



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 9,500? Export Solutions distributor database has helped 3,000 brand owners in 15 years speed up the process of finding qualified distributors. Our database covers an average of 85 distributors per country of supermarket type products for 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.”

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**“The Right Way” –
New Country Launch**

Mexi-Grow



Nearshoring to Mexico is accelerating following the supply chain crisis during the pandemic era. Manufacturers of all types are rapidly shifting production from Asia to take advantage of shorter replenishment cycles, low labor costs, and favorable trade conditions created by the US-Mexico-Canada agreement (USMCA). Bustling Monterrey appears a mere 130 miles away from the USA border. This creates an ideal factory location when measured against 8-10 week transit times from Asia.

130 Million Reasons

Many brands appear exhausted by chasing BRIC dreams in China and India. Along the way, many have undervalued the “miracle called Mexico.” Mexico is blessed in many ways: beautiful beaches stretched along 5,600 miles of coastline, rich mineral resources (oil) plus a convenient location just south of the USA border. Mexico’s population of 130 million ranks 10th in the world, roughly equivalent to the UK and France

combined. GDP per capita of \$19,100 signals a good level of purchasing power, eliminating comparisons with poor countries like Indonesia and Vietnam. Another factor is more than 2,500 large format stores including Walmart, Costco, and HEB.

4 Regions – 32 States

Mexico features 32 states

Mexico Fast Facts

Population	130 Million
GDP per capita (ppp)	\$19,100
Population under 25	46%
Supermarkets	2,500
Distributors	192

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Tackling a Tough Country

Does anyone know of an easy country to develop in 2023? The days have disappeared when a leading USA or European brand could simply “ship and sell” into an emerging market. In the past, many companies blindly pursued the famous BRIC countries, mostly with disappointing results. Exporters learned the hard way that market entry requires more than a pretty package and nice story to succeed.



Export Solutions
Distributor Identification Experts

Today, countries like Saudi Arabia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Turkey, Brasil, and Mexico appear as attractive prizes. Every European company claims sales to the USA, but most are severely underdeveloped relative to category potential. Winning in complex markets is possible! Tabasco and Barilla represent patient, family owned, companies that enjoy leadership positions worldwide.

A game changing goal is to double your international business in three years. Consider Export Solutions five strategies for accepting the challenge of creating critical mass in a tough country.

1. Research Local Results of Companies “Like You”

Overseas supermarkets in tough countries serve as the best teachers. Walk the entire store searching for other brands from your country or aisle that enjoy strong presence. What is their price premium? Who is the distributor (check sticker)? Has the brand adapted their formula or package to sync with local taste profiles? Learn from local experts versus massive PowerPoints touting the “attractiveness of India.”

2. Models Matter

Brand owners may need to search beyond traditional distributors in large, complex countries. Other route to market models may include partnerships with local manufacturers, contract packers, or even the establishment of subsidiaries. Another option is to acquire the local category leader. “If you can’t beat them, buy them.”

3. Launch the “Right Way”

Imagine the strategy required for a new brand to gain traction in your own country? Apply the same fundamental principles overseas. Export Solutions has identified 30 elements in a “Right Way” launch. This includes consumer research, sampling, digital marketing, and a memorable distributor launch program.

4. Customer, Region, or Channel?

Segment the target country into smaller, more manageable opportunities. “From high class to mass.” A common strategy is start with upscale supermarkets and retailers serving expatriate communities. A metro area like Sao Paolo, Jakarta, or Chicago can total more consumers than an entire European country. E-Commerce represents another on ramp option in Asia.

5. Boots on the Ground

Your investment in human resources may equal the importance of trade spending. Hire a team or at least one person that wakes up every day in the country. Your country manager can be a “local” veteran or expat who has credibility with headquarters. Plan to visit at least four times per year.

As we dream of success in large countries, it is important to remember that the word “impossible” contains the word “possible.”

Good luck!

Greg Seminara
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Strategic Services

Contact Us for
Export Solutions

1. Identify Best in Class
Distributors: 96 Countries
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Workshops
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Let’s Get Started
5. New Market
Prioritization
and Launch Plan
6. Personal Distributor
Introductions:
96 Countries
7. Walmart International
8. Distributor Contracts,
Margins, and Fees
9. Meeting Speaker
10. International
Strategy Expert

Can We Help You?

