

“Keep on truckin”

WORDS: Luyton Driman

For those of you aspiring to begin exporting, or those of you who are already exporting, but have hit a bit of a “flat spot”, there are a number of ways to revitalise your business and to approach the export task from a couple of new angles.

I make extensive overtures in my book about “getting your house in order” and I cannot emphasise this enough. By this I basically mean you need to make sure your company (regardless of size) is geared and capable for the export task, as it is a real, departmental function in any company, not merely an add-on to “get some extra business”, which is all too often the misconception.

My point? Well, as part of your primary market research (PMR), and as an addition to your strategic export plan, consider adding the following option/function into your routine: seeking out and joining *Trade missions* and/or *export workshops*. There are quite a few of them, generally spread over the months of the year and you will see them advertised in newspapers, trade journals, business magazines, such as *Export SA*, and the like. This could lead to information overload, so you need to seek out those specific to your needs.

I suggest you approach the Chamber of Commerce and Industry – Johannesburg (JCCI), or the chamber in the city where you live, and ask them what missions are coming to this country, from which country they are coming from, and what the profile of the business for that specific mission is.



Luyton Driman, author of “Going the extra mile: A guide to trading in Africa” writes a monthly column for *Export SA*

The Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) also has a pretty active website, showing trade mission activity. Having received this info, you can then decide to participate or not.

Outgoing missions, ie missions of South African businessmen going as a group to other countries to meet, network and grow business leads for the primary purpose of expanding export business, are also on offer.

In Gauteng the Gauteng Enterprise Development Agency (Geda) also offers free information. If you prefer the export workshop option, opt for the versions where pertinent guest speakers and foreign businessmen are present; this

generally works out more beneficial for you as part of the PMR you need to do to make your export business successful.

A good website to visit for incoming and outgoing conferences is www.omegainvest.co.za or www.omegaconferences.com.

The Omega operation is the brainchild of Dr Denis Worrall, an active ex-politician in South Africa, who has cunningly put his experience and many leads into practice and is offering some great workshops and mission options for those of you aspiring to grow your export businesses.

I recently attended the Middle East – South Africa workshop and really enjoyed the interface and networking between dignitaries and businessmen from the likes of Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq. Remember, plenty of networking is done at these events and that plays a major part in the recipe to success!

“Keep on truckin” as the group Grateful Dead once said . . . and for more information on all these issues and for any direct consultation, my contact details are in my book “Going the extra mile – A guide to trading in Africa”. ■



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