

Top 10 Export Errors: Common Mistakes & Pitfalls

Unsuccessful or struggling exporters often make common mistakes:

1. No Market Research

The business takes insufficient time to collect background information about the target markets, such as consumer demand, the competitive landscape, local import laws, customs requirements and other important factors.

2. Lack of Commitment

When problems arise, the exporter does not have the determination or financial resources to deal with start-up problems.

3. Poor Alliances

The exporter pays too little attention to the qualifications of a foreign agent or distributor.

4. Eyes Too Big

The exporter tries to enter too many different markets too quickly.

5. Low Priority

The exporter uses foreign markets as a back-up to the domestic market and abandons exporting when the local economy booms.

6. Poor Distributor Relations

The exporter treats foreign agents or distributors as minor partners, giving preference to domestic distribution channels.

7. Rigid practices

The exporter balks at modifying products in compliance with foreign regulations and cultural preferences.

8. English Only

Producing documents in one language, the exporter wins few friends in foreign markets.

9. No Export Expertise

A novice exporter should not attempt to do everything without help and should hire freight forwarders, customs brokers and other specialists to ensure technical details are correct.

10. Going It Alone

Opportunities are missed when the exporter doesn't investigate potential strategic partnerships, joint ventures and technology exchanges.