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Global Revolution: Find the Right Overseas Partner

By Laurel Delaney

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Dream of seeing your product in stores around the world? Unless you have years of international experience, you'd be wise to find some overseas distributors. Otherwise, your unfamiliarity with foreign business customs could stall your efforts.

The most helpful distributors will buy products from you, then warehouse, distribute, and sell them to customers. They'll also handle customer service. (Note: These folks are not always called distributors. In Japan, they're known as wholesalers.)

Networking among trusted business colleagues is the best way to find a reputable distributor. If you don't have many overseas contacts, take heart. The U.S. government offers an alphabet soup of programs that are designed to help small business with this — and many of them actually work. The U.S. Department of Commerce (<http://www.doc.gov/>) offers a wealth of resources through the U.S. Export Assistant Center, the International Trade Administration (<http://www.ita.doc.gov/>), and the U.S. Commercial Services (<http://www.usatrade.gov/>).

Want to research potential markets? Contact the ITA's Commercial Information Management System (CIMS), which collects data that will help you track down your target customers. Ready to pair up with a partner? Call the The Matchmakers Service, offered by both the DOC and the ITA. It introduces new export companies to agents, distributors, or large retailers with an interest in their products. Similarly, the Agent Distributor Service finds qualified distribution firms that are currently handling products similar to yours. An ADS search will generate up to six names of distributors who have an interest in specific U.S. products. Smaller companies with bigger budgets should

also check out The Gold Key Program, which will introduce you to pre-screened potential business associates, whether you are seeking an agent, a distributor, or a joint-venture partner.

Uncle Sam will also help you nail down the details of selling overseas. Trade missions, for instance, will help new exporters establish sales and set up representation abroad at a low cost. The DOC's Export Contact List Service generates a mailing list of potential importers for your product from the agency's automated global network of overseas firms.

Once you have found a distributor, how do you find out if it's

reputable. First, secure an in-depth profile on your potential partner through World Trade Data Reports. You can obtain one of these reports through the ITA. Next, use Dun & Bradstreet's Business Identification Service (<http://www.dnb.com/>), which will provide you with a credit report and other financial information on the distributor. Finally, contact the U.S. Embassy (<http://www.travel.state.gov/links.html>) in the country in which you hope to do business and run your prospective customer's name by them, just in case they know anything. You'd be surprised at how willing they are to help.

Once you've qualified several prospective distributors, I recommend that you meet with each one and decide who comes closest to sharing your views on market penetration. Then you'll be ready to talk business.

Laurel Delaney runs a global marketing, consulting and web content providing company aimed at entrepreneurs and small businesses. She is also the creator of the much-talked about "Borderbuster," monthly FREE newsletter. She can be reached at ldelaney@globetrade.com or visit <http://www.globetrade.com> to sign up for newsletter.

The Work From Home Internet Business Is booming On The Net

By Tom Worsley

The work from home revolution on the Internet is in full swing. There has never been a better time or opportunity to make money online working at home in front of your computer. The number of money making opportunities is endless.

With today's technology it is quite possible to run your entire business online from anywhere in the world using your laptop computer. You no longer need to leave your house to make a living for your family. It can be done from the comfort of your own home. No commute required. No travel time with

reduced fuel consumption and maintenance on your vehicles. Best of all you are your own boss.

The amount of people using the internet worldwide continues to increase almost monthly. This bodes well for internet business entrepreneurs and anyone wishing to take advantage of the internet work from home business industry. Global Internet Statistics shows over 800 million people worldwide are now using the internet.

Just do a search for internet business opportunities on Google or your favorite search engine. You'll find websites such as

&

promoting

several top Internet home based business products and services from paid surveys online to network marketing and MLM businesses. If you already have your own website you can even sign up with Google ad sense and make money displaying Google ad words ads on your site. In fact everywhere you look on the net almost every single site you go to is making money from some form of advertising or work from home business opportunity.

The internet is forever changing the global job scene and the world economy with new internet opportunities arriving on the internet every day even as you read this. We can only hope that this will make the world cleaner and a better place to live with less pollution from automobiles and reduced pollution from factories. This in turn could create a backlash on the economy but it has yet to be seen. We all know the reasons behind why we are still using oil and gas rather than clean energy. (It would kill the global economy). Internet business could be just as threatening as electric cars and cars running on fuel cells.

We are indeed in a revolution. The last revolution was called the industrial revolution. This one is called the information revolution. Or what I like to think of it, the work from home revolution.

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