

Exporting for small businesses: 10 top tips

Expand your business across international borders and kick-start growth

Thinking about exporting as a small business can seem a bit daunting—there’s a lot to learn, all while finding the time to keep your business journey on track. But lots of US businesses are finding success doing business overseas, and there’s plenty of help and advice on hand. Our tips will help you get started on the path to exporting success.



1. Develop your networks

You don’t have to be an expert to start exporting. Build up your network of people who can help and advise you on tax, licensing and more. The International Trade Administration (ITA) website [export.gov](https://www.export.gov) is a good place to start.



2. Do your research

Before you take your first steps, find out about local markets, customers, trading options, customs and costs. Try the ITA’s [exporting guides](#) as a starting point and use the networks you’re building up.



3. Develop your strategy and direction

Your export plan should include:

- Route to market. How will you distribute your services?
- Business model. Will you use agents, distributors, a subsidiary or sell direct?
- Marketing strategy. How will you promote overseas?
- Finances. What are your costs and income forecasts?



4. Select your partners carefully

Build up relationships and ensure agreements are fully understood. For example, the US has robust laws on bribery, and you could find yourself liable if one of your agents or partners abroad doesn’t comply.



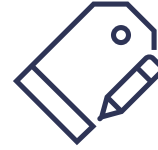
5. Select your market

The EU? South America? China? Demographics, competition, costs, distribution networks, legal considerations and taxes may all have an impact on your choice.



6. Adapt your website

Think about setting up a domain for the country you're trading in and invest in a proper translation service. And don't forget to make sure your ecommerce site can handle multiple currencies.



7. Research costs and pricing

You could be missing out on sales by setting a price that's too high, or missing out on profits where the market would sustain a higher price. Also factor in the costs of exporting your service.



8. Prepare your pitch

As your business export plans develop, you'll be meeting lots of new people, so it's important you explain what your business can offer clearly, quickly and succinctly. Think of it as your elevator pitch—an opportunity to capture a prospect's attention.



9. Experience the culture

There's no substitute for living, breathing and experiencing first-hand the environment that you're doing business in. Plan to visit regularly, using face-to-face meetings to build relationships and to learn about the different ways of doing business.



10. Patience, persistence and passion

Setting your business on course for exporting takes time, resources and energy so be prepared to contribute all three. Take your time to get it right.

Starting out
on the journey
to successful
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Get the business support you need to expand abroad

Understanding the possibilities is a good start. But when you're ready to go global, what are the practical steps you can take?

At Sage, we believe that expanding your horizons should be easy. It's why our small business solutions include global trade support. We free you from the hassles of multi-currency operations so you can follow your international goals. Here's how.



Effortlessly deal with multiple currencies

Fluctuations in currency exchange rates can be difficult to manage. Not with Sage. Record incomings and outgoings in multiple currencies for any location. Automatically calculate exchange rates and bank charges, using your preferred rates or live from the U.S Federal Reserve. And because foreign currency revaluations post automatically, there's less risk of error when making these tricky calculations.



Consolidate business views from all your markets

As your business grows, you need to be sure you're getting the whole picture. Sage accounting solutions give you a real-time view of what's happening across all the regions in which you operate. Whether you're working as a single company or multiple subsidiaries, access financials from across your business. Distribute transactions to the right geographies, and report with individual or consolidated results, as you prefer.



Scale your systems as your business grows

Are your processes holding you back? Get the additional accounting resources you need, as you need them, so your systems can scale alongside your business. Sage accounting tools are designed for today's new ways of working. Cloud-based technology enables you to effortlessly share and receive information with your teams on any device, in or out of the office, in any location. And we bring together all of your sites for simple business reporting.



Want to do business across borders?
See how Sage can help.

There's a Sage solution for every journey. Discover the right one for you.

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