

Follow up Questions

Quick Resources:

- Explore eCommerce Resources: <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce>
- eCommerce Innovation Lab Business Service Provider (BSP) List: <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce-bsp-directory>
- Find a Local US Commercial Service Office: <https://2016.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp>
- Research Foreign Markets: <https://www.trade.gov/international-market-research>
- Exports for Beginners, a Basic Guide to Export Book: <https://2016.export.gov/basicguide/index.asp>
- Why Companies Should Export: <https://www.export.gov/article2?id=Why-Companies-should-export>
- Find a local State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) Grant office: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants/state-trade-expansion-program-step/directory-step-awardees>

eCommerce Innovation Lab Business Service Provider List:

Q: Do you have a list of website service providers to help create a website that is international sales friendly?

A: Refer to eCommerce Innovation Lab Business Service Provider (BSP) List: <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce-bsp-directory>

Q: How can a service company become a Service Provider with you?

A: Refer to eCommerce Innovation Lab Business Service Provider (BSP) List: <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce-bsp-directory>

Q: Where can I go to translate my website into different languages

A: eCommerce BSP Digital Marketing: <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce-bsp-digital-marketing>

Q: Where can I go to develop my website into an eCommerce platform:

A: eCommerce BSP Back End Technology: <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce-bsp-back-end-technology>

Q: If you're selling direct to individual consumers abroad via your own US website, how do you arrange export documentation and customs clearance plus duties?

A: The first question is are you already exporting offline? How are you managing documentation needs for offline exports? Assuming you are using a customs

brokerage/freight forwarding firm for your documentation and shipping needs, you would continue to use those service providers for your online sales documentation needs as well. One off individual (aka small parcel) freight can be expensive so you will need to potentially look at shippers who offer consolidation services. I would also suggest checking with larger shipping firms as some of them are offering special rates such as UPS with a special promo code. See eCommerce BSP Logistics <https://www.trade.gov/e-commerce-bsp-logistics-1>

Finding Foreign Partners:

Q: How can I find potential partners through your Gold Key Program?

A: You have options for finding the right foreign buyer or partner. Trade shows, trade missions, customized services, and eCommerce are possibilities. To view more: <https://www.trade.gov/find-buyers-and-partners>

Social Media:

Q: Are you aware of in country social media partners that aren't also distribution partners? I am interested in an in-country SEO/social media partner only.

A: It sounds like you are looking for a referral to an in-country digital marketing firm. This would best be addressed by working with your local Trade Specialist, <https://2016.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp>, to better understand your target market needs and then working with our overseas posts to help connect you to the right type of service providers in country.

Website Globalization Review - Gap Analysis (WGR):

Q: How often should you conduct a review/check of your website?

A: In general, as often as you would like. This largely depends on how efficient you are at implementing website optimization recommendations and best practices. The frequency will be dictated by internal discussions around the company's stated objects with their site. Websites require routine monitoring and maintenance, and it is recommended that website analytics and SEO needs are addressed at least annually, preferably quarterly. Establishing regular performance checks and benchmarks is a good practice and will also help you keep an open dialogue around your expectations when working with service providers. <https://www.trade.gov/seo>

Q: How do we sign up for a WGR?

A: Contact your local US Commercial Service Office: <https://2016.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp>

Q: How much does it cost for a Website Globalization Review GAP Analysis?

A: No fee for small and medium sized companies until September 31, 2020. Fees at 50% reduction for medium and large sized companies until September 31, 2020

Q: What's the turnaround time of gap analysis?

A: The official response time is 14 days with a sign Participation Agreement. Depending on demand this could be adjusted up or down slightly.

Q: Does the US Commercial Service assist with fixing the gaps realized?

A: No. The intent of the gap analysis is to identify areas that need attention. We recommend you reach out to a professional technical service provider to assist you with these repairs. <https://www.trade.gov/ecommerce-bsp-directory>

Company Size Structure

Q: What is considered a small company? Or a midsize company? Large company?

