

exporter case study



Didgeridoonas®



Company profile

Based on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, Didgeridoonas began its manufacturing business in 1995 with only two sewing machines. Initially the business focused on retailing and manufacturing clothing, but was inspired to design products that used the strengths of Australian wool.

The company was successful in its wool bedding range, and then turned its direction to develop a range of products that would also benefit from the use of wool. The high quality products are designed to last a lifetime and use the very best materials, including pure Australian wool, durable oilskin fabrics and 100% natural cotton.

The Didgeridoonas product range is sold through selected stockists across Australia and proudly exports to a growing number of countries including the United Kingdom, Denmark, Germany, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, USA, Bermuda and Canada.

Motivations to export

After spending six years establishing the business within the domestic market, the next level was to look at other aspects of business development. The company was receiving individual enquiries from overseas and decided to formally pursue these opportunities. The company focused on regions that had greater populations and shared similar characteristics to Australian consumers, such as the United States and the United Kingdom.

Activities that contributed to its export success

Once the decision was made to export, Didgeridoonas prepared for export by attending a range of training programs which were offered through the Queensland Government and Austrade. From the knowledge gained, the company improved its position in the domestic market by attending to production capabilities and quality control requirements.

Rather than focusing on the whole world, the company concentrated its export activities on countries where their products could more easily gain a foothold within those markets.



Lessons learnt and mistakes made along the way

In the early days the company made the mistake of not educating itself enough nor listening closely to the advice given regarding the ins and outs of exporting.

The company learnt the importance of finding a good distributor and developed the ability to recognise a good distributor. It also learnt to take care of the legalities of exporting to ensure all parties were protected through contracts.

How exporting has benefited the business

As the Didgeridoonas products are niche products and not mass-produced for the general population, this automatically reduces the target audience within the Australian market. The numbers within the United States and the United Kingdom markets provide greater possibilities of growing the business. Exporting has expanded the marketplace allowing Didgeridoonas to sell more products.

Assistance received from the Queensland Government

The local State Development Centre has provided advice on exporting and funding grants. State Development's Queensland Industry Development Scheme (QIDS) has provided the financial assistance to improve operations and business systems within the company.

Didgeridoonas has learnt about the basic ground rules through export seminars and workshops provided by the local State Development Centre.

Words of advice for exporters

Didgeridoonas recommends that businesses attend seminars that are offered and investigate what financial assistance is available from both state and federal governments.

It is important to get the basics right in the domestic market before stepping up to export. A lot of time and effort is required in setting up to export, however at the end of the day it is very worthwhile.

This case study was prepared for the Getting Export Smart workshop series. Please contact your local State Development Centre to register for export workshops and training programs.

Queensland State Development Centres
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**If you have any queries about exporting
from Queensland, please contact:**

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