



THE ITC REPORTER

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

“International Marketing”

Wednesday, February 18, 2009 7:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Location: Platte County Economic Development Council
11724 Northwest Plaza Circle, Suite 400, KCMO 64153

“Trade Finance Seminar”

Thursday, March 19, 2009 7:30 AM – 10:00 AM

“Federal Reserve Bank Luncheon”

March 4, 2009

“Doing Business in the Middle East”

Wednesday, April 1, 2009 7:30 AM – 9:00 AM

“Incoterms I”

Wednesday, April 15, 2009

“Doing Business in Africa”

May, 2009

“NAFTA Documentation”

May, 2009

“Doing Business in China”

June, 2009

“Legal Hazards: BIS, OFAC, and More”

June, 2009

24 Month Calendar Online!!!

Check our website for updates and details: itckc.org

**WANTED: EXPORTERS AND IMPORTERS
SEEKING TO EXPAND THEIR
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

You may have read of the ITC program GRI, or Global Research Initiative, which has been used very successfully in the past and is currently undergoing a revival and upgrade. As we speak, a team of five students from Benedictine College

in Atchison is actively engaged in researching global market opportunities for the products of ITC member Western Forms, in a project which will run through the end of the academic year.

GRI pairs competitively selected students from an area educational institution with an existing or perspective manufacturer/exporter or importer seeking to establish or grow a global presence. The project consists of two primary phases, and a progress plan is designed to fit the academic calendar and needs of the faculty and students. Phase one consists of worldwide marketing research, during which the students identify the best market prospects for the products involved, or alternatively, the best sources of supply for importers. Phase two then focuses on the top few prospects and the students produce a detailed marketing or purchasing plan for each country or market area. The ITC provides moderators, direction and oversight. Faculty coordinates the project with regular coursework; oversees the research activities and works to obtain academic credit for the students involved. The benefiting company stays active throughout the process and critiques the research and resulting presentations.

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When run in the past, GRI has produced job opportunities for graduating students and significant new business gains for participating exporters. At the very least, the students stand



to gain significant and valuable experience, as well as exposure to a wide variety of resources, and the exporter, for example, obtains quality, product-specific marketing information and new business.

Strong interest in the program has been expressed by a number of area educational institutions, and so we are actively seeking local manufacturers, exporters or importers to pair with students from local schools. If your company is interested in expanding its global presence and you think that GRI may be of value, please contact the ITC immediately. We will be happy to provide more information and testimonials, as we work to establish pairings for 2009 and beyond.

AFRICA RISING

If you are looking for some interesting reading in the field of international business, try “Africa Rising: How 900 Million African Consumers Offer More Than You Think” by Vijay Mahajan Ph.D. A professor at the McCombs School of Business, University of Texas at Austin, Mahajan interviewed business people throughout Africa and concluded that the continent offers significant rewards for businesses that are flexible and nimble enough to navigate through markets which are underdeveloped and often suffer from poor infrastructure and political instability. Citing examples of creative entrepreneurship in several countries, he shows that African consumers want material items such as cell phones, bicycles and computers, and that there are plenty of innovative ideas to market such products.

News of uncertainty in Kenya or of hyper inflation in Zimbabwe overlook the fact that there are many other nations on the continent in which business can be conducted quite successfully, in spite of the many obstacles. Generally optimistic in his overall approach, the author also admits that “Africa is not for the faint of heart”. With perseverance, however, and a realization that social entrepreneurship and an involvement in local communities should be incorporated into long term plans, the opportunities are there for the taking. Some European companies, of course, are already well established throughout, and it has been interesting to note how the Chinese have recently begun to develop connections on the continent. Let’s not get caught napping on this one!

THE INTERNSHIP: NAVIGATING ON A SHIP WITHOUT A SAIL OR CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE?

Based on evidence seen during a February 2007 ITC program, we strongly support the notion that internships may be an important tool in developing international business expertise and thus helping to improve our ability to trade globally. At the meeting in question, a panel of ITC board members shared their own internship experiences and offered practical advice,

while KU students representing AIESEC outlined that organization’s impressive program. Much interest was expressed that day and educational institutions continue to seek opportunities for their students to obtain first hand practical experience through internships. It was proven during the meeting that well-organized and well-managed internship programs can be highly successful for both intern and hosting organization, whether paid or unpaid.

Currently, the executive committee of the ITC is considering taking on interns to upgrade the corporate web site and work on data base management, and we are in discussion with board members and other contacts within the academic world. The limited resources of our organization dictate that any such internship will be unpaid. However, we are involved in a number of exciting projects for the near future which would offer interns greater exposure to various elements of global trade operations. For more information on an ITC internship opportunity contact Larin Payne at payne@kcsmartport.com.

We strongly encourage all ITC members to consider offering internships as we believe that there is a significant pool of qualified students in this area receiving strong support and encouragement from their respective schools. A long-term goal of the ITC might be to establish a formal committee structure and formalize an internship program, but in the short term, we can very easily act as an intermediary, pairing interns and internship providers through opportunity postings on our web site and in this newsletter.

