

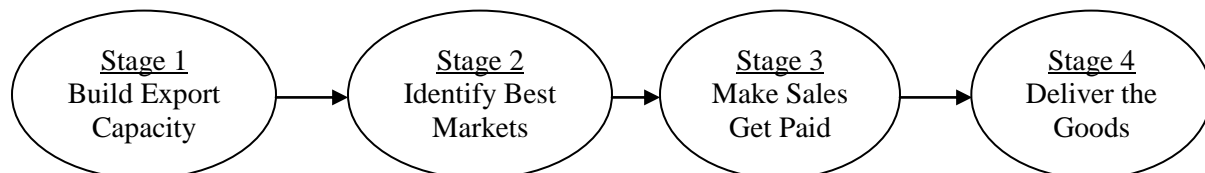
Q&A Guide to Web-Based Export Resources

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The Internet is a goldmine of international trade information. Literally thousands of Websites offer useful resources for almost anyone in this field. These resources include how-to guides, glossaries and conversions, trade and economic statistics, market research, trade contacts and leads, and trade regulations just for starters. The key is not whether what you want exists – it does -- but whether you can find it in the maze of Website riches. The Web universe is now so vast that it's not easy to find just the nuggets we need. The usual search method – Googling by keyword – might hit the mark, but could also be a huge time-waster. A Google search invariably pulls up page after page of “hits” that may or may not be relevant, or the hits you really want may be too far down the list to retrieve.

Fortunately, a solution exists. A few Internet sites, known as “portals” have aggregated and organized this mass of trade information into more user-friendly, one-stop databases. Some portals are fee-based, some are free. The *International Trade Compliance Institute* (ITCI) portal we'll focus on here (www.tradecomplianceinstitute.org) includes a *Trade Information Database* (TID) (www.tradecomplianceinstitute.org/p_trade_info_database.php) with nearly 1,000 “deep” links to trade information in 12 broad categories and 84 subcategories. This extensive free portal was developed under a federal grant (DOE Title VI B) by the El Camino College Center for International Trade Development (CITD). The categorization means you can quickly drill down to your areas of most interest. Deep links mean you get directly to the specific content you seek within a broader site, with no need to navigate further.

Now, let's illustrate how the Web can provide the information and answers that exporters most need at start-up and as they become more experienced. In essence, exporting is a four-stage process. At each stage, shown below, exporters must take certain steps to advance to the next stage, and at each stage and step, they have questions and need information and answers that the Web can provide.



The Stage 1 goal is to “Build Export Capacity.” In this stage, would-be exporters need to assess whether they have the potential and readiness to export, learn how to export, and know where to go for export help.

The Stage 2 goal is to “Identify Best Export Markets.” By this second stage, exporters already know how to export and that their products have export potential. Next, they need to determine which of the many possible world markets are best for them, develop a market entry strategy for each target market, and take steps to implement the recommended strategy. Typically, entry strategy deals with how best to distribute, price, promote, and adapt the product for each target market.

The Stage 3 goal is to “Make Sales and Get Paid.” By this third stage, exporters will have selected their target markets, established representation and recognition in those markets, and should be attracting some interest in the form of inquiries and leads. The task now is to convert leads into purchase orders --

basically to “close the deal” by negotiating with the buyer on the price, credit, payment and delivery terms of the sale.

The Stage 4 goal is to “Deliver the Goods.” By this fourth stage, exporters will have agreed on all terms of sale and now need to fulfill the order. For this, exporters must first comply with all documents and regulations required by the U.S. to export the goods and by the receiving country to import the goods. Then, the exporter must arrange to transport the goods to the specified destination, typically with help from a freight forwarder..

At each stage, questions arise, and most can be answered with information from the CITD Website and other readily available Web sources. For example:

Stage 1 Questions -- Building Export Capacity	
Am I export-ready - do I have what it takes to export?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Export Readiness Assessment System (free registration)
How do I export - what are the basic steps and procedures?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Export Guides
If I want to export through an intermediary (e.g. an EMC), rather than on my own, where can I find one?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global TradeNet – Export Management in the U.S. • Global TradeNet – Trading Companies & Agents in the U.S.
What are the relevant classification codes for my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule B • Harmonized System (HS) • Standard Int’l Trade Classification (SITC) • SIC and NAICS • Index to ECCN (Commerce Control List)
I’m unfamiliar with this trade acronym or term; what does it mean?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Terminology
How do I convert U.S. into foreign currencies, time of day, weights, measures, standards, and vice versa?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Conversions
Who are potential export clients for me as an Export Management Company (EMC)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Producers & Exporters
Who can I go to for export help, particularly as a relative newcomer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State International Trade Offices • U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service Offices

Stage 2 Questions – A: Identifying Best Export Markets

Which markets do the experts consider most promising for my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry-Specific Market Research Reports • Agriculture Attache (GAIN) Reports • Country Commercial Guides (Chapter 4)
What are the leading and fastest growing export destinations for my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USITC Trade DataWeb (free registration) • Trade Stats Express
Which countries are the leading and fastest growing importers of my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Intracen Imports by Product/Country • UN Comtrade
How competitive are U.S. exports of my product in world markets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intracen Competitiveness Map • UN Intracen Exports by Product/Country
Where can I find economic and demographic data to size up a market?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Economic & Demographic Statistics

Stage 2 Questions – B: Entering Best Export Markets

What's the best strategy to get into a target market?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country Commercial Guides (Chapters 1, 3) • Industry-Specific Market Research Reports (free registration)
Who are potential foreign buyers/distributors of my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreign Manufacturers & Importers
Are there any "hot" leads for products like mine?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hot Foreign Trade Leads
How can I find qualified and interested foreign agents/distributors for my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Partner Search (fee-based) • Gold Key Matchmaking Service (fee-based)
How can I determine the bona fides of a potential foreign partner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Company Profile (fee-based) • Coface Business Information (fee-based) • Int'l Credit Reporting Agencies (fee-based)
How can I best promote my company and product in foreign markets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Trade Promotion Programs & Services (fee-based) • ExportUSA (formerly Commercial News USA (fee-based))
How can I find trade events for my product that attract foreign buyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Event Schedules • International Buyer Program
How can I best prepare to exhibit my product at a trade show?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade Event Preparation

Stage 3 Questions -- Making Sales & Getting Paid

How should I respond if/when I get a foreign inquiry or request for information?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exporting Basics (Sample Inquiry Responses, p. 108)
How should I respond if/when I get a request for a price quote from a foreign buyer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exporting Basics (Price Quotation Worksheet, p. 112)
What are my and the foreign buyer's costs and responsibilities under typical INCOTERMS?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• INCOTERMS 2010 (Chart)• INCOTERMS Explained
How do I get paid for export sales?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Export Finance Guides• Trade Finance Programs & Services
How can I protect myself against non-payment by a foreign buyer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Export Credit Insurance

Stage 4 Questions (Delivering the Goods).

How do I determine if my product requires a license or permit to export it from the U.S.?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intro to Commerce Dept. Export Controls• ITCI Regulatory FAQs (Export Controls)
How do I determine what shipping and other documents are required to export my product?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documentation Basics
How do I determine if my product is subject to an import duty in a target market and the amount of the duty?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• U.S. and Foreign Import Duties
How do I determine if my product is subject to any non-tariff barriers in a target country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foreign Trade Laws & Regulations
Where can I find a freight forwarder to help me with documentation, logistics and transportation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transportation and Logistics Providers• Customs Brokers & Freight Forwarders