



Overseas Market Introduction Service

UK Trade & Investment business advice and guidance

January 2007

Introduction

The Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) provides focused business advice and assistance to UK companies exploring new export markets overseas.

The service is offered by the government body UK Trade & Investment. It enables your business to make direct contact with expert staff in over 200 markets in the commercial departments of the UK diplomatic posts overseas, including British embassies, consulates and high commissions.

How will it help me?

With local language skills, market knowledge and extensive commercial and political contacts the diplomatic staff can provide expert advice and support for market visits.

OMIS will help your business take the first steps into new overseas markets.

How does it work?

In consultation with you, OMIS staff will tailor a work plan to your individual requirements.

The key steps in the process are:

1. After you contact OMIS it checks that you are eligible for the scheme and registers your business as a user.
2. You submit an application giving full information about your business, its products and services and existing markets.
3. You consult with OMIS overseas trade teams to prepare and agree a work plan.

4. You implement the work plan.
5. You receive a report.

For many of the UK's top export markets, you can deal with OMIS via a website designed to give you the greatest possible control over the process.

Using the website you will have fast access to reports and advice and you will be able to keep in touch even when you are overseas.

How much does it cost?

Because the requirements of different companies vary so much there are three levels of support offered by OMIS.

Level 1: £200

This level is designed to supplement the support provided as part of other Invest NI programmes, such as a trade mission, or to follow up earlier market information or contacts. Generally, you can expect to receive a market overview, a few good quality contacts and some mentoring or briefing.

Level 2: £420

Most businesses will find that this service level will give them the essential information and contacts needed to prepare for an effective first visit to the market. This level will provide for a higher number of contacts to be approached, with visits to the more promising ones, and a mix of mentoring or briefing.

Level 3: £850

This level helps businesses to look at a market in greater detail. It provides a comprehensive in-depth report, including validated contacts with visits to the companies, and usually a greater amount of in-market briefing and assistance.



Who is eligible?

Businesses with a UK address which produce, design or manufacture a product or service in the UK are eligible for assistance.

Other businesses which can demonstrate they are adding significant value or producing a significant benefit for the UK may also be eligible.

You do not need to be an Invest NI client to participate.

Becoming an Invest NI client

To qualify as an Invest NI client company your business must meet certain criteria.

You should typically be from the manufacturing or international tradeable sectors and be able to demonstrate that currently, or over the next three years, your business will have:

- total sales of over £100,000 a year;
- sales outside Northern Ireland of greater than 25 per cent of turnover **or** greater than £250,000 a year; and
- the capability and willingness to work with Invest NI.

If you are not an Invest NI client, but can satisfy the above criteria and would like to become one, please contact the Invest NI office in your area.

Full details can be found at www.investni.com.

Contact

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Invest Northern Ireland
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If you are an Invest NI client you may also contact your Client Executive if you feel your business will benefit from this service.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk

Invest NI has launched a new online information and support facility, **nibusinessinfo.co.uk**

This web site provides all Northern Ireland businesses and entrepreneurs with free access to an extensive source of essential business information.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk provides 24x7 advice, information, guidance and signposting, with over 5,000 fact sheets and over 70 interactive tools on offer. Every aspect of setting up and running a business is covered, from the earliest days of developing a business idea to the legal issues involved in selling a business concern.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk also features case studies showing how local businesses have handled particular business challenges.

nibusinessinfo.co.uk provides you with a single point of access for all your business information needs, freeing up time for to concentrate on running operations.