A: Must qualify as a "small business" under the Small Business Administration's size standards, which vary by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code: <https://www.sba.gov/document/support--table-size-standards>. Fees listed also apply to U.S. Economic Development Organizations (EDO) and Non-profit Educational Institutions that purchase ITA services for their own use. For example, when an EDO requests a Gold Key Service (GKS) to promote itself as a tourist destination, it will be charged the small company fee. If, however, an EDO requests a (GKS) to promote a U.S. company's goods/services, the size of the company will be used to determine the fee.

Fee Structure:

Q: Where can I find information about US Commercial Service fees when/if applicable?

A: Fees are spelled out on each of our product pages on www.trade.gov.

Q: Do you need to become a member if pay a fee?

A: No. Must be a US Company to utilize US Commercial Service programs.

Finance

Q: Can you assist with "factoring" finance programs for export?

A: We can provide general counsel on trade finance to exporters, and have reference guide online <https://www.trade.gov/trade-finance-guide-quick-reference-us-exporters>

General:

Q: For localization, are there some markets/regions where this is even more important? And why?

A: I would say it's always a good idea to localize, IF your site traffic and market research supports the level of investment it takes to localization. There is no sense localizing in a market where you have little to no site traffic. If you want to build

your brand in a new market, your efforts might be better served by selling through a marketplace or signing a distributor with an established digital reputation and then work on building your brand awareness. We recommend site traffic from a foreign market of 5% or more before considering localization. We also recommend reaching out to a professional service provider via the eCommerce BSP Digital Marketing: <https://www.trade.gov/ecommerce-bsp-digital-marketing>

Q: Any words of advice for companies that offer a service (thinking of software as a service company, as an example)?

A: A digital strategy is important for all who have business affairs in the digital economy, regardless of a product's tangibility. <https://www.trade.gov/ecommerce-digital-strategy-0>. Additionally, reach out to your local Trade Specialist and become a client of the U.S. Commercial Service. We have a global Information, Communications & Technology (ICT) industry teams that can work with SAAS companies to help export their technologies. <https://2016.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp>

Q: Please explain more about helping with overseas trade shows?

A: We often participate in overseas trade shows with U.S. pavilions and other B2B services. <https://www.trade.gov/meet-buyers-events> The best way to learn which trade shows our staff are supporting is to contact your local U.S. Export Assistance Center near you and speak with one of our Trade Specialist. <https://2016.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp>

STEP Grant:

Q: I will have my items manufactured in Mexico and will be sold from the USA; would I qualify for a grant?

A: No. Must be a US Company to utilize US Small Business Administration programs.

Q: How can I get approved/reimbursed for site translation and SEO with STEP or another program?

A: Contact your local State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) Grant office: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants/state-trade-expansion-program-step/directory-step-awardees>

Q: Can we get reimbursement for the trade show inside USA, or even online?

A: Contact your local State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) Grant office to review the eligibility details: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants/state-trade-expansion-program-step/directory-step-awardees>

Q: Can I use the STEP grant to develop the Website?

A: Contact your local State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) Grant office to review the eligibility details: <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/grants/state-trade-expansion-program-step/directory-step-awardees>

Non-Tariff Barriers:

Q: I did not know the US Commercial Service assists with Non-tariff barriers?

A: Yes, we are part of the International Trade Administration and addressing trade barriers is a big part of what our agency does. Both tariff and non-tariff barrier related. Contact your local trade specialist for further guidance:

<https://2016.export.gov/usoffices/index.asp>

How to Start Exporting:

Q: What do you suggest for someone who isn't exporting and just looking into getting into this field?

A: Refer to a "Basic Guide to Export" Book at:

<https://2016.export.gov/basicguide/index.asp> and "Why Companies Should Export" at: <https://www.export.gov/article2?id=Why-Companies-should-export>

A: Contact your local Small Business Development Business Center at

<https://americassbdc.org/>

Import to USA:

Q: Do you assist companies who want to import to the US?

A: The US Commercial Service focuses on exporting goods from the USA while the US Customs and Boarder Protection (CBP) can assist with imports into the USA:

<https://www.cbp.gov/trade/basic-import-export/importer-exporter-tips>