



EXPORT COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW POWERS INTERNATIONAL SALES FOR WEST SUSSEX FIRM

LITTLEHAMPTON-BASED POWERBRONZE INTERNATIONAL DESIGNS STYLISED COMPONENTS TO CUSTOMISE AND ENHANCE MOTORBIKES. AS ITS NAME SUGGESTS, IT IS AN EXPORT-FOCUSED BUSINESS WITH AN INTERNATIONAL DEALER NETWORK.

SITUATION

In early 2009, the company undertook a review of its export operations and strategy as it prepared to expand its overseas sales operations into new territories.

Hazel Clifford, Sales Office Manager, explained: "We were already enjoying considerable success in markets such as the USA and Australia, with around 55 per cent of

our sales originating from overseas. However, we plan to double our revenues in 2010, with a significant proportion of that growth coming from international expansion – taking a step back to review our international strategy, particularly our web presence, was a crucial first step."

In particular, having registered 42 international domain names Hazel was keen to find ways to enhance Powerbronze's use of the web, both as a way of driving international sales, but also as an element of its international dealership strategy: "The plan was to roll out websites to new territories over time. I wanted advice on how best to drive traffic to local sites and on ensuring they are highly effective export communications tools."

Hit the world running ^{UK}

SOLUTION

In May 2009 Powerbronze approached UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) for assistance, and signed up to the Passport to Export programme. International Trade Adviser, Stephen Golding, introduced Hazel to the Export Communications Review service, delivered by the British Chambers of Commerce on behalf of UKTI.

The Review saw Hazel and her team work closely with Sarah Carroll, a Registered Export Communications Consultant. Sarah undertook a comprehensive on-site evaluation of Powerbronze's export communications, focusing in particular on the company's international websites.

Hazel said: "Working with Sarah was fantastic. She is incredibly knowledgeable on all aspects of export communications, and provided us with some really valuable advice and resources."

OUTCOME

Hazel immediately took on board Sarah's recommendations - modifying existing international websites, using new techniques to drive traffic to them, and building Sarah's advice into plans for a raft of new international sites.

Hazel said: "The Export Communications Review introduced me to a series of online marketing tools. For example, we are using Google Adwords to help us attract more visitors, monitor conversions and assess the geographical success of our websites."

Since the Review, Hazel has also set up five new international websites. All provide core information on the business and its products in local languages and link back to a local distributor for customer communication, sales and fulfilment. Hazel said: "Following Sarah's advice, we ask our distributors to translate content for local sites, or at least check and localise existing translations, which ensures the language we use is right for our audience and does not fall foul of local cultural nuances."

There is no doubt that this work to effectively localise Powerbronze's overseas websites and actively promote them has borne fruit in terms of site traffic and sales. Overall, export orders have grown by 40 per cent year on year with 62 per cent order growth in the USA a real highlight.

The company has enjoyed a strong start in new markets too. It has received 167 orders via its new Spanish site since February 2008, compared with two or three per year prior to its launch. In Australia, another newly launched site has delivered 156 orders amounting to total sales of AUS\$35,000 since June 2009 and revenues continue to grow steadily.

Hazel said; "Our international websites are central to our export strategy and our export communications, especially since they link directly to our local distributors. As a result of the Export Communications Review, we now have a highly efficient template that we can adapt and re-use every time we develop and launch a new international website."

THE EXPORT COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW

An Export Communications Review costs £500 + VAT, however SMEs may be eligible for a UK Trade & Investment subsidy of £350 towards the cost of the review.

For more information, please visit www.britishchambers.org.uk/ecr or contact the ECR team at the address below.

You can contact your local ECR Consultant Sarah Carroll who covers London and East Sussex on +44 (0)7711 132179 or sarah.carroll@ecrconsultants.org

The British Chambers of Commerce manages the Export Communications Review on behalf of UK Trade & Investment.

UK Trade & Investment is the United Kingdom Government's lead organisation for supporting UK companies in overseas business, and attracting inward investment.

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