



COMPANIES - SECTION 8

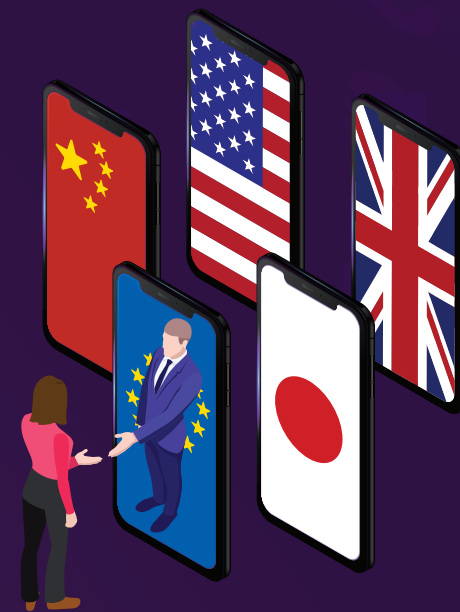
**EXPORT GROWTH IN A VIRTUAL WORLD:
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

Checklist for Companies Participating in a Virtual Trade Mission

2021 EDITION

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Preparation and clear communication are key to getting the results you want from any trade mission, virtual or face-to-face. By building a file on markets of interest, identifying key players and events in-market, you may be able to influence the choice of the next mission destination, or at least be out in front when it is announced. Work with in-market partners to gather market intel and profile agents, distributors, industry associations, media, social media groups, the start-up community and even community news, so you can comfortably discuss business when the B2B program unfolds. Work with the matchmaker, sharing insight and discussing prospects, the objective is winning customers. Accept responsibility for the outcomes and do the work to make it happen.



Identify markets of interest to your company. Suggest markets to government. Be ready when missions are announced. Keep building the profiles.

Be prepared to work in a different culture. Different technology preferences, different apps.

Determine if having digital collateral in another language would make you stronger.
Groom staff who speak the language.

Ask yourself how business is done in your industry in this new market.

Hi touch vs low touch / rich info.

Map out how logistics and payment would work in this market post pandemic.

Build a presence in the market by joining social media groups, follow companies, industry news.

Communicate with TCS and EDC in a coordinated manner, keeping government contacts in your home province in the loop, well in advance of a mission.

Develop your trade mission strategy based on the products and market segments and customer types you will be meeting. Write a thorough profile tailored to this mission.

Create a one-line positioning statement: your digital elevator pitch, enticing the prospective customer to click for more information about you. It should be simple, easily understood and informative.

Work with the matchmaker so they completely understand your objectives. Check in with them regularly. Share your intel as trust grows.

Tell the matchmaker you will be ready and available in case a company requests a meeting with you right away. In virtual trade, not all meetings need to be during mission.

Fine tune your sales pitch so it is informative, relevant, and provides solutions to problems identified. Practice so that you can be at ease and natural.

Use digital collateral to assist you, and make sure that it reaffirms your position as a quality company where customer service is paramount, and that delivers real value.

Practice some more, using the same technology you will use for the meeting, whether it is MS Teams, Skype, Zoom, or any other web conferencing technology.

Plan for technology failures. Double check everything to ensure they don't occur; but, have a contingency plan in case they do.

Study information on each company. Be prepared. A senior executive may sit in on the virtual meeting. Have selling messages tailored to the CFO; CTO; CEO, as well as the product user.

Follow all the established practices for clear communication, professional image, good lighting, technical preparedness, backup plans.

Consider having a colleague participate (in the background) so they can seek out information or digital assets for emailing in real time, or to share on screen during the call.

Set the call on your web conferencing subscription, so you can record it for reference and critique afterwards.

Have a clear objective for each call. You won't likely complete a sale but what milestone would you like to meet?

Have a follow up plan in place and get the company to agree that you will follow up with something, even if the call does not go the way you had hoped. Keep the door open.

Start on time, plan to finish in the allotted time and only go longer if they agree to extra time.

