

Preparing to export to Pakistan

Taking a strategic approach

British companies are advised to undertake as much market research and planning as possible. Doing business with Pakistan can be challenging, but taking a strategic approach is the key to making the process manageable. The first step is to spend some time thinking about your company's Pakistan objectives.

The ten questions listed below should help you to focus your thoughts. Your answers to them will highlight areas for further research and also suggest a way forward that is right for your company. You may then want to use this as a basis for developing a formal Pakistan strategy, although this may not be necessary or appropriate for all companies:

Your Aims

- Do you wish to buy from Pakistan, sell to Pakistan or both?
- Do you wish to establish your own company presence in Pakistan, for example through a representative office, limited liability company or joint stock company?
- Do you need to be involved in Pakistan at all?

Your Company

- What are the unique selling points for your product or service?
- Do you know if there is a market for your product in Pakistan?
- Do you know if you can be competitive in Pakistan?
- Do you have the time and resources to handle the demands of communication, travel, product delivery and after-sales service?

Your Knowledge

- Do you know how to secure payment for your products or service?
- Do you know where in Pakistan you should start?
- Do you know how to locate and screen potential partners, agents or distributors?

It's unlikely that you will have the answers to all these questions at the outset and these 'knowledge gaps' should form the basis for further research and investigation.

Consultation and bespoke research

You will be able to find out some free information from carrying out desk research. As a minimum, visitors to Pakistan are advised to undertake as much market research and planning as possible prior to their visit. It would also be helpful to consider travelling to the market more than once to establish appropriate contacts and develop a feel for the market in terms of conducting business. Utilise the strengths of the dedicated in-country UKTI Pakistan team prior to your visit to discuss your objectives and the help that you may need. Their services include the provision of market information, validated lists of agents/potential partners, key market players or potential customers, establishing the interest of such contacts in working with the company, and arranging appointments. In addition, they can also organise events for you to meet contacts or promote a company and its products/services.

Help available for you

You can commission a UKTI Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) to help you enter or expand your business in Pakistan. Under this service, UKTI's Trade and Investment Advisers, who have wide local experience and knowledge, can identify business partners and provide the support and advice most relevant to your company's specific needs in the market.

Other UKTI services

UKTI assists new and experienced exporters with information, help and advice on entering overseas markets such as Pakistan. These services include:

- An Export Health Check to assess your company's readiness for exporting and help develop a plan of action;
- Training in the requirements for trading overseas;
- Access to an experienced local International Trade Adviser;
- Specialist help with tackling language and cultural issues when communicating with Pakistani customers and partners;
- Advice on how to go about market research and the possibility of a grant towards approved market-research projects;
- Ongoing support to help you continue to develop overseas trade and look at dealing with more-sophisticated activities or markets;

- Information, contacts, advice, mentoring and support from UKTI staff in the UK and their network of staff in Pakistan;
- Support to participate in trade fairs in Pakistan;
- Opportunities to participate in sector-based trade missions and seminars;
- Access to major buyers, local governments and supply chains in Pakistan;
- Advice on forming international joint ventures and partnerships;
- Exploratory visits to Pakistan;
- Alerts to the latest and best business opportunities.

For more information on any of these services, contact your local UKTI International Trade Team. See: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-trade-investment

Private sector assistance

In addition to UKTI services, a wide variety of nonsubsidised private sector advice is available for companies wishing to do business in Pakistan. This ranges from the business services provided by the big international professional services firms to specific services provided by specialist operators. Companies such as PwC, KPMG, Deloitte and HSBC provide reports on the Pakistan economy.

The range of services available from the private sector includes company structuring advice, marketing, website design, partner selection, due diligence, legal services, advice on intellectual property rights and outsourcing. Some consultancies also offer more in-depth assistance on developing a strategy for Pakistan and operational management.

Source - UKTI

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