

DEVELOPING YOUR INTERNATIONAL TRADE POTENTIAL

Improve your communications with global clients

The Export Communications Review

Powerbronze, West Sussex: *"We have increased our international business by 25% in the first month following the Export Communications Review."*

London College of Professional Training, London: *"The improvements we made to our communications have made us more competitive. I feel that if we had not followed the recommendations of the review, we would have gone out of business; they were that important to our success internationally."*

Body Clock Health Care Ltd, London: *"While efficient customer service has always been considered important to Managing Director Marilyn Bash and her team, their successful supplier relationships in the Far East have reinforced and contributed to their understanding of the importance of appropriate intercultural communication."*

What is an Export Communications Review?

UK Trade & Investment's Export Communications Review (ECR) can help you improve communications with both English and non-English speaking export markets by reviewing all aspects of communication with them.

It builds confidence to trade successfully with overseas customers, both now and in the future, without necessarily learning their language.

How does the ECR work?

An accredited export communications consultant will discuss with you how you tackle (or plan to tackle) the language and cultural issues that arise when trading overseas. They will identify communication strengths and weaknesses, and offer unbiased, objective advice that is based upon years of practical experience.

Your company can benefit from a series of Export Communications Reviews to support the development of your international business. At each visit, the consultant will spend around two-three hours with you and your export team, discussing the current export strategy and international activities.





The website review

The ECR can review the effectiveness of your website to communicate with potential overseas customers and to generate export business. A specific website review offers a comprehensive analysis of your site, covering:

- Technical aspects involved in setting up an international website
- The design, structure and navigation of the site for overseas visitors
- Inclusion of appropriate international content
- Translation and localisation for your target export markets
- Promotion of the site in overseas markets (including search engine optimisation)
- Monitoring the site's performance
- Managing the impact of a successful site.



The consultant can review all your written/spoken communications with a specific overseas market or they can focus upon a certain export activity such as:

- Press Releases and promotional materials, technical documentation and manuals, catalogues and packaging for international audiences
- Preparation for and representation at an overseas trade show or exhibition
- Preparation for a presentation to an international audience
- Improving relationships with overseas agents and distributors
- International sales and invoicing processes
- Systems for handling foreign phone calls and emails
- Training of overseas staff; language training needs in the UK and recruitment of export staff
- International website strategy (see left for details).

You will then receive a customised written report including the following:

- A table of strengths and weaknesses of your current communications against international best practice (addressing written, telephone, face to face and electronic communications)
- Practical recommendations, tailored to your company and summarised in an action plan
- Information about possible suppliers and costs to implement the recommendations
- How-to guides, with more detailed general advice on how to implement recommendations.

How has the review benefited exporters?

It encourages them to think more broadly

Britten Sinfonia, Cambridge: "I was quite taken aback at the thoroughness of the review, the insights it delivered and the sheer depth of resources it gave us access to. There is no doubt that the review changed the way we think about our export communications."

It provides an action plan for improving international communications

Bia Associates, Leicester: "Excellent report which has given us a roadmap of what areas to address with good clear signposts of how to address these issues."

It builds confidence to trade with new and challenging markets

Supreme Music, Brighton: "The Review has had a wide impact as we have used the same approaches for other overseas markets. It has certainly increased my confidence in dealing with worldwide markets."

A fresh pair of eyes reviews their export activities

State of the Emergency, Devon: "This was a very useful exercise. It was valuable to have someone who was not arts based looking at our website from a different point of view."

It makes the website work harder

Bigbury Mint, Devon: "I thoroughly enjoyed the fact-packed review session and was impressed by the clarity with which she presented her Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) knowledge and experience. The knowledge gained will be put to great use in our new website and make it really work for us!"

Financial support for the ECR

Exporting companies that have been trading for at least two years and employing fewer than 250 staff can benefit from up to three UKTI-subsidised reviews. The cost of each review is £500 + VAT. Eligible companies can receive from UKTI a subsidy of £350 towards the cost of the first review and a subsidy of £250 towards each of the second and third reviews.

How to apply

You can apply online at www.britishchambers.org.uk/ecr. Payment can be made by credit card, PayPal or cheque.