

Export Express

Insights to Accelerate International Expansion



Our Mission: Help Manufacturers “Spend time *Selling* to Distributors versus *Searching* for Distributors”

Sweets – Middle East

Looking for international Confectionery distributors? How about 2,200 of them in 96 countries? Export Solutions’ distributor database now covers more than 7,700 distributors in 96 countries, including an average of 23 per country handling confectionery and snacks. New! Export Solutions’ Retailer database now tracks 2,100 retailers in 96 countries. Get ready for Gulfood! Our databases track more than 800 Middle East distributors plus 84 retailers in 12 Middle East countries. Order now at www.exportsolutions.com.

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We’ve Got You Covered!

Where to Play, How to Win



When is the best time to enter or expand in a country? When it is flying high, with demanding retailers and expensive startup costs? Or when the country is experiencing economic uncertainty and political upheaval? In 2017, all major economies strengthened, setting the stage for a positive 2018. However, there is political turbulence everywhere, with potential for ruptures to snowball into a global slump.

Change of Control

Mexico and Brasil face presidential elections in 2018. Success by left-leaning candidates could cause swings in Latin America’s two largest countries. Crown Prince MBS is shaking up Saudi Arabia, announcing reforms and detaining opponents. Saudi Arabia represents almost half the consumer business in the Middle East. UK must make progress towards a Brexit agreement. Spain is struggling with the Catalonia secession issue. Could these be the transformational events that redefine Europe?

USA – China: Global Powers

The USA survived the first year of Trump, with the economy humming along. A key question is the ratification (or rejection) of a revised NAFTA agreement. China is retrenching, with re-elected President Xi Jinping acting to close inefficient plants and restructure the healthy Chinese economy. Exporters should take the clue and pursue a China strategy renewal recognizing the dramatic shift to e-commerce.

Turbulent Ten

1. Saudi Arabia
2. Mexico
3. United States
4. China
5. United Kingdom
6. Brazil
7. Spain
8. South Korea
9. Philippines
10. Argentina

How to Win 2018 – Ten Tips

2018 will be challenging and everyone can benefit from “new ideas.” Listed below are Export Solutions’ 10 strategies to build your export business in 2018 and beyond.

Focus 5 Countries

A true measure of export success is relevant market share in large countries like China, USA, Japan, Mexico or Saudi Arabia, not selling small quantities to 50 or 100 countries. Each international manager should select his global “Focus 5” countries and strive to spend at least fifty percent of travel time in core countries. Regional managers should adapt the same mantra for gamechanging results at their top one or two opportunity countries.

China Strategy Renewal

Most brands have learned that China is not a country where you can appoint a national distributor and visit a few times a year. E-commerce represents most of industry growth and up to 50% of sales for imported brands. Many companies appear at a “10 Year Crossroads.” There is an urgent need to hire “boots on the ground” in China to execute a multi-channel, multi-region strategy.

Small Shops – Big Opportunity

Small stores represent 50% of sales or more in many emerging market countries in Asia, Latin America, Middle East, and Africa. These stores are particularly relevant for impulse categories such as beverages and confectionery/snack. Small shops are not a focus for niche brands or start-ups.

E-Commerce

Will e-commerce represent five percent of sales by 2023? Ten percent? Who knows? We can all agree that it will be bigger. Challenge each distributor to develop an e-commerce plan. Share learning from your corporate office. Treat Amazon as another “Global Customer.”

New Channels

My Summer Export Express identified 23 “alternate” channels that could represent new customers. These channels tend to be “less demanding” and more open to new brands.

USA – Multi Channel

USA based manufacturers routinely sell to ten channels or more. Most adopt a matrix model meshing channel specific brokers for supermarkets and foodservice with direct sales to Walmart, Costco, and Drug customers. Overseas brand owners should adopt the same approach to reach all USA channels and regions.

Listing Map

Our page 4 and 5 articles confirm that an up to date listing map and “white space” plan is the essential one page template for every country

Is the Store a 10?

Can 2018 be the year for focus on improved in-store brand presence? Brands (& distributors) own the tools and knowledge to reach these objectives. The critical element is your focus and execution of a formal shelf drive. Contact us if we can help.

Upgrade Distributor Network

Every company has distributors that are “under-achievers” or that are no longer a good fit with the brands aspirations. Begin the “upgrade” process early in the year to impact second half 2018 shipments.

Export Team

How can you redefine roles and responsibilities to obtain more productivity from your export team? One idea is to appoint one manager to focus on new country pioneering for a large country as a special project or “stretch” assignment. Another concept is to place a junior “company missionary” in a key distributor’s office for a one year training assignment. Contact Export Solutions for “new ideas to solve old problems.”

2018 Winning Strategies

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