

**BECOMING EXPORT-READY**

Exporting is not a quick fix for growth or poor local sales. It requires a strategic intention to implement, and dedicated efforts in assessing the potential in export markets. It's therefore important to commit to the process.

That said, there is a lot of assistance available to businesses interested in exporting their products. If you do want to tap into these options, however, you need to ensure you have all the detailed information at hand that will be asked of you, and this means you need to have covered all of your bases.

Nadia Rawjee, director of strategy and finance at Uzenzele Holdings unpacks the seven key steps to becoming export ready.

**Select and research countries and potential export markets**

- » Desktop research: Understand different countries and how the markets work by reading industry news and papers, trade data and other material online.
- » Field research: Given the ability to connect with global buyers through digital and electronic means, a fair amount of research can be done from the office with email, video-conferencing and other tools to connect and communicate with prospective buyers before even setting foot on a plane.
- » If you're already exporting to a specific country, ask yourself, "how can I strengthen the market?" Can you look into the wider region?

**Export readiness assessment**

- » Are you in a position to finance your export endeavours for a period of 12 to 24 months without necessarily generating any immediate income?
- » Do you have any prior experience in exporting, or do you have experts that are able to assist you?
- » Is your firm established and successful locally?
- » Are you competing well with imported products?

**Obtaining finance for your exports and managing FOREX risks**

- » You'll need to budget time and money to research, promote and become export ready and then you'll need to be ready to finance the export orders and manage exchange rate risks.
- » Make use of the dti's export marketing incentive EMIA to assist you exhibit and promote at up to six tradeshows per year.



**Nadia Rawjee, director of strategy and finance at Uzenzele Holdings**

**CHECKLIST DTI ASSISTANCE**

- You must be an export registered company
- You must have traded for 12 months in South Africa
- Your products must be acceptable, conforming to the requirements of your industry
- You must be a local manufacturer or a trader of locally manufactured products

**THE dti's SUPPORT INCLUDES:**

- » Cost of the exhibition stand
- » Freight of samples to the expo
- » Plane tickets
- » Accommodation

**For a full list of South Africa's export councils, visit [www.thedti.gov.za/trade\\_investment/export\\_organisations\\_contacts.jsp](http://www.thedti.gov.za/trade_investment/export_organisations_contacts.jsp)**

Visit: [www.dti.gov.za](http://www.dti.gov.za)

**Promoting your products in foreign markets**

- » Make a hitlist of ten or more prospective buyers, agents or distributors of your product.
- » Advertise and promote to potential buyers before leaving the country and make use of tradeshows to seal the deal.

- » Promoting your products in a country should be well planned, and exhibiting at trade shows in foreign markets allows for your product to be on display.

**Selling in foreign markets**

- » Sell through local distributors or agents who have access to the buyers of your products.
- » Pricing must take tariffs, marketing and distribution costs into account.

**Handling, export logistics and paperwork**

- » Deciding between air, rail, road or sea is dependent on various factors, including the weight of your product, the infrastructure available both in South Africa and in the destination country which will affect cost, distribution lead times, the value of your product and the life of the product.
- » With all these options, and more, it's best to have a freight forwarder that has experience in transporting your type of product to the destination country to ensure the best logistics solution and that all paperwork is in place.

**Collections and international receipts**

- » Remember that there are different monetary regulations in various countries, including tax considerations.
- » There is also a significant amount of paperwork attached to the process of receiving payment from foreign countries.
- » When researching countries, assess whether there is liquidity or if getting money out is a challenge – this is particularly important when exporting into developing markets.

For those already exporting, being more focused and deliberate about expanding your markets, making use of financial support – such as EMIA – and exposing your business networks to exports will show growth in your business and is a crucial element to the growth and re-industrialisation of the South African economy.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**  
**Export Marketing & Investment Assistance Scheme (EMIA):**

[www.thedti.gov.za/trade\\_investment/emia.jsp](http://www.thedti.gov.za/trade_investment/emia.jsp)

**Empowerment Fund:** [www.nefcorp.co.za](http://www.nefcorp.co.za)

**dti:** [www.dti.gov.za/trade\\_investment/nedp.jsp](http://www.dti.gov.za/trade_investment/nedp.jsp)