Going from strength to strength

Continuing support from UK Trade & Investment’s in-country teams and Defence & Security Organisation has helped Essex-based company Hidden Technology to increase its international profile and secure millions of pounds of export business.

Extensive support

UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) has worked extensively with Hidden Technology over the years to identify potential target markets and raise its profile with potential new clients. In the US, for example, UKTI DSO helped the company to identify key players and made introductions to all the main US prime contractors, which ultimately resulted in a multi-million pound contract from the US Department of Defense for an ultra-secure tracking system.

Hidden Technology continues to use UKTI’s services to build an understanding of new markets and meet potential clients. The company recently used UKTI’s Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) to explore the state of the market in Trinidad and Tobago, the Netherlands and Belgium. It is also planning on entering Brazil and Mexico in the near future, and UKTI has presented several briefings on these markets.

“We know how crucial it is to research markets and identify key players before deciding whether to make a move,” says Chris. “The key to reaching out to potential new clients is to get the best possible intelligence. This is something that UKTI does fantastically well. UKTI’s regional desks and UKTI DSO have become our first ports of call for advice and guidance. Their ongoing support in helping us to secure long-term supply contracts with high-status organisations, such as the US Department of Defense, has really helped us get our international business off the ground quickly.”

Security showcases

Exhibiting at industry events is a key way for Hidden Technology to raise its profile and meet potential clients.
In 2011, the company attended the Special Operations Forces Industry Conference (SOFIC) in the US alongside UKTI DSO, minimising the cost of exhibiting, while maximising exposure to full effect under the UKTI banner.

In the last three years, UKTI and UKTI DSO have also provided support for the Security and Policing Exhibition, organised by the British Home Office. Carefully targeted foreign delegates are invited and escorted by members of UKTI DSO who ensure that the correct level of visitor attends the exhibition. Hidden Technology has achieved significant international business as a direct result of these initial focussed introductions.

“Our industry is so sensitive that it would not be appropriate for us to advertise our products,” says Chris. “That’s why opportunities for us to exhibit and showcase our systems in front of the right people are so crucial. The Security and Policing Exhibition in March 2013 was our busiest ever, with a blend of end users and budget holders that were actually able to commence the purchasing process at the event itself. We have already issued quotations to several potential customers, which will hopefully translate into firm orders during 2013.”

Queen’s Award win

In light of Hidden Technology’s overseas success, UKTI suggested that it apply for the Queen’s Award for Enterprise in the International Trade category. The company was subsequently awarded The Queen’s Award for Enterprise: International Trade 2012.

In February 2013, Lord Green, Minister of State for Trade and Investment visited Hidden Technology’s offices in Essex, taking the opportunity to congratulate the company on its recent Queen’s Award success.

“The support we have had from UKTI and UKTI DSO has been a major contributor to our global success, and to our winning the Queen’s Award for Enterprise in International Trade,” says Chris. “This is the most prestigious award for a British company, and we are incredibly proud to be a recipient. It was also a real honour and privilege to host Lord Green at our offices. A personal visit by a man of his standing and importance demonstrates that the UK Government is really active in assisting UK businesses in their export activities. We truly value this support and will continue to work with UKTI and UKTI DSO as we expand further into new international markets.”

How we can help - UKTI DSO services

The UK Trade & Investment Defence & Security Organisation (UKTI DSO) provides support to companies through a range of services.

DSO can help companies interpret customer requirements, highlight business opportunities, and assist with company marketing activities. It can also provide specialist advice and access to the wider UKTI network in the UK and overseas, making use of embedded UK military personnel, and defence and security experts based in several UK Embassies, High Commissions overseas, and other Government Departments.

For the full range of DSO Support and Services, please visit http://www.ukti.gov.uk/defencesecurity/uktidsoservices.html

The Export Advantage

International trade has always played an important role in the UK economy; today it accounts for a third of the nation’s GDP. For individual UK businesses, especially in times of economic uncertainty, exporting can make the difference between profit and loss.

Companies that start to export see a 43 per cent increase in productivity and are 11.4 per cent more likely to stay in operation. These companies have a stronger financial performance and achieve growth levels and economies of scale that would not be possible domestically.

Exporting can be challenging, but the benefits are far greater than the challenges. Exporting means that the commercial lifespan of products and services improves, as well as the returns on R&D investments. Trading overseas also means that revenues and profits are more reliable and resistant to inevitable economic changes.

For more information, please go to www.ukti.gov.uk/export