

Getting a grip on Mexico

UK dental products company Associated Dental Products Ltd has successfully entered the Mexican market, working closely with a major local distributor, thanks to the assistance of UK Trade & Investment



For close to 90 years, Associated Dental Products Ltd has designed and manufactured dental products and materials. Based in Swindon, the company makes modelling wax for dentures, filling materials, dental cement, infection control materials and other products for dental labs and surgeries. It manufactures all its products in the UK and employs 38 full time employees.

For many years, Associated Dental Products, also known as KEMDENT, concentrated its efforts in its home market. Six years ago, it decided to place a greater emphasis on international sales. It now counts countries around Europe, the Middle East and South East Asia as its main export destinations, and recently completed its first big order for Mexico.

“We choose our export destinations based on the need we see for our products,” says Belinda Mayoh, Business Development Coordinator at Associated Dental Products. “Our manufacturing operations allow us to make or adapt products to suit a particular market, and our flexibility

gives us a real leg up. Our modelling wax, for example, can be made in different sizes and colours.”

Exploring Mexico

For three years, UKTI had helped the company develop its export strategy, and in June 2009, Associated Dental Products attended Explore Export, a one-day meeting organised by UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) to help businesses in the South West of England grow their presence overseas.

At the gathering, the company met with representatives from UKTI, and learned about the range of services on offer to help UK businesses. Having already identified Mexico as a possible target market to pursue, Associated Dental Products decided to commission an Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) report to gather specific information about the Mexican market for its products, and identify potential distributors and customers. It also received funding through UKTI’s Gateway to Global Growth scheme to explore the market in Mexico.



Fast facts

Company:	Associated Dental Products Ltd
Industry:	Healthcare
Target Market:	Mexico
UKTI Service:	Overseas Market Introduction Service
Website:	www.kemdent.co.uk

“We attended Explore Export because we felt that we had reached our potential in terms of international sales,” says Belinda. “We had looked at the American market and felt that it would be difficult for us to compete on pricing with companies already established locally. As Mexico is right next door to the US, and also quite a large market, we decided to do further research on the market there. But, we realised that we would need help to get reliable, quality information. Through the local UKTI team, we were able to access the on-the-ground experience and knowledge that we needed to seriously consider Mexico as a future market for our products.”

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Expert assistance

In autumn 2009, Associated Dental Products attended the International Dental AMIC Expo in Mexico City, the country's largest dental exhibition. A UKTI Trade Adviser escorted the company around the exhibition hall and helped explain how AMIC differs from other dental exhibitions around the world, in that sales are made at the exhibition, rather than introductions alone. The adviser introduced Belinda to several dental product distributors, helping her find the right contacts at busy exhibition stands.

Most helpfully, UKTI secured a meeting for Associated Dental Products with Mexico's main dental equipment distributor, Villa de Cortes. After several months of negotiations, Villa de Cortes placed a large order with the company for modelling wax and other wax materials.

"We know that without the help of UKTI it would have taken us much longer to secure a large order from a major distributor," says Belinda. "Having the help of an organisation that knows the market like UKTI does, gave us an advantage that cannot be overstated. Their support lent us much needed credibility in a market where no one knew our name. Thanks to UKTI, our

initial experiences in Mexico have really exceeded our expectations."

Future plans

Associated Dental Products returned to the AMIC Expo in late 2010, and again worked with UKTI advisers to meet local contacts. In preparation for the Expo, UKTI advisers assisted with the translation of the company's brochure into Spanish, which were then also displayed on the UKTI stand.

Going forward, Associated Dental Products plans to expand its sales in Mexico, and is working exclusively with Villa de Cortes to introduce several of its other products to the market. It is also currently researching the practicalities of product registration, with support from UKTI.

"We found that our market visits to Mexico have really paid off," says Belinda. "Local companies are very happy that we have taken the trouble to come and see them, a feeling which helps start relationships off on the right foot. Many of the companies we have met are family-owned businesses similar to ours, and once they see our product, they are happy to make purchasing decisions quickly. We are looking forward to many years of continued sales and expansion in Mexico."

Helping you to do business abroad

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it's good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

Through our Passport to Export programme we offer new and inexperienced exporters:

- free capability assessments
- support in visiting potential markets
- mentoring from a local export professional
- free action plans
- customised and subsidised training
- ongoing support once you're up and running

For further information please visit www.ukti.gov.uk



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The UK and Mexico

Mexico is the UK's second largest trading partner in Latin America and there has never been a better time to consider Mexico as a place to do business. Mexico regularly ranks in the top three emerging markets in which to do business, and is the fourteenth largest economy in the world.

Over the past decade, the country has seen economic growth and stable inflation. With its impressive network of

Free Trade Agreements (including North America and the EU) and its strategic location in between the US and Latin America, Mexico has the potential to act as a springboard into the region as well as being an attractive proposition in its own right.

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