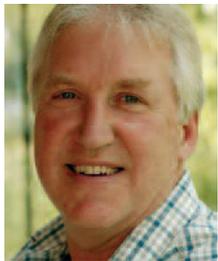


**For many UK businesses, taking advantage of overseas markets will be vital to surviving tough trading conditions at home. But there remain considerable obstacles to overcome in the modern global economy. John Bailey, Haines Watts International Partner, discusses the opportunities – and the challenges.**



# Passport to success

John Bailey



**I**f you think international trade will be part of your future, there are a number of ways to establish your business overseas, depending on your aims and ambitions

and your products and services. “Different businesses have radically different overseas sales potential,” explains John Bailey, Haines Watts International Partner, “so it’s crucial to plan properly. Foreign markets have been a graveyard for too many UK businesses that have jumped without looking.”

According to John, you should begin by determining what the structure of your international trading is going to be. Are you going to open a branch? Or set up a new company? Or trade via the Internet? Are you going to manufacture abroad, or import from the UK?

“The options are vast and there are advantages – and disadvantages – to each approach,” explains John. “What’s more, those advantages and disadvantages vary enormously from country to country and from industry to industry. There isn’t one rule for international trade, there are different rules for every country you want to target.”

All of which makes planning even more critical. Entering foreign markets can be expensive and time consuming, and can present legal and cultural

barriers (not to mention language). If you get your planning wrong, you’ll spend time and money for little reward. Get it right and the opportunities are endless.

According to John, your planning should involve as much on-the-ground market research as possible. “To effectively understand an overseas market, it’s crucial to go there. Foreign markets can be so different in terms of culture and the way business is done on a day-to-day basis. There is absolutely no substitute to establishing local links to get your business set up – it’s paramount.

“You also need to be connected to a local presence,” continues John. “But, realistically, a UK-

going and arrange a meeting. That client can step off the plane to meet someone who is expecting them, who is fully aware of their business objectives and who can help them to set up properly.

“Our ANTEA connection will also have a number of other contacts, perhaps in marketing or in distribution, to help that client launch and promote their products effectively. And of course, once those contacts are established, ongoing working relationships can be managed remotely from the UK.

“That level of local expertise can save business

**“To effectively understand an overseas market, it’s crucial to go there.”**

based business owner can’t be overseas for great lengths of time. That’s where Haines Watts can help with our international ANTEA network.”

ANTEA is an alliance of independent firms around the world selected for their local influence, international capabilities and ability to be at the forefront of commercial activities. Their expertise and local knowledge of any area can save time and money in getting a business up and running in terms of the right location and structure, as John explains.

“If a client says to me ‘I’m thinking of setting up in Brazil’, I can put them in touch with a local partner in Rio de Janeiro, or Sao Paulo, or wherever it is they are

owners so much time and money in getting established and structured in the right way, and, crucially, help them keep pace with changing market conditions in target territories. ANTEA makes all aspects of the process easy – it would be impossible to do all of those things from the UK, but with the alliance you can.”

**Contact your local Haines Watts office to find out more about ANTEA.**