



Trudy Belanco

Question**How can I become more export ready?****Answer**

The secret to export success is preparation and a carefully researched export plan. An export plan helps you to act—rather than react to the many challenges and risks encountered in international business.

An export plan consists of many elements, some of which include a description of your company—its market and industry, your business objectives, financial forecasts, information about your products and/or services, your competitive advantages against the competition, an analysis of the target market, and your international marketing strategies—since International Marketing is not the same as domestic marketing.

Remember that your international market may have totally different tastes, needs and customs. There are also additional factors to consider such as receiving payment, increased documentation, potential different cultural, social and business styles, as well as different legal and regulatory environments. You may wish to enter into an alliance with a local agent or distributor to circumvent some of these issues. If possible, visit the country, spend some time learning about the culture, attend a trade show and possibly create an alliance with a company selling a complementary product or service.

Exporting can be a complex and challenging process. However, with careful and deliberate planning, exporting can be a rewarding growth strategy for any business. ■

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