



# Export Express

Insights to Accelerate International Expansion



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

## 1,200 USA Experts

Export Solutions features the most extensive database of USA food brokers, distributors, and importers. Our proprietary information covers experts dedicated to every USA trade channel, major customer, and region. This includes specialists for Italian, Spanish, British, German, Asian and Hispanic food plus other supermarket categories. Export Solutions tracks more than 572 food brokers, as well as 645 food importers and distributors. These lists can be purchased individually or as part of an annual subscription to our database which covers 96 countries and more than 9,600 distributors. Access now at [www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com).

## Grab your Slice of the American Pie



### In This Issue

- Page 2  
**HomPort Strategy**
- Page 3  
**Buyer New Item Scorecard**
- Page 4  
**Export Solutions:  
15 Common USA Issues**
- Page 5  
**USA Acceleration Strategy**
- Page 6  
**USA: 10 Priority Investments**
- Page 8  
**10 Questions for  
Every Broker Interview**
- Page 10  
**Right Way Launch**
- Page 11  
**USA vs. Europe**

The USA has served as a growth market for European traders for more than 400 years. Waves of immigrants have landed on the USA’s welcoming shores. Early arrivals hailed from the United Kingdom and France. Slavery delivered more than 600,000 Africans between 1700-1820. The industrial revolution lured people from European countries including Italy, Germany, Ireland, Greece, and Sweden. The last 50 years have redefined the USA again with almost 65 million citizens of Hispanic descent and 20 million of Asian heritage. The result is a melting pot of cultures which creates a unique appreciation of food from every corner of the world.

#### USA Today

The USA is the world’s largest consumer market with 336 million people and retail sales exceeding one trillion dollars. It’s a young country, with 31% of the population under the age of 25. Many exporters make the mistake of labeling the USA as a “mature” market, with low

growth expectations. The reality is that the USA offers some of the best opportunities on the planet. This fact is validated by the combination of a large, wealthy population, that is adventurous in food habits. The retail industry is robust, with large stores bursting with food choices from around the world.

Export Solutions recognizes that most overseas companies maintain some business in the USA. Brands remain frustrated by their inability to generate sales beyond “homesick expats” to mainstream American consumers. Fortunately, the USA is an “open market” with proven strategies for brand expansion, even with premium pricing strategies. Export Solutions’ role is to serve as an accelerator for international companies aiming to grab a “larger slice of the USA pie.” Our popular recipe includes practical commercial strategies, insights, contacts, and facts for international brands looking to drive their USA sales to the next level.

*continued on page 7*



# HomPort Strategy

2024 is the year to pursue your American Dream. 336 million people, big stores, and adventurous consumers with spending power establish the USA as the top opportunity. Most international brands are available sporadically in the USA, but sales levels fall far below potential. Many companies fail to achieve their ambitions, as they treat the USA as "Export Country #31," with a "copy/paste" approach from exports to smaller countries.



**Export Solutions**  
Distributor Identification Experts

HomPort reflects the fusion of success strategies from your home base adopted for an export model. This incorporates fundamentals like market research, product innovation, and a strong local sales team. In practice, it signals a unique model for the USA, with stronger organizational and investment commitments delivering a larger size of the prize.

## Strategic Services

Contact Us for  
Export Solutions

1. Identify Best in Class Distributors: 96 Countries
2. Best Practices Export Strategy
3. Distributor Management Workshops
4. Export 101: 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

### 1. Range Review

Overseas companies usually default to their best sellers from back home. However, what may sell well in your country may represent an unfamiliar taste or meal pairing for the USA. Consider a product range just for the USA, with bold, colorful graphics to justify a premium pricing positioning. Herdez, a billion-dollar Mexican food player, created a winner with their Guacamole salsa range.

### 2. Target Upscale Retailers: "From High Class to Mass."

The USA features more than 460 retail banners. Focus your activation efforts at high-profile "influencer" retailers that are viewed as new product pioneers. Consider Kings, Roche Brothers, Fresh Market, Heinen's, Harris Teeter, Central Market, Gelsons, and Erewhon.

### 3. Hi-Low Promotions

One report revealed that over 40% of USA purchases were stimulated by a price discount. In the USA, consumers are geared to stock up via "Buy One Get One" and "2 for \$5" type offers. Consider higher everyday prices with deep discount promotions four times per year.

### 4. Are Your Brokers the Right Fit?

Some international brands work exclusively through their importer, missing the vital connection to the broker who owns the customer relationship. Massive national brokers like Acosta and Advantage with 20,000 employees and armies providing store-level merchandising service offer a different model than niche specialty food brokers selling through UNFI and Kehe. Aim for motivated local brokers with experience executing trade promotion strategies and offering retail coverage.

