



TradeSource

Special Edition

The Exporter's Toolkit: Your Guide to U.S. Government Exporting Resources

July 2012
Issue 5

Why Export?

Exporting is a great way to increase your sales and competitiveness! Did you know that in 2011 U.S. exports surpassed \$2 trillion? Small businesses like yours account for much of the growth. In 2002, small businesses accounted for 27 percent of the overall value of exports. In 2010 that share rose to 34 percent.

United States goods and services are the gold standard of innovation, quality, and safety abroad—and foreign demand is growing.

Living outside the United States are 95 percent of your potential customers, and most foreign markets are growing from 4 to 10 percent each year!

Do not miss the opportunity to join the small businesses succeeding in new markets.

This toolkit will guide you to government resources made available to help you become a successful exporter—from finding compatible markets to financing your exporting program. In each section you will find the tools available, each with a brief description and direct Web site links.

GO GLOBAL



Where to Start

Export.gov

Export.gov is the complete export assistance portal—bringing together resources from agencies across the U.S. Government. It has everything from market research and trade leads from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Commercial Service to finance information from the Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im Bank) and the Small Business Administration. It also has the latest on agricultural export assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Web site: www.export.gov

A Basic Guide to Exporting

A Basic Guide to Exporting is a comprehensive manual that businesses turn to for answers on questions about how to establish and grow their sales markets overseas. The 2012 edition provides you with numerous real-life examples that illustrate the principles of exporting, samples of forms needed to export, and detailed information on how to obtain guidance.

Whether your company is new to exporting or in need of a refresher on the latest ideas and techniques, this guide provides the “nuts-and-bolts” information you need to meet the challenges of the world economy.

Web site: www.export.gov/basicguide

Prepare Your Business to Export

Business Counseling

Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) in every U.S. state and territory offer business counseling, technical assistance, and training for individuals and small businesses. With a network of 950 branch locations, SBDCs help you get the customized counseling you need. Special programs include **assistance with exporting and international trade, technology commercialization, government contracting, venture capital formation, and rural development.** A growing number of SBDCs with certified export assistance counselors help small businesses enter foreign markets. To get started, find your local SBDC office by entering your zip code in “Get Started” at www.asbdc-us.org.

Web site: www.sba.gov/sbdc

The Planner

The Small Business Administration offers an export business *Planner*, an interactive template that puts you on the path to exporting success. Unlike a traditional printed manual, the *Planner* is a “living” document that can be customized to your business. It helps you **identify target markets, understand financing options, and calculate sales forecasts.** Informational pages provide you need-to-know exporting information, a readiness assessment, and a wealth of resources. There are also key Web links and online training tools that give you a head start on conducting export research. You can use the *Planner* to build your own Export Business and Marketing Plan.

Web site: www.sba.gov/exportbusinessplanner

Picking Your Market/Trade Research

Access Trade Statistics

The U.S. Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Division collects, compiles, and disseminates official U.S. export and import statistics. These timely and detailed trade statistics are exactly what you need, whether to start exporting or looking to expand your opportunities and **increase your sales**. USATradeOnline.gov provides **detailed information on over 18,000 commodities exported out of or imported into the United States**. Find where there is an international market for your product and in which market you can be competitive.

Web site: www.usatradeonline.gov

Follow Market Access Negotiations

If you are curious about new and developing trade negotiations, visit the United States Trade Representative (USTR) Office's Web site at www.ustr.gov. USTR **develops and coordinates U.S. trade policy and oversees trade negotiations with other countries**. They negotiate agreements to open markets for U.S. exports and enforce trade agreements to level the playing field for U.S. firms of all sizes.

Web site: www.ustr.gov/eNews

Market Research Library

The market research library on Export.gov gives you **access to reports on countries, industries, and commercial developments** written by the Commercial Service's trade professionals. Country Commercial Guides have up-to-date information on doing business in most countries: the economic environment, leading sectors, trade regulations, customs and standards, and much more. You can also sign up for e-mail updates on the latest industry events.

Web site: www.export.gov/mrktresearch

The FTA Tariff Tool

The United States negotiates trade agreements with partnering countries to eliminate tariffs, remove nontariff barriers, and secure nondiscriminatory treatment of U.S. goods and services. **Search instantly for tariff information on specific goods covered under Free Trade Agreements (FTA)** with the FTA Tariff Tool. You can find the tariffs of your goods in 20 FTA partner countries and create reports and charts of trends under different agreements.

Web site: export.gov/fta/ftatarifftool

Finding Buyers/Making Contacts

Export.gov Trade Events Tools

Participating in trade events is a cost-effective way to find new customers. To find out about the latest federal government-sponsored trade events, go to Export.gov. The “Trade Shows” and “Trade Missions” tabs highlight events, and a search tool lets you see a full listing. You can also subscribe for e-mail updates.

Events include:

- Foreign trade missions—Arrange one-on-one meetings with potential business partners.
- Foreign buyer delegations at U.S. trade shows—Match buyers with U.S. exhibitors.
- Major foreign trade shows—Showcase your products or services (often in U.S. exhibitor pavilions).
- Reverse trade missions—Foreign delegates come to the United States to see products and technologies.