HELP RECRUIT MEMBERS!

Founded in 1944, the International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City, Inc. promotes international trade through educational programming and networking opportunities. There is a large number of local and regional businesses and organizations that would benefit immensely from programming by International Trade Council. The more members, the more sophisticated, valuable, and varied programs we can deliver to our members.

Please refer your associates to ITC!
www.itckc.org

ARTICLES REQUESTED!

Members are requested to submit articles about international trade success for publication in the ITC Reporter. Please try to include digital photos or graphics with your submission!



International Trivia Corner

- 1) What are the only two land-locked countries in South America?
- 2) The African kingdom of Dahomey became what country in 1975?
- 3) What is the former name of the city of Mumbai in India?
- 4) Name at least two countries that share a border with Switzerland.

(Answers on Page 5)

Company Profile: Seven Pillars Consulting

SPC specializes in research and consulting on Asian (ex-Japan) financial markets, economies and listed companies. The research is tailored to the client's needs, focusing on areas of special interest and targeting the goals of the client. The Chief Executive Officer of SPC, Kara Tan Bhala, has twenty-two years of investing experience in Asia. For some time, Kara managed the second largest mutual fund investing in Asian (ex-Japan) stocks. Her experience, knowledge, and contacts give her an exceptional edge and enlighten every consulting project that is undertaken. The following are some of the services that SPC provides:

Financial Market Research

SPC provides tailored research on any of the Asian (ex-Japan) financial markets: Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. We create strategies to invest in these markets, and offer research on market characteristics, market data, sector data, historical data, details of bourses, and the brokerage research available.

Economic Research

SPC offers the latest economic news and insightful economic analysis. We are particularly strong in analyzing economic data and developments, with emphasis on their effects on the stock markets and on each listed company.

Listed Company Research

Clients interested in the details of any listed company in the region will find our Company Research helpful. We analyze company information, such as balance sheets, cash flows and profit and loss statements. We do in-depth studies on the industries in which the companies operate, their business plans, management strengths, weaknesses and strategies. If necessary, we will speak directly to top managers in specific companies to further assess their capabilities.

For further information about SPC please contact:

kara@sevenpillarsconsulting.com

1435 E. 550th Road

Lawrence, KS 66049

MEMBERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

One of the major benefits of volunteering with ITC is the opportunity to work closely with others in the international trade arena. This means:

- **Networking** with international business experts
- **Learning** management and leadership skills from others
- **Developing** new skills that apply to work
- **Enjoying** working together for a common goal
- **Influencing** ITC's activities to better help members
- **Entering** the pipeline as a potential ITC board member

ITC's board is seeking members to join committees chaired by board members. Meetings are generally monthly, with email communications between meetings.

The following Committees need extra volunteers:

Program Committee. ITC's most important committee, it defines, refines, organizes, and delivers meaningful educational programs of relevance to best practices in international business. **Please provide ideas for meaningful and relevant program content!**

Membership Committee. ITC serves its' membership, and the more members, corporate, educational and individual that the Council has, the greater the number of relevant and useful programs the ITC can deliver.

Marketing Committee. Communicating with our committees is the most important part of ensuring that our members are well served. If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter, would like to help update the website or work with the media on behalf of the ITC please contact info@itckc.org.
Do you want to be involved?

Market Highlight: Poland

A new feature of the ITC quarterly newsletter is a market highlight. The U.S. Commercial Service-Kansas City office is contributing to this series and will focus on a new country each quarter. Much attention is always placed on large complex markets such as China or India, but to kick this series off we chose to highlight a smaller market with real opportunities for small and medium sized businesses that are just starting to export or looking to expand to new markets.

Poland is a market of 38 million people located in the heart of central Europe, sharing borders with both "new" EU and "old" EU-15 countries and markets to the East including Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia (Kaliningrad oblast). It has become a fully integrated member of the EU since its May 2004 accession, adhering to common economic, structural and commercial policies, including adoption of the common external tariff regime. Poland's accession to the Schengen free transit zone in December 2007 eliminates all remaining border checks along its intra-EU frontiers. The U.S. and Poland enjoy an extraordinarily close relationship which has fostered strategic



and commercial cooperation. Abundant opportunities remain for U.S. firms in Poland given the country's rapid economic growth, the size and location of the market, the access it affords to the larger EU market and the strong affinity Poles have for the U.S.

Poland's economy grew at a rate in excess of 6.5% in 2007, and it has enjoyed 17 straight years of economic expansion, fueled by high export output, individual consumption and increased business investment, including new foreign direct investment totaling approximately \$15 billion in 2007. Housing, and commercial construction also fuels the economy and will accelerate given the broad overhaul of the country's road, rail and airport infrastructure and tourism and athletic facilities consistent with EU commitments and plans to host the European Cup Soccer Championships in 2012.

