



# EXPERT EXPORT GUIDES

## SECURING YOUR FIRST EXPORT ORDERS

By Michael Wilson

---

CEO - [Go Exporting](#)



# SECURING YOUR FIRST EXPORT ORDERS

By now you will have visited your target market at least once and will be planning your next visits. You will have made a lot of contacts, gathered mountains of information and gained a real feel for the market, its key players, movers and shakers.

If you have not already secured your first orders, then now is the time to really push. Customers have seen you in the market, know what you can offer and your Value Proposition. You may well have already delivered samples of your product for them to assess.

Look to finalise some deals. There is no greater satisfaction than to start seeing the fruits of all this hard work.

It may be tempting, and you will certainly be asked, to give a special introductory price. Whilst this may seem the way to secure some business, be wary that it does not set a precedent as the pricing expected in the market. It can be used as a stick to beat you with later as customers see the introductory price as really your best-selling price.

Better is to offer volume discounts or rebates. If they order more, then you can offer a better price. This can be done retrospectively too, so you set an annual volume level for example and agree that if they reach that level you will give x% rebate, but only when they have reached that level.

If really pushed and as a means to secure the first order you could offer the rebate in advance for the first order but make it clear that this volume then does not count towards the annual target or rebate.

Alternatively, keep the unit or per kg price the same but offer x amount free with the first order. That way the 'real' price is maintained, and the free amount can be offered as a bonus. You can explain you can only do it this time as part of your marketing budget.

If you are looking for a distributor/agent you should by now have narrowed down your search to the one(s) you would like to work with and who you feel will bring the best returns. Remember it's not who you like best, but what they can do for you which is the most important selection criteria.

Don't rush in to give away exclusivity to one company, unless you really are certain they are the best choice, and they can bring immediate results. For example, are they prepared to invest in stock and commit to minimum purchases throughout the year?

Look for their commitment, for evidence of the benefits they can bring. Do they have customers lined up ready to order? Take time to get to know them and their capabilities. Suggest an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) as a way of getting the ball rolling prior to entering into a longer-term contract. Once you are ready to commit to a contract ensure it is carefully drafted and does not conflict with local law in your target market. It is always best to insist that your home country legal system is the basis of the agreement and used to resolve any disputes, but you do need to ensure you are not in breach of local regulations also.

Build into the agreement the minimum term, sales targets, marketing responsibilities, break clauses and notice periods, a dispute resolution mechanism, credit agreement etc. This is a legal document which needs to secure your company, but also show commitment to the distributor/agent. If you are working on an agency basis be particularly careful on the contract to ensure the agent does not become a quasi-employee under local law with rights should the arrangement end. Also ensure it is clear that any personal tax liabilities are their responsibility.

Distribution/agency contracts are a complex area, and we recommend you take legal advice from a company with international business knowledge. Your local solicitor may well not have the expertise in this area. For recommendations [contact us here](#).



# EXPERT EXPORT GUIDES

**GO EXPORTING**  
Opening a World of Opportunities

---

[www.goexporting.com](http://www.goexporting.com)  
[info@goexporting.com](mailto:info@goexporting.com)  
+44 800 689 1423