Web site: www.export.gov

Local U.S. Export Assistance

Connect with international buyers by working with U.S. Commercial Service offices in 108 U.S. cities, and U.S. embassies and consulates in more than 70 countries. Trade professionals can help explore your product’s market potential through a variety of services:

- **Customized services:** Access a wide range of services.
- **Trade counseling:** Develop effective market entry strategies. Understand documentation, regulations, and requirements of foreign markets. Learn more about trade finance options and navigating U.S. government export controls and compliance.
- **Business matchmaking:** Connect with pre-screened potential foreign buyers, participate in trade events, and meet with industry and government officials in your target market(s).
- **Market intelligence:** Analyze market potential and foreign competition; obtain useful information on financing, laws, and cultural issues; conduct background checks on potential buyers and distributors.

Web site: www.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp

Financing

Export Development and Guarantee Loans

The **Export Express Program** from the Small Business Administration provides financing up to \$500,000. The program allows lenders to use their own forms, procedures, and analyses. Companies will be eligible if they have been in business for at least 12 months (or have personnel with exporting expertise and prior business success) and can demonstrate that the loan proceeds will support export activity, such as participating in a foreign trade show, translating product literature, financing specific export orders, or financing fixed assets used in the production of goods or services for export.

The **International Trade Loan** provides loans of up to \$5 million with a 90 percent guarantee to lenders for businesses modernizing or expanding facilities in order to meet growing export demand.

Web site: www.sba.gov/content/us-export-assistance-centers

Working Capital Program

The Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Export-Import Bank offer export working capital loan programs. Go to the agencies' Web sites to determine which program is suited for you.

- **SBA's Export Working Capital Program (EWCP):** Provides lenders with up to a 90 percent guarantee on export loans of up to \$5 million as a credit enhancement. You can apply for EWCP loans before finalizing an export sale or contract to give you greater flexibility in negotiating export payment terms.
- **Ex-Im Bank's Working Capital Guarantee Program:** U.S. companies using Ex-Im Bank's program must have been in business for at least one year and have a positive network.

Products must be shipped from the United States and have at least 50 percent U.S. content. Services must be performed by U.S. based personnel.

Web sites: www.sba.gov/content/us-export-assistance-centers

Insurance and Guarantees

Export Credit Insurance

Ex-Im Bank Export Credit Insurance: Insurance can protect you against the political and commercial risks of a foreign buyer defaulting on payment. You can obtain insurance policies for single or repetitive export sales. Short-term policies generally cover 90 percent of the principal for political and commercial risks.

Web site: www.exim.gov/products

Foreign-Buyer Guarantees

Ex-Im Bank provides guarantees of commercial loans to foreign buyers of U.S. goods or services against both political and commercial risks of nonpayment.

- **Medium-term guarantees** cover the sale of capital items such as trucks and construction equipment, scientific apparatus, food processing machinery, medical equipment, or project-related services—including architectural, industrial design, and engineering services.
- **Long-term guarantees** are available for major projects, large capital goods, and/or project-related services.

Guarantees and medium-term insurance cover 85 percent of the contract price (100 percent of the financed portion). The foreign buyer is required to make 15 percent cash payment.

Web site: www.exim.gov/products

Documentation and Shipping

Electronic Export Information (EEI) to Automated Export System (AES)

When you export any good valued at over \$2,500 (or requiring a license), you must submit information regarding the shipment to the AES. The Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Division offers training to help you understand the requirements when filing in AES.

You can contact them at **800-549-0595**

Opt. 1 for questions related to filing to AES

Opt. 2 for questions on how to **classify your merchandise**

Opt. 3 for questions regarding the **Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR)**

Opt. 4 for questions regarding **trade data**

Web sites:

Foreign Trade Division: www.census.gov/trade/aes/

AESDirect: www.aesdirect.gov

Blog: <http://globalreach.blogs.census.gov/>

Schedule B Search Engine: <https://uscensus.prod.3ceonline.com/>

Trade Data: www.usatradeonline.gov

Freight Forwarders

An international freight forwarder is an agent you can hire to arrange moving your cargo to an international destination. Agents are familiar with **import and export rules and regulations, the methods of shipping, and documents related to international trade**. The National Customs Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association of America can help you find a freight forwarder.

Web site: ncbfaa.org

Shippers and Express Delivery Services

Shippers' Associations help manage cargo for domestic or international shipments with motor carriers, railroads, ocean carriers, air carriers, and others. The International Logistics page on Export.gov (<http://export.gov/logistics>) provides other options and information, including the use of Shippers' Associations services and express delivery services.

Web site: <http://export.gov/logistics>

Understanding Regulations

BIS Export Licenses

The Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) regulates the export and re-export of **commodities, software, and technology, commercial and military in nature**. Some exports require a BIS license before you can ship. BIS conducts seminars, webinars, and online training and responds to inquiries on Export Administration Regulations, export control policy, and licensing procedures. To speak to a counselor, call the Office of Exporter Services at 202-482-4811.