While the U.S. share of Poland's import market is only 3%, U.S. exporters have found considerable success targeting competitive niches. U.S. firms can increase their competitive edge by cultivating the market, establishing a local presence, committing to strong after-sales service and support and offering pricing and financial terms consistent with customer needs. Sectors which offer particularly strong sales opportunities include aerospace, automotive products, environmental technologies, safety/security products, defense equipment, IT products and services, consumer goods and financial services. With a talented labor force, wage rates among the lowest in the EU, excellent regional location and a sizeable market, Poland will continue to attract substantial new private investment for years to come.

The Polish market is characterized by wide population dispersion with 25% living in rural areas and a number of urban population centers including Warsaw, Lodz, Krakow, Wroclaw, Poznan, Gdansk, Szczecin, and Lublin. Urban consumers generally have greater purchasing power than their rural counterparts. Personal contact with the customer is critical and final purchasing decisions typically require a face-to-face meeting. Success in this market typically requires an in-country presence such as an agent, distributor or representative office. Access to capital is difficult for most Polish firms and business transactions are typically self-financed. U.S. firms that can arrange financing will have a competitive edge. One way that U.S. companies can learn more about Poland is through the Trade Winds Forum Europe that will be held April 20-22, 2009 in Warsaw, Poland. This will be an excellent opportunity for companies with a Pan European business strategy. Europe presents a market filled with opportunities for U.S. businesses. By participating in this event, U.S. companies have the chance to make or increase sales in this booming region with a customized itinerary, according to country market demand. For more information on Trade Winds Europe, please visit: <http://www.buyusa.gov/newhampshire/twe.html>

The U.S. Commercial Service is present in 107 U.S. cities and in more than 80 countries. The Commercial Service team works with your company to help you start exporting or increase your sales to new global markets. Services include: world class market research, trade event services, introductions to qualified buyers and distributors, and counseling and advocacy through every step of the export process. To learn more about how the U.S. Commercial Service can help your company export, contact the office in Kansas City at (816) 421-1876 or visit us online at www.buyusa.gov/kansascity.

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KC Smart Port Has Grant from DOC to Help Area Companies with Mexico and Central American Markets

The U.S. Department of Commerce has granted Kansas City SmartPort with funds to develop tools and events focused on education, promotion and hands on market experience for companies in the KC region who are interested in starting or increasing exports to Mexico and Central America.

SmartPort is Kansas City's inland port that works to increase the volume of international trade in the Kansas City region. Kansas City has a significant trade relationship with Mexico and Central America, but SmartPort feels these trade relationships have the ability to grow immensely.

Kansas and Missouri companies will be interested to know that with the DOC funds, SmartPort has created a program to help companies with travel and marketing expenses for those doing business with Mexico or Central American countries.

Specific uses for the funds include; a trade mission support program, trade show support program, establishing education tools to assist Missouri and Kansas companies, and to plan and implement trade shows/missions.

Your company may be able to benefit from this program if you participate in trade shows or trade missions in Mexico or Central America. Your company may also have the opportunity to use the SmartPort market research team for entering the Mexican or Central American market free of charge. The grant is available until June 2009. For more information about the reimbursement program please contact Larin Payne at (816)374-5640 or payne@kcsmartport.com.

Upcoming Events in Kansas City

April 21-22 - U.S. Commercial Service – Kansas City Presents: "Complying with U.S. Export Controls"

April 23 - U.S. Commercial Service – Kansas City Presents: "How to Develop an Export Management and Compliance Program"

For more information on these events please visit:
<http://www.buyusa.gov/kansascity/bis0409.html> or contact
Regina.Heise@mail.doc.gov, Sally.Pacheco@mail.doc.gov

Answers to International Trivia Corner:

- 1) Bolivia and Paraguay.
- 2) The Peoples Republic of Benin
- 3) Bombay
- 4) France, Germany, Italy and Austria. (Liechtenstein also borders Switzerland in the east but is a principality, or small state.)

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

You may also join the International Trade Council by visiting our website at www.itckc.org. The 2008-2009 business year started September 1, 2008. **Dues will be pro-rated by quarter.**

New Member Renewal

Former Member/New Company

Name: _____

Title: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Business Description: _____

Industry: _____

Corporate \$300*

* Up to 5 individual members; \$150 increments for additional five members.

Individual: \$80 Diamond Patron - \$5,000

Educational \$65 Platinum Patron - \$5,000

Retired \$30 Gold Patron - \$1,000

Student \$30

Total: \$ _____ Date: _____

Payment Method

Check MasterCard VISA AMEX

Credit Card Information

Account No. _____

Expiration Date: _____

Security Code: _____

Billing Address: _____

Authorizing Signature: _____

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(Left) The ITC partnered with the Kansas City Taipei Economic and Cultural Office to present an informative event on “Doing Business in Taiwan”

(Right) ITC Members gathered for the Export Documentation seminar on November 19th in as a part of the ITC’s effort to expand the reach of the ITC by holding events at different locations around Kansas City



(Left) ITC members enjoying a night of international food and entertainment at ITC’s Annual Holiday Gala, held at the Kansas City Power & Light District



(Right) Attendees at ITC’s informative Letters of Credit seminar held at the Kauffman Foundation

