

# INTERNATIONAL TRADE PROGRAM SERVICE PARTNERS



## Michigan State University International Business Center

Michigan State University International Business Center (MSU-IBC) is the nation's No. 1 center for international business education and research (CIBER). Michigan Economic Development Corporation partners with MSU-IBC to offer companies two types of services:

### Michigan Export Growth Program

A vital part of a company's export strategic plan is sound market research. Michigan Export Growth Program (MEGP) assistance helps companies identify their highest potential global markets, and provides recommendations for penetrating those markets. Companies receive country- and industry-specific research reports.

### Training

MSU-IBC offers six seminars and workshops for companies on selected export topics including, but not limited to, introductory exporting themes, international management, international marketing, trade finance, global supply chain or regional business themes.

## Michigan Small Business Development Center

The Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides counseling, training, and secondary market research for new ventures, existing small businesses, and advanced technology companies. With 11 regional offices and more than 20 satellite offices statewide, SBDC strengthens companies with a spectrum of services that range from writing a business plan to financing a startup to expanding a business into international markets.

## Early stage export assistance

Companies with export potential often find themselves overwhelmed by the volume of new information they must absorb. SBDC provides a multi-stage export readiness assessment for early stage or newly exporting companies, which may include export planning, export financial assessment and export marketing. The objective is to ready the company and product for international trade success.

## International search engine optimization

Search engine optimization (SEO) defines strengths and areas of needed improvement on a company's website and social media outreach to advance international sales. The in-depth analysis addresses online penetration in up to two international markets. SEO benchmarks a company's website against their two key competitors, scoring each website on 10 key areas. The report includes a 30-page detailed domestic SEO assessment with step-by-step instructions on how to improve a company's website.

## Fiscal fitness assessment

SBDC finance specialists work with the CEO or CFO to assess the company's financial health and assist in improving its position for financing. Efforts may include: financial benchmarking using ProfitCents; assessing the accuracy of and recommending modifications to the chart of accounts; analyzing domestic and international pricing; and preparing a loan package for export financing.

## ibt partners

ibt partners is a team of experienced and professional web-savvy European business developers with offices in the U.S., U.K., Germany and France that provide European SEO services to Michigan companies.

### European Union search engine optimization

After completing a European SEO report, ibt partners implements the recommendations to increase the visibility of the client's domestic website to target prospects and clients via Europe's many search engines. This may include: identifying key words; establishing a URL for the target market; adapting content for the European audience; identifying recommended meta data; and/or providing landing pages in the native language. The end result is a website which ranks higher in organic search results for the target European market.

## Foster Swift

Experienced, highly specialized and service oriented, Foster Swift law firm focuses on identifying clients' needs and applying knowledge and legal skills to achieve objectives efficiently and cost effectively. When exporting, many businesses overlook or minimize the legal considerations that need to be addressed. Foster Swift assists companies by assessing the international legal environment for the company and product.

### Legal Essentials to Export Toolkit

This educational program has three components designed to help businesses identify legal and compliance issues that are relevant as businesses pursue exporting opportunities. Four full-day group seminars\* will take place at different Foster Swift office locations, with video conferencing capabilities available at other office locations.

#### 1. Trademark/service mark readiness

This session is designed to help businesses assess their readiness to pursue international protection of their name and trademark/service mark.

- Importance of protecting intellectual property, specifically name and trademark, in international markets

- Process and time frame for protecting intellectual property internationally
- Resources available to help conduct due diligence
- Tips on avoiding costly litigation and disputes related to U.S. and international trademark infringement

#### 2. Export control overview compliance training

This is an initial training session to cover a basic overview of U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Commerce, and U.S. Department of Treasury export-related regulations.

- Export control regulations and how they might affect their business and the business of their customers and those in their supply chain
- Processes and procedures that can help ensure compliance with applicable regulations
- Trade embargoes, sanctions and restricted party screening
- Resources available to help comply with export related regulations

#### 3. Foreign agent/distributor contract checklist

This session will help attendees gain and understanding of U.S. and international laws that may affect their relationship with an agent/distributor for foreign sales.

- Top 12 most important topics to address in a foreign agent/distributor agreement
- How U.S. laws and regulations will impact the conduct of an agent/distributor for foreign sales
- Resources available to help with due diligence regarding agent/distributor relationships
- How to avoid costly fines and penalties for violations of U.S. laws and regulations

\* A limited number of one-on-one meetings may be available.