

ter with Austrade. The organisation can provide exporters with access to very valuable market data.

"Importantly, emerging exporters need to appreciate the real time and effort required to realise commercial success. It should be determined early who will carry the ball in this regard.

"We can work as a pseudo export manager or business development manager on a project basis. The exporter only carries the cost for the period of the project," he explained.

In spite of the US's very powerful "Buy America" program, Raz says it's still possible for Australian exporters to compete successfully in the North American market.

"Whilst Americans can be very parochial, they tend to be mindful of commercial realities and practicalities. The US Free Trade Agreement which came into force on 1 January 2005 has stripped away a number of the barriers affecting Australia-US trade."

Raz says, in his experience, where a particular product specification disadvantages an Australian company, once informed, the Americans will alter or amend that specification to conform to the rules of the day.

In terms of the USFTA's effect on the ability of Australian exporters to access the US market, Raz admits

there may be specific circumstances where Australian exporters have been disadvantaged. "In general terms, though, we have found the FTA to be of benefit as it has removed the significant hurdle of import duties," he said.

"The reality is that Australian manufacturers need to be efficient and to be 'best in class' if they are to successfully export fully processed goods."

He emphasised that issues such as transportation costs, changes in the exchange rate and mechanisms for logistics and distribution have potential for greater impact on the Australian exporters.

"The basic barriers for Australians wanting to export to the US are still the same as they were before the FTA. That is, being under prepared, under educated about the market and under resourced to do the job properly."

Raz says one area companies need to research thoroughly is the marketing and packaging of their product. "Marketing and packaging requirements will be dramatically different for different items being exported. The wine and food industry for example has quite specific legal requirements which must be adhered to.

"I would recommend that each exporter gains a clear understanding

of the requirements relevant to their industry and that this intelligence is reflected in their pricing strategy," Raz said.

Manufacturers looking to export their products can access financial support if they comply with certain criteria. There are state based grants which are generally administered by the individual State Government department responsible for trade and economic development.

Federally, Austrade administers the Export Market Development Grant (EMDG) scheme which compensates exporters for eligible expenses on a dollar for dollar basis once minimum expenditure levels are reached. If a company engages an outsourcing partner to help them market and sell their product in an international market, the costs to employ such a firm are generally eligible to be claimed under this scheme.

Raz suggests companies contact Austrade and their relevant State Government department for more information on these schemes. In most states and territories there are private companies who specialise in helping exporters to access EMDG funds.

For more information call Export Access on 08 8224 0333.

Carbon tracker

SUPPLY Chain Consulting has announced the availability of CarbonView, a solution that enables organisations to capture, analyse and optimise carbon emission data across their operations.

The system allows organisations to view and optimise their complete supply chain by looking at it from a financial and carbon perspective.

By acting on results of the analysis, organisations can achieve financial savings and carbon reduction internally and across the supply chain.

Peter Klein, Supply Chain Consulting's EMEA VP, began developing CarbonView after becoming increasingly concerned at the lack of business tools available to help businesses become more carbon-friendly.

The company has been working with a number of key carbon database suppliers globally to provide comprehensive greenhouse gas emission data that organisations will require for effective analysis of the environmental consequences of their operations.

Using this data, and data that companies have collected internally, businesses can run different supply chain scenarios.

Supply Chain Consulting 02 9409 6100.



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