Web site: www.bis.doc.gov

Economic and Trade Sanctions

The Office of Foreign Assets Control in the Department of the Treasury **administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions** against targeted foreign countries, terrorists, and drug traffickers. The Web site shows sanctions by country, lists entities and individuals with whom U.S. firms cannot do business, and provides the guide *Foreign Assets Control Regulations for Exporters and Importers*. Sign up for e-mail updates or reach them by phone at 800-540-6322.

Web site: www.treas.gov/ofac

Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR)

The FTR are the rules and requirements that you must follow before exporting goods out of the United States. The Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Division works with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to ensure the information filed is correct before it leaves the U.S. port of export. They can assist you in understanding the filing requirements and helping you avoid possible fines and penalties. You can contact them at 800-549-0595; select Opt. 3 for questions regarding the FTR.

Web site: www.census.gov/trade

State Export Licenses

The State Department regulates the export and import of defense articles and services. Some products or services require an export license or an International Traffic in Arms license exemption.

Web site: www.pmdtc.state.gov

Other Agencies

Exports under the exclusive jurisdiction of other U.S. agencies also may require authorization prior to shipping.

Web site: www.export.gov/regulation/

Avoiding and Resolving Problems

Protecting Intellectual Property

This interagency Web site offers tools, resources, and access to U.S. government assistance. STOPfakes.gov makes it easy to find information on **obtaining and protecting intellectual property rights at home and abroad.**

Web site: www.STOPfakes.gov

Trade Agreements Compliance Program

The Trade Agreements Compliance Program is your one-stop shop for help in **resolving foreign government trade barriers or unfair situations in foreign markets.** Trade experts in the Trade Compliance Center work to resolve your problem or guide you to the correct person. **Fill out the Trade Compliant Form.**

Email: tcc@trade.gov

Fax: 202-482-6097

Phone: 202-482-1191

Web site: tcc.export.gov

Commercial Diplomacy and Advocacy

When requiring support abroad, you can seek assistance from the Commerce, State, and Agriculture Departments. Their Foreign Service Officers located in U.S. embassies and consulates will seek to provide you with Commercial Diplomacy support. The Advocacy Center represents companies' interests to foreign governments or government-owned corporations.

Web sites:

For help with industrial goods or services:

www.export.gov/worldwide_us/index.asp

For help with agricultural products: www.fas.usda.gov/ofso/overseas_post_directory/

Advocacy Center: www.export.gov/advocacy

State Department assistance: www.state.gov/business

Exporting Agricultural or Food Products

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) has staff in over 162 countries that identify problems, provide solutions, and advocate for U.S. agriculture.

Trade Policy

The FAS removes trade barriers and enforces U.S. rights under existing trade agreements to increase reach in foreign markets. The FAS works with foreign governments, international organizations, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to **establish international standards and rules that improve accountability and predictability in agricultural trade.**

Web site: www.fas.usda.gov/trade.asp

Market Development and Credit Guarantee Programs

FAS collaborates with 75 groups from the U.S. food and agricultural industry, manages a toolkit of market development programs, and provides credit guarantee programs that help develop and maintain markets.

Web site: www.fas.usda.gov/exportprograms.asp

Data and Analysis

The FAS provides unique market intelligence using its vast network of global contacts and long-standing relationships with international groups. The FAS can help you **obtain objective intelligence on foreign market opportunities, prepare production forecasts, assess export-marketing opportunities, and track changes in policies** affecting U.S. agricultural exports and imports.

Web sites:

FAS databases: www.fas.usda.gov/data.asp
Global Agricultural Information Network:
gain.fas.usda.gov/Pages/Default.aspx

Exporter Information and Technical Assistance

The FAS has online directories and databases that can link you to lists of foreign buyers, U.S. suppliers, and trade leads. Go to www.fas.usda.gov/agx/partners_trade_leads/partners_trade_leads, e-mail exportassist@fas.usda.gov, or call the FAS Export Assistance line at **202-690-3576**. The FAS Trade Facilitation Desk can assist with guidance on foreign import regulations and detained shipments. E-mail AgExport@fas.usda.gov or call **202-720-2378**.

Useful Web Sites—by Agency

U.S. Department of Commerce

o U.S. Census Bureau

- Foreign Trade Division www.census.gov/trade
- Trade Data www.usatradeonline.gov
- AESDirect www.aesdirect.gov
- Schedule B Search Engine <https://uscensus.prod.3ceonline.com/>

o International Trade Administration

- Export.gov
- tcc.export.gov
- trade.gov

o Bureau of Industry and Security

- bis.doc.gov

Export-Import Bank of the United States

- exim.gov/products

U.S. Small Business Administration

- sba.gov/sbdc

U.S. Department of Agriculture/Foreign Agricultural Service

- fas.usda.gov/trade

U.S. Trade Representative's Office

- ustr.gov/eNews

U.S. Department of State

- www.pmddtc.state.gov

U.S. Department of the Treasury—Economic and Trade Sanctions

- treas.gov/ofac