### 5. Boots on the Ground

You must have someone based in the USA working with your brokers "day to day." Options include a dedicated (or shared?) employee or a broker management group that offers scale to emerging brands. Locate your person in a central hub like Atlanta, Dallas, or Chicago with optimal time zones and easy flight connections.

The USA offers potential to become the "second home" for companies willing to follow the clear path to market development. International companies need to reflect on the lessons learned from their biggest country and apply these fundamentals to the USA. Success in the USA represents a larger new business opportunity than all other "export" countries combined for those committed to the principles of HomPort!

**Greg Seminara**  
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*"Spend Time Selling to Distributors versus Searching for Distributors"*

## Buyer New Item Scorecard Score \_\_\_\_\_

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

### 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 requirements for innovative products supported by marketing and trade investment.

## Export Solutions: 15 Common USA Issues

| Key Issue   | Solution  |
|---|---|
| Difficult to manage USA from abroad.  | Hire one national sales manager to manage business.<br>Or consider contract sales management team like Synergy Sales.                                     |
| Headquarter authorization for my brand, but I can't find it at retail.                | Hire a broker for store level coverage.<br>Store level distribution may be 60% or less without broker coverage.   |
| My brand sells well in New York, but not elsewhere.                                   | New York is unique and represents only 7% of USA population.<br>Markets like Atlanta, Dallas, Phoenix & Seattle are more representative.                  |
| Slow sales from the shelf for my product.   | Try a coupon (digital or on-pack).<br>Increase TPR allowance level from 10% to 25%.   |
| Walmart doesn't want my product.  | Walmart sells basic items for value conscious consumers.<br>Recommended focus: upscale retailers Whole Foods, Fresh Market, Harris Teeter, Kings, Gelsons |
| My broker is a "one man" organization.  | Large Brokers (Advantage or Crossmark) have 20,000 employees.<br>Find a broker offering retail coverage and category analysts.                            |
| My Importer (or Broker) claims sales to Kroger or Albertsons, but sales are low.      | Check number of chain stores where your brand is authorized.<br>Kroger has 2,726 stores. How many are you in?   |
| Importer/Broker is not achieving objectives.  | Export Solutions provides independent guidance on assessing your business and providing realistic solutions.  |
| Secure distribution without paying listing fees.                                      | Target the ethnic channel and non-slotting retailers like World Market & Trader Joes.   |
| Fancy Food Shows not generating quality buyer contacts.                               | Try Exhibitions focused on your Category.<br>Sweets and Snacks for Confectionery, NACS for Beverages etc.   |
| Importer/Broker achieves results at East Coast supermarkets, but struggles elsewhere. | Appoint channel and customer specialists.<br>No one importer or broker is successful everywhere.  |
| How do I secure distribution at Costco?   | Great quality, large size pack, and commit to demos.  |
| Is Private Label or Foodservice worth the effort?                                     | Private label/ foodservice dominated by local producers.<br>Focus energy on upscale supermarkets first.   |
| I know a guy with connections at Kroger, Walmart, etc.                                | 200,000 + sales people in USA with customer relationships.<br>Partner with a "company" with valid business track record.                                  |
| Brokers are not interested in representing my brand.                                  | Offer to pay a minimum pioneering fee, with a success bonus.  |

# USA Acceleration Strategy

## Export Solutions Can Help

- **Analyze USA opportunity for your company:**  
Category review, gap analysis, and “size of the prize”
- **Next level development plan for brands already selling in the USA:**  
What’s working? What’s not working? What to do next?
- **Broker/Distributor/Importer Identification:**  
National, Regional, or Trade Channel specific solutions. Export Solutions database tracks 572 USA brokers and 645 distributors/importers.
- **Develop strategic plan for USA:**  
Priority brands, pricing model, regions, customers, and partners.
- **Are you ready for USA?**  
Getting listed: launch plan, company credentials presentation in USA format.



