

Guide to Trading Internationally

Government support

There is an extensive network of assistance for UK business from government and government-sponsored entities. It is now widely accepted in government that if the United Kingdom is to compete in world trade, individuals and organisations in the UK need the support of government. This is ever more true as countries such as India and China take advantage of inherent advantages to forge ahead economically.

Some of these support organisations are listed below, but if a UK business is keen to take advantage of the advice and assistance on offer, it must have a clear idea of what information and help it needs.

The UK government's website www.direct.gov.uk is the gateway to information about government support for businesses.

Key providers of support are:

Business Link

www.businesslink.gov.uk

Advice and information for new and small businesses. Business Link is an easy-to-use business support, advice and information service managed by the Department of Trade and Industry. Its local presence across England, managed by business people for business people, means it is uniquely placed to identify business support services from across government, voluntary and private sectors.

Department of Trade and Industry

www.dti.gov.uk

The DTI website has a number of sections on the various types of business and a particular one for small businesses, which also has statistical information. There is information on loans from high-street banks backed by the guarantee of the DTI.

British Chambers of Commerce

www.chamberonline.co.uk

The British Chamber of Commerce has up-to-date information relating to trading conditions in different countries, risks, terms of trade and particular difficulties with particular markets. In addition there are lists of buyers and sellers by product and terms of trade, and often credit reports on buyers and sellers. Membership is recommended.

UK Trade & Investment

www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

UK Trade & Investment is a government network whose objective is to encourage British business success overseas. It provides a single point of access for the full range of help available for trading in world markets. It has access to over 200 embassies and posts overseas.

UK Trade & Investment information centre has business directories, statistical data and country reports. It has an index of websites for exporters and, importantly, country profiles online.

HM Revenue and Customs

www.hmrc.gov.uk

News and information about tax, including VAT and Customs in the UK.

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk

Source of health and safety information on regulations that businesses must comply with.

Companies House

www.companieshouse.gov.uk

Companies House keeps records of all UK limited liability companies and makes available company accounts, names of disqualified directors etc.

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