



Quarterly Newsletter September 2004

Chairman's Update

Dear Members,

The Midlands World Trade Forum now has over 400 members from across the West Midlands region, an extremely useful knowledge base for exporters to network and learn from each other.

August has seen the joint affiliation between the Midlands World Trade Forum and Coventry International Trade Forum, good news for members of both organisations as now members have access to both MWTF and Coventry International Trade Forum's seminars and events as well as the opportunity for existing members to network with companies located in the Coventry & Warwickshire area.

The Quarterly Members-

only Networking events have now proved to be a tremendous success with all events so far filled to maximum capacity. These meetings not only provide members with the opportunity to network with over 40 member companies, but also give the opportunity to learn from the experiences of Exporters who have been successful selling to various international markets.

Don't forget the next members event will take place on the 8th October—focussing on South-East Asian Markets. I look forward to seeing you there.

Yours faithfully

Peter Mathews CMG
MWTF Chairman

Emerging Markets!

Romania, Turkey and Bulgaria are all candidates for the next round of EU Accession in 2007.

One lesson the UK has learnt from the recent EU Accession countries, is that we need to access these markets well in advance of becoming members of the European Union.

In recognising this, we are hosting a seminar on the 19th October 2004 providing speakers representing all three countries and

case studies from companies who are already supplying these markets.

The seminar is free of charge and will take place at Birmingham Chamber of Commerce 07.30—10.00 am.

Further information on the event is available on the MWTF website—www.mwtf.org.uk in the 'events' section.

Alternatively please contact Claire Gamage, MWTF Coordinator on 0121 607 1759.

The Midlands World Trade Forum is sponsored by The Royal Bank of Scotland and the UK Trade & Investment Passport to Export Programme



Tapping into new market knowhow

Overseas markets are set to become even tougher for UK firms and exporters will need all the help they can get. But one MWTF member has called on the experience of another member to help him when he needed advice on

Mexico.

Graham Porter found assistance through the MWTF website 'member search' facility by searching on 'Mexico'.

Mr Porter, Sales Director of Birmingham-based Currie & Warner

is widely experienced in doing business in North America and Europe, and used the MWTF online database to obtain advice on Mexico. He said "Recently, a colleague from a sister company within our group had contacted

Cont over page...



Access the 'member search' facility via www.mwtf.org.uk/members.asp

Tapping into new market knowhow continued

me, to ask if I had any specific knowledge of some particular trading conditions, which he had encountered, for selling their products into the Mexican market.

While I explained that I had virtually no experience of selling into Mexico, I suggested that I would try to approach a fellow member of the MWTF, whose company, according to their membership details, had

experience in that market.

I got in touch with a member company in Dudley, who I had never even spoken to before, and their principal contact there was extremely open and helpful—agreeing to talk directly to my group company colleague in order to see if he could assist in that particular question that had been raised.

Certainly we could

helpful contacts at the local chamber of commerce, or the specialist market desk for Mexico at UK Trade & Investment in London –k but is it not more beneficial to hear from a fellow exporter who has actually been at the sharp end of the market, with first-hand experiences?"

To access this facility, visit www.mwtf.org.uk/members.asp where you can search by country, sector or company name. The results will also display the level of experience each

Online
Networking

@

www.mwtf.org.uk

Forthcoming Events

MWTF Members Event— "South East Asian Markets"

8th October, The Village Hotel, Dudley
Facilitated Networking Session combining company case studies based around the issues surrounding exporting to South-East Asian Countries.

Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey— Get Your Share of these markets!

19th October 2004, Birmingham Chamber of Commerce
Seminar and Networking opportunity for companies who are looking at the next round of possible EU Accession countries including a visit from Mr Quinton Quayle—HM Ambassador, Bucharest.

West Midlands International Trade Dinner

11th February 2005, Hyatt Regency, Birmingham
Prestigious Awards Dinner celebrating local success within International Trade.

Forthcoming Trade Missions, Export Explorers and Business Visits

Africas

• South Africa

14-18 February 2005 (Contact Mark Eaton tel: 02476 654295)

Asia

• Pakistan

7-10 February 2005 (Contact David Frost tel: 0121 450 4205)

United Nations/Aid Funded Business

• New York

6-9 December 2004 (Contact: Claire Gamage tel: 0121 607 1759)

• Geneva (incorporating mini-exhibition)

31 January—2 February 2004 (Contact: Claire Gamage tel: 0121 607 1759)

Visit www.mwtf.org.uk for latest International News from the BBC

Date for your diary...

The MWTF will be holding its Annual General Meeting on 19th November 2004 at Birmingham Chamber of Commerce & Industry, 75 Harborne Road, Birmingham, B15 3DH (07.30—09.30 hrs).

The AGM will give members the opportunity to voice their views on the MWTF, and nominate themselves or vote for local representatives to sit on the MWTF Management Board. Full details of the election process and AGM will be posted to all members shortly.

US-UK 'special relationship' still strong

MWTF members marked US Independence Day with an event teaching them how best to sell their goods across the Atlantic.

Members came together to learn how to take advantage of the historic "special relationship" between the two countries.

Among the subjects up for discussion were freight and distribution, market entry strategies, legal issues and, at a time of the increased terrorist threat, how to deal with Homeland Security.

Ben Morby, an MWTF board member who chaired the event, said: "The US is a huge market that can be treated as a series of regional markets with varying characteristics.

"The historic ties with Britain mean the US is very receptive to our goods and despite the distance, selling there is not as difficult as it may

seem."

The top three tips to come out of the facilitated discussion groups were:

Consider the company's resources before considering entering the US Market – a huge amount of time and finance needs to be invested.

Use available organisations such as your local international trade team, the British American Business Council, the Midlands World Trade Forum for experienced export advice, MANA (Manufacturers' Agents National Association) and the British Midlands Office in Chicago to research the market.

Appreciate the size of the US and the difference in culture between each region, e.g. dealing with a businessman in New York is totally different to dealing with one in Texas!



Left to right: Ben Morby (MWTF board member), Graham Porter (Currie & Warner), Dawn Stanyer (British American Business Council), Claire Gamage (MWTF) and Michael Allchin (Birmingham Assay Office).

Other speakers included Michael Allchin from the Birmingham Assay Office who provided information on how to break into the US market, and Graham Porter from manufacturer Currie & Warner, who explained how his company has achieved success in the US.