

ANALYSISMANAGEMENT

# US exporters need not go it alone

*Wendy Rush discovers a new breed of Australian entrepreneurs who are achieving success in the US by outsourcing their business development activities.*

WHEN Eye Catcher Innovations wanted to find a master distributor for its product in the US, the company didn't employ a sales team and initiate costly trips overseas to try and infiltrate the market. Instead, they outsourced the role to a company that specialises in securing business in North America for Australian inventors, manufacturers and intellectual property holders.

As a result, the company is on track to reach international sales targets of \$25m within five years.

But what about letting another firm take care of your "baby"? Paul Huxtable from Eye Catcher Innovations says losing control of its product is not an issue. "We own the patents and tooling and have absolute control over everything," he told *Manufacturers' Monthly*.

"We also put a lot of effort into developing the relationship with our

outsourcing partner, who was instrumental in us being able to access the US market."

But how does it work? Jim Raz, MD of Export Access, the company Eye Catcher engaged, says partnering with a contracting firm is much different than employing a consultant.

"We physically do the work on behalf of our clients. The process may involve one or more specific elements, from business planning, market research, identifying and qualifying potential international clients through to representing the products and formalisation of business relationships with North American partners."

"We run 'trade missions' where we represent a number of Australian exporters during one trip. This provides our clients with economies of scale, and because we travel regularly, it is easy for us to establish and maintain ongoing relationships with various



Manufacturers looking to export their products to the US can access government financial support if they comply with certain criteria.

clients," he said.

Raz says the US is way ahead of Australia in terms of using this outsourcing model. However, he admits there are many challenges to be negotiated when a company starts exporting its products.

### Research essential

Raz says it is essential companies learn as much as they can about the US market, and to take advantage of government assistance.

"Firstly I would recommend that manufacturers looking to export regis-

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