Distributor Search Helper for:



Your
Logo
Here



Procter & Gamble



Johnson & Johnson



Recent Distributor Search Projects

Asia	Europe	Middle East	Latin America
Australia	Germany	Israel	Argentina
China	Ireland	Kuwait	Brazil
Indonesia	Netherlands	Qatar	Colombia
Japan	Nordics	Saudi Arabia	Costa Rica
Malaysia	Spain	UAE	Ecuador
Philippines	United Kingdom	North America	Mexico
Singapore	Africa	Canada	Panama
South Korea	South Africa	United States	Peru



Export Solutions
Distributor Identification Experts

Call the Export Accelerator!

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

www.exportsolutions.com

Getting Listed: 2023

Every supermarket buyer appears obsessed with sales and profit targets just like you are. Their objective is to squeeze as much productivity out of every square meter of shelf space allocated to their categories. As salesmen tout their products miracle benefit's, the real question on every decisionmaker's mind is "How will this new product perform and help me versus what is currently occupying that shelf space now?"

Good Fit

Each retailer claims a place in the market spectrum. This ranges from formats appealing to high-income, gourmet consumers, to stores targeting budget-conscious families. Another key factor is segmenting supermarkets willing to pioneer a premium innovation versus those stocking brands with a proven sales record at other local chains. Align your brand attributes with a retailer's marketplace ambition and you will improve your chances.

Trend is Your Friend

Buyers remain on a mission to identify new trends and category innovation. What does your brand offer that is currently not available on the shelf? Can you share professional research to support your ideas? Is the opportunity high growth or niche? "Me too" bores everyone!

Data, Data, Data

Retailers manage categories, not brands. Companies that discuss their business opportunity, supported by deep dive analysis on category impact, are viewed strategically. Many vendors speak only of their own story and dream without factually creating a convincing case on the size of the prize for the customer.

Consumer Marketing Plan

You may have a great product, but is it supported by impactful marketing? This appears obvious, but many exporters ignore the fundamental requirement of brand support. In many countries like the USA, you can buy your way on to the shelf as a first step. However, you need a credible plan to generate meaningful sales turnover. Creative sampling events are a preferred vehicle. Digital marketing is targeted and comparatively inexpensive.

Trade Promotion

Trade promotion budget remains a critical listing factor for all buyers. Each chain sponsors proven programs to drive incremental sales at their stores. Companies willing to participate signal that they are serious about partnering. No one gets excited about periodic 10-20 % off price promotions.

Track Record

Multinational companies find it easier to gain listings due to a strong track record of success. What is your company reputation?



Have you been successful in adjacent countries or similar retailers? Are you worth "betting" on?

Unlimited Space-E-Commerce

Cyberspace offers unlimited opportunity to stock new brands, unburdened by the restrictions of physical store size. Amazon is now the world's second largest retailer. E-commerce appears as a channel to test and learn. E-commerce has experienced high growth everywhere, validating its place in the strategic mix. An important reminder is that rules are different in this channel, especially marketing and promotion tactics.

Service Level

A key buyer assessment metric is service level. Reliable suppliers promising delivery within 48 hours with 98% service level are heroes today. In many countries, companies with large merchandising teams are appreciated helping maximize in store execution and compliance. Buyers hate out of stocks and empty shelves more than anything else.

Who is Your Team?

Is your team a preferred supplier? Most buyers have favorite distributors or brokers who have earned their trust through years of demonstrated support. Your team extends beyond your dedicated key account manager. This includes your marketing manager, supply chain, customer service, trade marketing, distributor owner, and you!

What is the Size of the Prize?

Ultimately, you will enjoy success getting listed with a convincing argument and impressive data around the size of the prize. Everyone may appear friendly, but the real winners are those who help the buyer achieve their personal objectives for profitable total category sales growth. View our Buyer New Item Scorecard for your performance.

