

INTRODUCTION

A. Role of the South Carolina District Export Council

The District Export Council (DEC) is an organization of local community leaders from academia, business, and government whose knowledge of international business provides a source of professional advice to companies seeking to expand international sales. The DEC also serves as a communication link between the business community and the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce and supports the export expansion activities of the Department in a variety of ways.

DECs play a major role in the planning and coordination of export activities for their communities. As lead organizations serving the international business community, they are able to facilitate the development of an effective export assistance network.

This manual lists members of the South Carolina District Export Council who are willing to be mentors to South Carolina exporters. They provide, at no charge, advice and assistance on export related issues within their experience.

B. Reasons for Exporting

Exporting is crucial to the condition of the United States' economy. Increasing the amount of goods and services exported means increasing business growth, which in turn, means more jobs. U.S. businesses can no longer ignore the realities of international competition if they expect to gain market share and keep pace with their competitors.

There are numerous reasons for a business to consider exporting. Specifically, exporting can help a business to:

- increase sales and profits.
- gain global recognition and market share.
- reduce dependency on domestic markets.
- extend the sales potential of existing products.
- enhance potential for global expansion.

Likewise, there also exist several drawbacks to be considered when a business considers exporting. The firm may be forced to:

- forgo short-term profit with the hope of long-term gain.
- incur added administrative cost.
- modify the product or packaging.
- apply for additional financing.
- obtain special trading licenses.

There are no rules or guidelines that a company can go by to decide when is the right time to start exporting. Obviously, this decision must be made on a case-by-case basis.