professional organizer, public speaking, real estate, self–publishing, surveys, writing, and just about any other specific business you might be interested in.

Often, for less than one hundred dollars, you can have the benefit of years or even decades of experience from successful entrepreneurs.

Therefore, if you wish to enjoy quicker success, consider buying a business kit or startup guide.

J. Stephen Pope, President of Pope Consulting Inc., has been helping clients to earn maximum business profits for over twenty–five years. For more information about business kits, startup guides, and other profitable Work at Home Small Business Ideas, visit



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