Visit Export Solutions website for 15 free Export Guides on international development and best practices for working with distributors.
www.exportsolutions.com

Buyer New Item Scorecard Score _____

Criteria	Weighting	Rating	Evaluation Factors
Product Innovation	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High growth category or mature? • Taste or performance • Differentiation vs. current assortment • Consumer research insights
Saleability	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Packaging attractiveness • Retail price point vs. category norms • Sales turnover at other market retailers
Promotion Plan	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of investment...\$\$\$ not percentage • Consumer marketing: sampling, digital • Trade: listing fees, trade allowance level • Participation in retailers' programs
Team	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributor/Broker: category experts? • Logistics service level • Merchandising team to service stores
Size of the Prize	20%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incremental category sales • Incremental category profits/margin • Realistic projections (data)
X Factors			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I love/"believe" the story? • Does the item sync with corporate goals? • Will this product appeal to our customers? • Will it sell better than the item it replaces?

Greg's Ten Tips

1. Good news travels fast and bad news travels slowly
2. If you want to know what's really going on, spend a day visiting stores
3. Pick up the phone and call a friend or business partner versus email
4. Be positive. Think, "why not?"
5. Results are directly proportionate to your investment: Marketing, People, Focus, Time
6. A distributor (or Broker) "respects" what the Brand owner "inspects"
7. Shipment numbers rarely lie
8. Put it in writing
9. If two people agree on the principle of a deal, you can usually work out the financial terms
10. There is more in common with industry practices across the globe than differences. Brand owners everywhere desire more shelf presence and retailers demand more discounts. Recognize the differences, but focus on the universal requirement for superior products, marketed at a fair price.

20 Tips on Gaining Buyer Attention

It's tough to secure buyer Face Time, even as an existing supplier. Read Export Solutions 20 Tips on gaining buyer attention.

Tactic	Comments
LinkedIn	Connect via LinkedIn. Post success stories. LinkedIn messages go to buyer's personal email.
Gift Box	Mail samples in attractive gift box. Include high-quality pen with your company logo.
Sampling Pop Up	Retailers' headquarters or nearby train station.
Embassy	Invite buyer to special event at your embassy.
Photo Book (Apple?)	Share category conditions from their chain or nearby country.
Paid Consultant	Conduct independent buyer category research. Organize / pay through external agency.
CEO Visit	Bring your CEO to meet your buyer.
Mail	Correspond via DHL / FedEx. Receives special attention.
Charity	Support retailer's charity. Sponsor / attend their gala event.
Multifunctional Contact	IT, supply chain or marketing department.
Category Research	Share professional category research.
Company Newsletter	Add buyer to distribution list for your company newsletter.
Retailer CEO Speech	Pay retailer CEO or merchandising head to speak at your annual sales meeting.
Celebrity Chef	Dinner with celebrity chef at Michelin star restaurant.
Factory Tour	Invite buyer to VIP factory tour.
Book	Mail quality photo book from your home country.
Government Trade Support	Government trade officers maintain excellent buyer contacts.
Billboard	Near retailer's headquarters.
Sporting Event	Obtain VIP tickets for the big game.
Adjacent Categories	Create synergies with other categories on buyer's desk.

Mexi-Grow

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segmented into four district commercial zones. The wealthy North region, close to the USA border, enjoys the highest purchasing power and best acceptance of USA products. Popular beach destinations like Cancun and Cabo San Lucas feature substantial foodservice opportunities. Mexico City is the capital, with a population exceeding 22 million. European brands perform better in this business hub. The southern border areas remain poor, a stark reminder that Mexico is not just glitzy new shopping malls

Consumer Habits

Thank you Mexico for "Taco Tuesday" and the global popularity of their special cuisine. As you stroll the aisles, other categories are stocked with familiar global names. In fact, categories like cereals, snacks, and carbonated beverages enjoy some of their highest category development in the world. A recent trip revealed mainstreamed acceptance of natural and organic food products, with broad assortments, at least in Mexico City. Club stores like Sam's and Costco serve as showcases for most leading USA brands.

Walmart = \$37 Billion Leader

Walmart operates more than 2,900 stores across 5 formats, registering an impressive \$37 billion in sales. Some may

be surprised to learn that Bodega Aurrera is their leading banner, with more than 2,300 value-oriented outlets. They also operate 303 Supercenters and 101 upscale supermarkets called Walmart Express. Watch out: A standard service in Mexico includes dedicated merchandisers responsible for shelf stocking. Walmart may tempt some companies with direct purchases, but your brand may not escape the back room without merchandisers. Our retailer database tracks 70 unique banners in Mexico.

