



Export Express

Insights to Accelerate International Expansion



Our Mission: Help Manufacturers “Spend time *Selling* to Distributors versus *Searching* for Distributors”

Sell to 96 Countries

Looking for qualified international distributors? Export Solutions’ leading distributor database supplies information on more than 8,300 distributors in 96 countries. The database features filters that allow you to screen distributors by categories such as Confectionery, Natural Food, Beverage, or Made in the USA (or Italy, UK, or Germany). New! Export Solutions’ retailer database now tracks 2,300 retailers in 96 countries. Free samples at www.exportsolutions.com.

Prime Prospects 2020



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Searching for New Distributors?

There are 196 countries in the world. How many are you selling to? In the past, export managers impressed management with claims of sales to 20, 50, 100 countries or even more. Welcome to 2020, when export success is tracked by countries where your brand captures tangible market share, not opportunistic sales measured in pallets. Emerging markets and e-commerce have created strategic opportunities for “new sales to old markets.” Middle class population now exceeds three billion worldwide, with emerging market consumers living better and eating healthier. E-commerce provides an exciting channel to kick start new sales, as online retailers remain open to accepting your entire product range. E-commerce has no physical space limitations and costly entry fees of traditional supermarkets.

Prime Prospects Defined

2020 is the year to tackle prime prospects. Prime prospects are defined as

countries where many exporters are present, but your business is underdeveloped relative to country size and potential. These countries typically feature large (30 million +) populations and growing economies. Many companies have underperformed in prime prospect countries, distracted by the illusion of BRIC riches. Veteran export managers learned the hard way on difficulties of marketing new meal solutions to Chinese and Indian consumers and now have shifted focus to more promising countries.

Success Recipe

Prime prospect countries are open for business, receptive to international brands. The key is to identify one or two prime prospect countries as 2020 focus markets. Match the priority with a stronger investment plan, more frequent visits, and distributor alignment on your higher aspirations and scorecard objectives.

Prime Prospects

1. USA (Europeans)
2. Mexico
3. Vietnam
4. Colombia
5. Spain
6. Saudi Arabia
7. Philippines
8. Japan
9. Peru
10. Poland

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In some cases, you may need to upgrade to a stronger partner, with broader brand building and customer penetration capabilities. Simply asking a distributor to “sell more” with the same resources will not yield the desired results.

United States

The USA opportunity is bigger than all BRICs combined for most international brands. USA population exceeds 330 million people and features big stores open to new brands that are willing to “pay their way.” Amazon represents a new growth customer for all international brands. USA consumers are adventurous, with most families regularly consuming Italian, Mexican, and Asian food.

Most European brands claim sales to the states, unfortunately at levels well below potential. Cracking the code requires a channel and region specific strategy supported by targeted investments in trade promotion and a manager based in the USA to oversee it all. International companies must treat the USA as a prime prospect, not just another export market.

Mexico

Mexico surpassed Japan to be the world’s 10th largest country, with a population of 130 million. Mexico’s economy ranks 15th in the world, bigger than Saudi Arabia! Mexico benefits as a supply depot to the healthy USA market. Many industrial manufacturers construct enormous factories in northern Mexico to take advantage of lower costs and skilled workforce, less than one day transit time from the USA. Walmart, HE Butt, and Costco maintain an impressive presence, investing for the future.

Vietnam

Vietnam emerges as a bright spot in the southeast Asia VIP (Vietnam, Indonesia, Philippines) cluster. Business is booming, as certain industries shift manufacturing there to avoid the China trade brawl. Count on another year of 6% growth. New middle class consumers are flooding into modern trade. However, per capita GDP remains low, hovering around \$6,900 for the population of 97 million.

Colombia

Population now exceeds 50 million people, bolstered by almost 1.5 million Venezuelans. Colombia is a diverse country, from the sprawling cities of Bogota and Cali to historic sites like Cartagena and Medellin. 2019 retail sales increased an average of four percent, a good performance.

Spain

Record tourism and export levels, coupled with revived domestic consumption, helped drive Spain’s economic recovery. Spain is the top performer of Europe’s major economies, with another year of growth close to three percent. Mercadona is a tough chain to crack, but there are plenty of other retailers like El Corte Inglés and Taste of America that showcase international brands.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi remains the big prize in the gulf, accounting for 50% of region volume. Market conditions have stabilized, although the pay for performance environment still exists. Senior executives need to challenge their team to get out of Dubai and focus on Saudi Arabia and the wealthy 34 million population!

Philippines

Recently, I completed several distributor search projects in the Philippines. I continue to be impressed by this country with a young population of 108 million. The economy is a top global performer, with another year of 6% GDP growth. Philippines is attractive for USA exporters. In 2019, it will rank in top 10 worldwide, with purchases exceeding 3 billion dollars. Supermarket shelves are stuffed with popular USA brands, many arriving without the benefit of a local distributor. Significant potential exists for those willing to make an effort. Export Solutions’ database tracks 98 Filipino distributors.

Japan

Japan’s 127 million citizens had been ignored by many international suppliers, as exporters chased a China Gold Rush that never occurred for most. Now, the pendulum has shifted back to Japan. Japan claims a sophisticated food culture, with deep pocketed consumers. Japan features more than 1,000 gourmet stores like Seijo Ishi, Kaldi, and Meidi-Ya, focused on imported brands. Worth a fresh look.

Peru

Peru is an exciting culinary destination with Central and Maido ranking in the top ten restaurants worldwide. Peru’s growing population exceeds 33 million, also benefitting from new arrivals from Venezuela. GDP growth has slowed from its peak, but is still projected to reach 3.9 percent this year, the top performance in South America. The big 3 supermarket retailers maintain a rational approach to market entry.

Poland

Poland is a bright spot in Europe, with expansion rate of 3.8% expected. Poland’s economy has consistently outpaced the 2% benchmark for the euro zone. Poland’s 38 million citizens enjoy increasingly better lifestyles, albeit their income still lags behind the EU average.

Watch List

1. Qatar
2. Ireland
3. Dominican Republic
4. Panama
5. Ethiopia

Watch List

Qatar is surviving its regional isolation and is building full steam ahead in preparation for the 2022 World Cup. Ireland is doing well, helped by a Brexit scare bounce. Ireland also has the most to lose from a disruption in trade with their biggest customer. The Dominican Republic and Panama remain bright spots in the Caribbean basin. Everyone dreams of big business in Africa. Ethiopia’s population is now 112 million, with another year of eight percent growth. Still tough to access, but probably some first mover rewards for the pioneers.

Find Distributors – Prime Prospect Countries

Export Solutions’ distributor database covers 96 countries and more than 8,300 distributors and importers of supermarket products. The database features filters which allow subscribers to search by country, category, or brand. Export Solutions completed more than 200 consulting projects across Asia, Americas, Middle East, Europe, and of course the USA. Brands work with us as an “export accelerator” to quickly partner with leading distributors. Contact us to learn more about how Export Solutions can leverage our distributor contacts for your benefit in 2020.