



Assessment for New Exporters

A questionnaire for new exporters to determine export readiness. It provides an initial assessment of exporting needs and capabilities.



Exporter Assessments

Many businesses could be exporting, but view the process as burdensome or don't know where to start. This questionnaire includes areas to consider when determining your level of export readiness, and provides an initial assessment of your exporting needs and capabilities. Many of these questions will guide you to our [Exporting Basics Video Series](#) with more information and resources on exporting.

Does your company have a product or service that has successfully sold in the domestic market?

A product or service's success in the domestic market is a good indicator of its potential for export success. If your product or service is untried in the domestic marketplace, you could benefit from concentrating on domestic sales first. In the meantime, view [Strategic Reasons to Export](#) to learn how your business might benefit from exporting.

Is your company's management committed to developing export markets and willing and able to dedicate time and resources to the process? Does your company have an export business plan with defined goals and strategies?

Management commitment is the number one determining factor for export success, and an essential part of any export plan. Many companies begin export activities haphazardly, without carefully screening markets or options for market entry. Without an export plan, better export opportunities are often overlooked. Start by formulating a well-thought-out export strategy. View [My Export Plan](#), [Research the Global Market Place](#), and [Select Initial Markets](#).

Does your company have sufficient production capacity that can be committed to the export market? Will financing be required for any expansion?

Can your company meet the increased demand it is creating? More space and equipment might be required to manufacture for the specific countries (which often have their own product standards and regulations) you are selling to. Financing might be needed to include any product modification costs. See [Determine Your Export Potential](#) to explore.

Does your company have the financial resources to actively support an increase of product sales in targeted overseas markets?

A big hurdle for many companies is market development, as it requires funds for activities such as international travel, trade missions, trade show participation, market research, and business training. However, federal government export financing programs can assist. View [Obtain Financing](#) for links to the Trade Finance Guide.

Do you have both U.S. and foreign Intellectual Property Protection for your product?

U.S. businesses should know that protecting your intellectual property domestically does not extend your protection internationally, so companies should do their research first before exporting. View [Protecting Your IP Abroad](#).

Does your company have capabilities to modify ingredients and product packaging to meet foreign import regulations, cultural preferences, and survive competition?

Selecting and preparing your product for export requires both knowledge of the product and the unique characteristics of each target market. However, before the sale can occur, your product(s) may need to be modified to satisfy buyer tastes, or regulatory requirements in foreign countries. View the Plan Your Market Entry Strategy video on the [How to Export Video Series](#).

Does your company have appropriate knowledge in shipping its product overseas, such as identifying and selecting international freight forwarders and freight costs to ensure customs clearance overseas?

When shipping a product overseas, be aware of packing, labeling, documentation and insurance requirements. Also, be familiar with methods of shipping, import rules and regulations of foreign countries, and export regulations of the U.S. government. Visit the [Navigate Shipping and Logistics](#) page to begin.

Does your company have knowledge and experience of export payment methods, such as developing and negotiating letters of credit?

Experienced exporters have extensive knowledge of export payment mechanisms, extend credit cautiously, and monitor older accounts. A U.S. Commercial Service International Company Profile (ICP) provides key information for credit checks. See the [Methods of Payment](#) page and [Get Export Counseling](#) for guidance.

Does your company have knowledge and understanding of U.S. export controls and compliance?

Check to see if your product might require an export license, particularly if your product has military or dual military/civilian use. There are several U.S. government agencies that oversee licensing requirements for distinct categories of products. Visit [U.S. Export Regulations](#).