192 Distributor Options

Export Solutions distributor database covers 192 distributors in Mexico. This includes a broad assortment of category specialists of all sizes. Many enjoy large portfolios of USA or European favorites. Another option is to partner with a large Mexican producer who may be willing to pioneer your brand. Note: Most distributors are based in Mexico City or Monterrey, close to leading customers. Beware of border "traders" with elaborate stories and an appetite for English language packaging.

Lessons Learned

Many brands fail in Mexico. Post mortem analysis usually shifts blame directly to the manufacturer. Mexico is a large

country that politely requires an amount of TLC. Cost of entry is rational, with a discount structure built in the price list. However, manufacturers should hire a local manager or at least commit to visit four times per year. A year round, in store activation plan, is required. It is not an extreme challenge for a good brand to gain access to the shelves of the retail giants. However, without investments in marketing and "pull" activities, your brand will soon disappear. This all sounds fundamental, but you will be shocked by the number of overseas brands that sell to a Mexican distributor at dead net price and never visit and wonder why their sales are so low.

Mexi-Grow- Next Steps

The future looks bright for Mexico. Its 130 million consumers maintain familiarity with many global brands from cable television or from more than 40 million people of Mexican descent living in the USA. Many international brands sell to Mexico, but the business is small relative to potential. Time to evaluate strategies to accelerate your business before the country is spoiled by retailers with excessive cost of entry requirements. Export Solutions has conducted more than 10 Distributor Search projects in Mexico. We can help!

Top 10 Mexican Retailers (source: Export Solutions Retailer database)

Retailer	Owner	Format	Stores
Bodega Aurrera	Walmart	Multiple	2,300
Sams Club	Walmart	Club	168
Walmart Supercenter	Walmart	Hypermarket	303
Walmart Express	Walmart	Supermarket	101
Soriana	Soriana	Multiple	801
La Comer-City-Fresko	La Comer	Supermarket	80
Oxxo	FEMSA	Convenience	21,000
Chedruai	Chedruai	Supermarket	338
Costco	Costco	Club	40
HEB	HEB	Supermarket	76

431 USA Customers

How many are you selling to?



Export Solutions Retail Database Covers 431 Customers

291 Supermarket Chains

31 Natural Foods

46 Convenience Chains

28 Wholesalers

Features

- ✓ Up-to-date store counts
- ✓ Direct link to retailers' web sites
- ✓ Financial information for publicly traded retailers
- ✓ 126 Canadian retailers plus 2,300 retailers in 94 other countries
- ✓ Free sample access

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*Country Listing Map – USA Example**

“Required Template for Every Country”

Retailer	Stores	SKU 1	SKU 2	SKU 3	SKU 4	SKU 5	Comments/Plans
Walmart SC	3,572	x	x	x			SKU 1, 2, 3 stocked at only 2,000 Supercenters
Costco	585					x	Special SKU 5 for Costco
Kroger	2,726	x	x	x	x		Category Review March
Albertsons	2,278	x	x	x			New shelf set
Publix	1,335	x	x	x			BOGO Ad November
Ahold-FL	2,051	x	x	x	x		New SKU 4 listing
HEB - USA	365	x	x	x			Category Review March
Meijer	266	x	x	x	x		Holiday Display Program
Shop Rite	361	x	x	x	x		New SKU 4 listing
Giant Eagle	216	x	x	x			SKU 4 delisted

*Instructions: List top 10 customers for every country. List all your key SKUs (items).
 “X” indicates item stocked at customer. Blank space represents a distribution void.

Create Your Own Export Library



Distributor Search Guide



Export Handbook



Selling to USA Handbook



Distributor Management Guide



Finance & Logistics



*Idea Guide:
New World – New Business*



*Export Treasure Chest
My Favorite Templates & Forms*



*People Power
Strong Teams Build Great Brands*



All guides available free at www.exportsolutions.com in the *Export Tips* section.

USA: 10 Priority Investments

USA development remains a top opportunity for many European brands. Most companies sell to the USA, but maintain sales levels far below potential. The USA is complex, with 12 trade channels, 431 retailers, 50 states, and food brokers controlling sales. Which investments will deliver the greatest return?

