



Export Express

Insights to Accelerate International Expansion



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

Looking for New Distributors?

How about 9,000? Export Solutions’ distributor database has helped 3,000 brand owners in 14 years speed up the process of finding qualified distributors. Our database covers more than 9,000 distributors of supermarket and drug store type products in 96 countries. Search by country, category, brand name, or country of origin. Experts for Europe, Middle East, Latin America, and Asia with complete regional coverage. “Spend time selling to distributors versus searching for distributors.”

In This Issue

Page 1
Managing the New Normal

Page 2
Brandscaping

Page 3
**Distributor Supplier Relations
Managing the New Normal**

Page 4
2021 E-Commerce Game Plan

Page 6
Who, What, & Where

Pages 9-11
New Ideas for New Business

Managing the New Normal



Vaccines approved! Most forecast freedom of movement by summer 2021. 2020 forced us to deal with the realities of commercial distancing, the practice of brand building while separated from consumers, distributors and retailers. What did we learn? How can we emerge stronger than before? AC Nielsen labels 2021 the time to “rebound, reboot, and reinvent.”

Fast and Frequent Face Time

Web meetings will continue to replace frequent flier points. They can be arranged quickly and inexpensively and don’t require dealing with luggage and time zone changes. However, the novelty is over and a new protocol has been established to regulate this powerful tool. Web meetings are more personal than a phone call and allow more face time without a quarterly market visit. Winners in 2021 will schedule virtual meetings to train distributor sales personnel, connect

corporate office functional experts with distributor peers, and participate in overseas buyer meetings.

Analyze Why, Not What

Many industry players experienced unprecedented swings in 2020 business performance. Big brands surged while challenger brands suffered. Export managers were held hostage by plant capacity, begging supply chain contacts to ship overseas orders. Many invested time for deep dive analysis of shipment trends. The key is to understand consumer behavioral shifts impacting performance not just the boxes moved through the system. What is the “why” behind the buy?

E-Commerce Pivot Point

Baseline e-commerce sales surged by 40% or more. 2020 was the pivot point, and Covid lockdown accelerated

continued on page 7

Managing the New Normal

continued from page 1

e-commerce development by at least two years. E-commerce needs to be treated by all as a growth channel, with dedicated key account experts and scorecards. Apply the new best practices for brand promotion and digital marketing. Learn about all e-commerce platforms from Amazon and Alibaba to click and collect and direct to consumer.

New Work, New Team

Do we need to teach the young people about the business? Or do we need to learn from them? Our roles and responsibilities have been redefined, but for many companies the work is still executed by the old team. How many people under the age of 30 are active in helping you? Find web savvy, recent college graduates, to teach you about e-commerce, influencers, and digital marketing.

Brandscaping

The gift of time allowed us to dedicate more time for thinking, less to travelling. This is the period to refresh your web site, create a new credentials presentation, and design a web training program for your overseas partners.

Food 2.0

What's for lunch? Home office workers with no commute think creatively about menu ideas. People have rediscovered the joy of cooking. This extends to traditional comfort foods to experimentation with modern ingredients. Marketers must think laterally about meal solutions not just about their own product.

Strategic New Business Development

There is evidence of discipline in the establishment of new brand owner and distributor relationships. Distributors are more selective, looking to pioneer brands that match aspiration with

investment in marketing support. Our Export Passport system classifies brand owners and distributors on a rating scale. This provides clues for each side to pursue partners that are the right fit.

Intimacy Lessons

How do you maintain distributor intimacy without frequent travel? Create a plan to connect on a regular basis "beyond email." Vary the format to include web meetings or a gift of an item with your company logo on it. Schedule quality time with a week in a priority country when visits are allowed. Or invite the distributor for a VIP experience at your corporate headquarters. The best strategy to maintain intimacy is to respond immediately in times of crisis. Great customer service is always valued.

Web Store Checks

Retail store visits served as a major source of category information for your brand and a competitor. Today, retailer e-commerce sites supply visibility to basic assortment and pricing information with a few mouse clicks. The information does not replace the energy and feel of an actual store check. However, it's tough to beat the convenience and speed of a web store check. Export Solutions' retailer database covers 2,600 retailers, with direct links to web shops. Our retailer database represents a bargain at \$495 for one year access.

Emerge Stronger Than Before

2020 taught us new skills and served as a loud wake up call regarding developing e-commerce capability with our distributors. There are new skills required to build brands in emerging channels. The new year appears as a logical period to review your entire distributor network. Separate the group into "leaders," "performers," and "laggards." Upgrades may be necessary to establish a team to help you emerge stronger than before.

Talk to an Expert

- International Strategy Road Map
- Fix Problem Markets
- Entry Plans
- Find Distributors in 96 Countries
- Export Workshops
- Motivational Meeting Speaker



Contact Greg Seminara at greg@exportsolutions.com to discuss your business development project.

www.exportsolutions.com