### 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  
(001)-404-255-8387 to discuss your  
USA development project.  
[www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)**

## 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, 463 retailers, 50 states, and food brokers controlling sales. Which investments will deliver the greatest return?

| Investments                    | Strategy   | Insights  |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>USA-Based Sales Manager</b> | Mandatory oversight of your USA development.   | Base salary range: \$130 to \$200 K.<br>Location: Atlanta, Chicago or close to importer.      |
| <b>Broker Network</b>          | Upgrade channel and regional broker networks.  | Brokers sell to most customers, not importers.<br>Bonus brokerage model works!                |
| <b>High Class Retailers</b>    | Build sales base with laser focus on retailers catering to upper income consumers.         | Whole Foods, Fresh Market, Harris Teeter.<br>"From High Class to Mass."                       |
| <b>Trade Promotion</b>         | Customer specific promotions.  | Invest in retailers preferred promo vehicles.<br>10% TPR promotions do not excite anyone.     |
| <b>E-Commerce</b>              | Hire Amazon broker to create visibility.<br>Establish budget for pay-per-click investment. | Amazon: primary source for "homesick" consumers looking for their favorite brand.             |
| <b>Export Solutions</b>        | USA market development helper for leading European brands.                                 | Point of difference: Sales oriented.<br>Targeted, logical road maps; USA solutions.           |
| <b>Supply Chain</b>            | Analyze options to create more cost efficient supply chain. "Factory gate to store shelf." | Consider USA factory or co-packer.<br>Regional third-party distribution centers.              |
| <b>Sampling</b>                | Maximize consumer trial. Direct to consumer, multi-product, sample boxes are popular.      | Everyone loves free trial sizes.<br>Costco sampling drives sales volume.                      |
| <b>Data</b>                    | Leverage category data to sell your brand.<br>Nielsen and IRI are respected.               | USA buyers require detailed analytics for new listings, not just a nice story.                |
| <b>Retail Safari</b>           | Spend 25 percent of your time visiting stores.<br>"Retail University."                     | "Retail Reality", not board room promises.<br>Atlanta, Dallas, LA = real USA (not NYC/Miami). |

### 463 USA Customers How many are you selling to?



### Retailer Database Features

- ✓ Includes 322 supermarket chains
- ✓ Direct link to retailers' web shops
- ✓ Financial information for publicly traded retailers
- ✓ 126 Canadian retailers plus 2,300 retailers in 94 other countries

Order now: [www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)



## Grab your Slice of the American Pie

continued from page 1

### Who is Your Food Broker?

Food brokers dominate sales through the USA supermarket channel. Brokers provide critical mass and local relationships. Services include key account sales, category analysis, trade marketing, and essential retail coverage. Store level representation is mandatory to insure compliance with headquarter authorized plans. Brokers range in size from the massive "Big 3" which feature more than 20,000 employees each to smaller specialists focused against one retailer. Export Solutions' database tracks over 572 brokers covering all markets and channels. Leading USA importers partner with brokers to provide the local expertise and store merchandising services required to succeed.

### Calibrate Expectations to Investment

Imagine approaching Carrefour, Rewe, or Tesco with a new brand with "net, net pricing" and limited marketing support. The USA market is no different, with a menu of account specific programs

required to build your brand. If you don't invest, you will always be anchored to niche status at best. Retailers such as Costco with their demo programs and Shop Rite retain good reputations for delivering incremental cases for your trade spending.

### Success Stories:

#### Barilla, Bonne Maman, and Walkers

Case studies exist for international brands to successfully develop the USA market. Barilla is the USA's leading pasta brand. Success strategy included building a USA factory to offer competitive pricing, highlighting their Italian heritage, and alignment with a leading USA food broker. Bonne Maman and Walker's trajectory followed patient paths. Both brands built a base in the upscale retail sectors, before moving mainstream to mass availability. A core message was the ability to upgrade category sales and profits with a high quality, premium option. Both companies invest in having USA based sales managers versus managing via remote control from Europe. Other European brands have

developed massive businesses through unique programs dedicated to Costco.

### USA Business – Next Level Strategies

European brands frequently hire Export Solutions to provide insights on taking their current USA business to the "next level." Our sales oriented approach involves market analysis, "lessons learned" and recommendations of sensible options to grow your business. Suggestions normally include laser focus on brand building at high potential customers plus best route to market partners (importers/brokers) by trade channel.

The USA still offers tremendous growth opportunities for many international brands. USA success requires the same formula as your home market. Higher levels of investment may be required to win in the USA. However, market dynamics are transparent and purchasing power ranks among the highest in the world. Contact Greg Seminara at [gseminara@exportsolutions.com](mailto:gseminara@exportsolutions.com) for more information on taking your USA business to the next level.