Investments	Strategy	Insights
USA-Based Sales Manager	Mandatory oversight of your USA development.	Base salary range: \$130 to \$200 K. Location: Atlanta, Chicago or close to importer.
Broker Network	Upgrade channel and regional broker networks.	Brokers sell to most customers, not importers. Bonus brokerage model works!
High Class Retailers	Build sales base with laser focus on retailers catering to upper income consumers.	Whole Foods, Fresh Market, Harris Teeter. "From High Class to Mass."
Trade Promotion	Customer specific promotions.	Invest in retailers preferred promo vehicles. 15% TPR promotions do not excite anyone.
E-Commerce	Hire Amazon broker to create visibility. Establish budget for pay-per-click investment.	Amazon: primary source for "homesick" consumers looking for their favorite brand.
Export Solutions	USA market development helper for leading European brands.	Point of difference: Sales oriented. Targeted, logical road maps; USA solutions.
Supply Chain	Analyze options to create more cost efficient supply chain. "Factory gate to store shelf."	Consider USA factory or co-packer. Regional third-party distribution centers.
Sampling	Maximize consumer trial. Direct to consumer, multi-product, sample boxes are popular.	Everyone loves free trial sizes. Costco sampling drives sales volume.
Data	Leverage category data to sell your brand. Nielsen and IRI are respected.	USA buyers require detailed analytics for new listings, not just a nice story.
Retail Safari	Spend 25 percent of your time visiting stores. "Retail University."	"Retail Reality", not board room promises. Atlanta, Dallas, LA = real USA (not NYC/Miami).

Hire a USA Expert

- USA strategy recommendation
- Category analysis and plan development
- Identify priority channels, regions, and retailers
- Broker/Distributor identification specialist
- Have a USA pro with 20+ years experience on your team



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

“The Right Way” – New Country Launch

Retail buyers and distributors are receptive to brand launches from multinationals. Why? Multinationals succeed, as they introduce new products “The Right Way.” Export Solutions recaps 30 components of launching “The Right Way.” Exporters create magic with limited budgets! Winners check as many boxes as possible on “The Right Way” scorecard.

Product	Retailer
<input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful innovation – not “me too”	<input type="checkbox"/> Boost category sales, margin, and profit
<input type="checkbox"/> Consumer market research insights	<input type="checkbox"/> Syndicated data (Nielsen) – category facts
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical confirmation of product differentiation	<input type="checkbox"/> Invest in retailer “push” programs
<input type="checkbox"/> Reasonable retail price – premium (not sky high)	<input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 high value promotional events per year
<input type="checkbox"/> Test market results – similar country or retailer	<input type="checkbox"/> Retailer VP, distributor CEO at intro call
Marketing	Excitement
<input type="checkbox"/> 360 marketing plan: TV, in-store, social, PR	<input type="checkbox"/> Launch party – memorable location
<input type="checkbox"/> Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> PR, social media, trade press
<input type="checkbox"/> Social media	<input type="checkbox"/> Celebrity endorsement
<input type="checkbox"/> Displays: end of aisle and shelf blocks	<input type="checkbox"/> Distributor sales contest
<input type="checkbox"/> Special offers – retailer fliers	<input type="checkbox"/> Donation to local charity
Team	Scorecard
<input type="checkbox"/> Distributor – best in class, category expert	<input type="checkbox"/> Year 1: invest; year 2: break even; year 3: profit
<input type="checkbox"/> Local manager – launch oversight	<input type="checkbox"/> Sales volume (retail sell-out)
<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing, social media, PR agencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Market share
<input type="checkbox"/> Brand/technical resource from headquarters	<input type="checkbox"/> Retail availability (weighted distribution)
<input type="checkbox"/> Total distributor engagement: reps. to CEO	<input type="checkbox"/> Year 2 commitment and enthusiasm

We've Got You Covered!

Distributor Database Coverage

Confectionery & Snack
2,813 Distributors

Ambient Beverage
1,759 Distributors

International Foods
3,471 Distributors



Europe
3,155 Distributors

Asia
2,073 Distributors
17 Countries

USA Importer/Distributor
637 Distributors

Latin America
1,608 Distributors

Middle East
963 Distributors
12 Countries

9,500 distributors – 96 Countries

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