

# Complete Guide To Import/Export

How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business

## Week #8

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### Marketing And Selling Your Products

*“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”*

— Mark Twain

**Make sure to read Chapter Ten of *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business* before you start this week’s tasks.**

The more precise you are in identifying your most likely customer, the easier it will be for you to find them—as well as the products that are likely to appeal to them. And it also allows you to choose the best possible media methods for reaching out to these potential customers.

#### **Task 1: Identify your target audience**

Your first task this week is to identify your target audience. Take some time to think about who is likely to buy your product and then answer the following questions.

- Who are your target audience? Where do they live, what do they do, what’s the demographic, etc.? At this stage you should use as much detail as possible.

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- What is your customer’s primary reason for buying your product?

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- Are there any issues or concerns that the target audience might have regarding this type of product or service?

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- What publication does your target audience read?

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## Task 2: What is your advertising strategy?

Advertising is an essential ingredient of any successful import/export business so make sure that you don't neglect this aspect. As a general guideline, the advertising industry reckons companies should devote 3% to 8% of annual sales to their total advertising and promotional budget. Now that you have determined who your target audience is, you should begin researching the best ways to capture their attention. Carefully consider all the points below and your advertising strategy should start to take shape.

### Determine what advertising methods would be best for your business:

- Fairs and festival
- Trade shows
- Publications
- Radio advertisements
- Direct mail
- Online
- eBay

**Contact what you consider to be the top three magazines or newspapers of your target audience and get quoted advertising prices. Record your findings in the space below.**

- **Magazine/Newspaper 1**

Name of magazine/newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type/size of advertisement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Price:

\_\_\_\_\_

• **Magazine/Newspaper 2**

Name of magazine/newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type/size of advertisement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Price:

\_\_\_\_\_

• **Magazine/Newspaper 3**

Name of magazine/newspaper: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact details:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type/size of advertisement:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Price:

\_\_\_\_\_

**You should now contact two fairs, festivals, or trade shows in your local area and find out the cost of exhibiting and the dates of upcoming events. Request to be on their vendors' mailing list so you will receive notification of future shows.**

- **Fair/Festival/Trade Show 1**

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost of entry: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Fair/Festival/Trade Show 2**

Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Cost of entry: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Task 3: Have you got a website?**

Now that you have established who your target audience is, the magazines/newspapers they read, and the fairs/festivals/trade shows they attend (as well as gathering information on these different elements), you should have a good idea of how you are going to market and sell your product. Have you looked into the opportunities a website can offer? With a website you could potentially reach millions of customers and earn substantial sums of money—all from the comfort of your own home computer.

If you choose to use a website you have two options—you can either build a website yourself or get someone else to do it for you. Whichever option you choose you should:

- Check out the websites of competitors. List what you like—and don't like. Think about what you want to include on your own site.
- Choose a website address—or domain name (also called URL)—that is short and simple.
- Register your domain name.
- Add the website address to your letterhead, business card—all marketing materials and advertisements.
- Consider setting up a PayPal account so people can pay you via eBay or your website. (I'll tell you more about this in next weeks course installment.)
- At this stage of the process you should have a rough idea of your marketing and advertising strategies. Before we finish for this week, take a look at some other suggestions and methods of getting your business known to your customers.

- Consider writing articles on the information you've discovered for publication. Even beginners like to learn from other beginners—and sometimes you can obtain free advertising in lieu of payment for your article.
- Visit online chat forums and chat with others involved in the import/export business to gather tips and pose questions to people who have experienced what you are about to do.
- Create a sample advertisement for your company. Make sure you target your audience and convey the uniqueness of your product.

Next week we will look at how to manage the paper trail. To prepare yourself for the financial issues covered next week, you should read **Chapters Three** and **Eleven** of *How To Start Your Own Import/Export Business*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steenie Harvey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steenie Harvey  
Import/Export Correspondent, *International Living*