## Good USA Chains for International Brands

| Retailer           | Type        | Sales (billions \$) | Stores |
|--------------------|-------------|---------------------|--------|
| Ahold-Delhaize     | Supermarket | 55                  | 2,051  |
| HEB - USA          | Supermarket | 35                  | 340    |
| Meijer             | Supercenter | 24                  | 266    |
| Wakefern/Shop Rite | Supermarket | 19                  | 361    |
| Whole Foods        | Gourmet     | 18                  | 530    |
| Hy Vee             | Supermarket | 14                  | 285    |
| Wegmans            | Supercenter | 12                  | 110    |
| Giant Eagle        | Supermarket | 11                  | 216    |
| Harris Teeter      | Supermarket | 8                   | 260    |
| Sprouts            | Gourmet     | 7                   | 415    |
| Raleys             | Supermarket | 6                   | 121    |
| Fresh Market       | Gourmet     | 2.0                 | 161    |
| World Market       | Gourmet     | 1.0                 | 240    |
| Gelsons            | Supermarket | 1.0                 | 28     |
| Kings              | Supermarket | 0.4                 | 19     |

## 10 Questions for Every Broker Interview

### 1. Company History

How long have you been in business? Who are the owners? How many direct, “payrolled” employees do you have? Approximate annual sales volume?

### 2. Company Brand Portfolio

What are your top 10 companies/brands represented? For which channels do you represent each brand? How long have you represented each brand? Can you provide senior level references at each “brand owner?”

### 3. Key Account Buyers

Who is the buyer for our category at the largest retailers in your market? What other brands do you sell to our buyer? How frequently do you visit each major customer?

### 4. New Product Launch Success Story

Provide a recent example of a new brand launch success story. Key retailer acceptance? Cost of entry? How long did it take? Key elements of the success strategy?

### 5. Creative Selling

Provide an example where you took an assigned marketing/brand support budget and created a successful local program. How do you measure success?

### 6. Retail Servicing

How many full time employees do you have visiting retail stores? Are they located countrywide or just in the capital city? How do you measure a “good store” in terms of brand presence versus a “bad store?” Describe your retail reporting system.

### 7. People

Who would be our point of first contact? Would our contact also “sell” our brands to major accounts? What other brands is our contact responsible for? How do we insure that we get our fair share of attention from your sales force?



### 8. Business Planning Model

What would your action plan be if we made an agreement to start with your company? First steps? 90 Day Plan? Reporting?

### 9. Cost to Serve

How do you model your broker commission? Range of commission for our brands? How do you manage trade spending budgets?

### 10. Enthusiasm for our Company

Why is our brand a good match for your company? Why are you the best partner in the market for our brand? What commitment are you willing to make?

### *Greg's Guidance: Broker Assessment Criteria*

- ✓ History of Success pioneering other international brands
- ✓ Strong retail presence for current brands handled
- ✓ Logical launch plan, category analysis, and cost structure
- ✓ Positive references from existing brands and Dun & Bradstreet
- ✓ Enthusiastic about your brand and the business



# 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](mailto:greg@exportsolutions.com)  
to discuss your business development project.

[www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)

## *“The Right Way” – USA 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.

| <b>Product</b>   | <b>Retailer</b>  |
|--|--|
| <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, broker / distributor CEO at intro call |
| <b>Marketing</b>   | <b>Excitement</b>  |
| <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                           |
| <b>Team</b>  | <b>Scorecard</b>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Broker / distributor – best in class              | <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                    |

## *USA vs. Europe*

### *Differences – Industry Fundamentals*

|                           | <b>USA</b>                               | <b>Europe</b>                                  |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Store Size (avg.)         | 50,000 sq. feet                          | 20,000 sq. feet                                |
| Unique Items/store        | 40,000                                   | 18,000   |
| Private Label Value Share | 17%                                      | 25-50%   |
| Price List (wholesale)    | Same pricing model<br>for all retailers  | Price may vary by retailer                     |
| Annual Negotiations       | Category Review                          | Standard Practice                              |
| Organizational Model      | Food Brokers                             | Food Distributors                              |
| Data Transparency         | Account/Store Level Data                 | Country Level Data                             |
| Store Level Service       | Merchandisers required<br>for compliance | Conditions controlled by<br>Chain Headquarters |
| Retail Coverage           | National/Regional                        | Unique retailers by country                    |
| Digital Coupons           | Popular Practice                         | In-ad only                                     |

Note: Every market maintains differences. However, industry manufacturers everywhere share the common goal of securing more shelf presence while retailers demand more discounts.

# *We've Got You Covered!*

## Distributor Database Coverage

**Europe**

**3,280 Distributors  
34 Countries**

**Asia**

**2,081 Distributors  
17 Countries**

**Middle East**

**975 Distributors  
12 Countries**



**Confectionery & Snack  
2,853 Distributors**

**World Food &  
Beverages  
3,536 Distributors**

**USA Food Broker  
572 Food Brokers**

**Latin America  
1,663 Distributors  
29 Countries**

**Italian Food  
1,476 Distributors**

***9,600 distributors – 96 Countries***

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