Overview

Exporting is, and will always be, vital to Scotland’s economic growth. We have world renowned industries trading successfully all over the world but we need to do more to enable more businesses to export and diversify into new markets. We know that many potential exporters are dissuaded from taking the first steps through fear of the unknown.

This workshop will address some of the common barriers that companies face, and will demonstrate how these can be overcome. Attendees will be equipped with the knowledge and connections that will enable them to make informed decisions about the opportunities that are open to them.

It will focus on the practical advice and enabling support that is available, plus it will examine case studies of Scottish companies in different sectors that have successfully broken into new overseas markets.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- What more can be done to encourage and enable businesses to export?
- What are the most common barriers to exporting and how can these be overcome?
- How can the current business support landscape (Business Gateway, SDI, SCC network and other private and public sector bodies) be simplified for businesses to navigate it easily?
- What is the best way to exchange knowledge, best practice, innovation and practical advice by current exporters, to support and encourage new exporters on their journey and existing exporters to increase their exports?

The purpose of this workshop is to:

- Address some of the common barriers to trade and demonstrate how these can be overcome
- Share knowledge and connections to help businesses make informed decisions about the opportunities that are open to them, through the network of organisations eg SCC, SDI, SE and others
- Provide practical advice and real-life examples of companies that have successfully managed to enter new markets and trade internationally by utilising available support

About SCC

Scottish Chambers of Commerce Network comprises 27 local Chambers of Commerce with a membership of over 12,000 businesses and is part of the International Chambers of Commerce Network, making it the largest B2B organisation in the world. SCC is identified as a strategic partner to deliver elements of the Government’s Export Growth Plan.

Background

Exporting plays a fundamental role in the Scottish economy. It creates jobs and helps our economy to grow whilst helping businesses improve productivity and become more resilient.

As a nation, Scotland exports over £30bn worldwide, however our exports as a percentage of GDP have remained largely flat over the past 20 years. In response to this, Scottish Government has established A Trading Nation, “a plan for growth that will underpin Scottish
Government’s efforts to substantially grow Scotland’s exporting performance. The plan uses an evidence-based approach to identify the challenges and opportunities to exporting. The plan also identifies next steps and actions to achieve the goal of increasing exports from Scotland, in particular looking to increase exports as a percentage of GDP to 25% by 2029.

**Key Challenges and Opportunities**

From research and market intelligence, the following **barriers to trade, objections and concerns from** potential first-time exporters are often identified:

- Uncertainty around Brexit/future trading relationship with the EU
- Exchange rate volatility
- Tariffs (taxes or duties on imports/exports)
- Admin requirements or regulatory barriers in UK or overseas
- Lack of free trade agreements (FTAs) or lack of preferential

Though Scotland's export performance has continued to improve in absolute terms since 2005, data shows that more can be done to internationalise our economy to the extent that we can and should. Being able to overcome these barriers would deliver results that can be transformational for the Scottish economy.

“A change in approach” has been established within **A Trading Nation** to shift the dial on our export performance. In order to create a diverse, more resilient export base we need to get current exporters to export more, but also encourage new businesses to export.

**Key Deliverables of the Export Growth Plan include:**

- the recruitment of 15 new in-market specialists
- a partnership to be built between the Scottish Chambers of Commerce to promote international Chamber to Chamber connections and coordinate a series of inward & outward trade missions
- work to expand the Scottish Trade Envoy network
- develop a new digital portal which supports exporters, providing support to trade activities
- continuing the First Minister’s Export Challenge
- work to revamp the Global Scot network with new digital platform and promotional material and the launch of a campaign of awareness-raising to make sure Scottish companies know about and can access, export finance support.

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