

A San Diego Company Uses the Internet to Sell Globally

Expanding Sales Frontiers with BuyUSA.com

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Sixty-five percent of U.S. exporters sell their products to buyers in only one country. San Diego-based Evertek Computer Corporation, which sells new and refurbished computers and parts, has business in more than 80 countries. How does a small company do it?

Part of the answer is worldwide demand for what Evertek sells. The company also has well-established sales channels, including an excellent e-commerce Web site and a multilingual sales staff—a grand total of three people. Now Evertek has BuyUSA.com, the U.S. Commerce Department's on-line marketplace that helps U.S. companies find buyers in the world's best markets—and others that aspire to be among the best.

Evertek's most recent BuyUSA.com buyer is located in France. "This French company has become a full-fledged partner of ours," says John Ortley, international sales manager. "Since May of this year, we've had multiple transactions totaling in excess of \$75,000." Since joining BuyUSA.com a year ago, Evertek has found 10 new clients in as many countries. Buyers are snapping up monitors, CD-ROMs, scanners, DVDs, and complete systems.

Besides its proven ability to generate new business, what does Evertek find appealing about BuyUSA.com? Ortley says BuyUSA.com provides an additional sales channel, offering a "more professional package of services" than anything else he has seen. "Perhaps the biggest advantage," he says, "is that buyers who approach us from these different countries are more reassured because of the involvement of the U.S. government. When we considered participating in the BuyUSA.com program, we were confident we would see results based on our own success in e-commerce marketing."

IN BUYUSA.COM THEY TRUST

This sense of reassurance and trust implicitly provided by the U.S. government is important, Ortley believes, because Evertek operates, at least for now, on a prepayment basis. Evertek's buyers, be they from Europe, Asia, or South America, need to know that they will get what they paid for. In part, buyers are more trusting because they know they can call on the commercial section at their local U.S. embassy if there is a problem. The trust factor works for Evertek, because Ortley is confident that the buyers on BuyUSA.com are reliable.



Everttek has been in business for 12 years, and it began exporting from the beginning. Today, export sales account for 20 percent of total revenues. Growth has been steady and is expected to continue, in part, because of new sales channels like BuyUSA.com. Other optimistic trends include larger economic factors, such as the continued globalization of world markets and the acceptance of e-commerce as a means to effectively market and purchase products globally.

How do buyers in so many different markets know Everttek? One way is through BuyUSA.com, which is promoted by the U.S. Commercial Service in more than 90 countries and currently has over 20,000 buyers. BuyUSA.com also promotes Everttek at overseas trade shows in the IT sector. Other factors include efforts by many developing countries to become part of the global economy. These countries are quickly connecting to the world via the Internet. This provides both increased demand for Everttek's computer products and a continuously growing marketplace.

SALESPeOPLE MAKE THE WORLD GO ROUND

This is not to say that success depends exclusively on flashy electronic catalogs and the latest fulfillment software. Ortley considers himself first and foremost a salesperson, and he says that doing e-commerce via the Everttek Web site or BuyUSA.com is still "Basic Salesmanship 101."

For example, Everttek readily offers volume pricing as well as selective pricing on specific items. Forging close client relationships is also key, especially since Ortley and his two colleagues do not have time to travel abroad much. He has built a client database, and he sends a lot of personal e-mail. "We want to bond with our customers," Ortley explains.

He also spends hours on the phone, adjusting his calls throughout the day



John Ortley, director of international sales of Everttek, and trade specialist Carrie Brooks at Everttek's headquarters in Oceanside, California.

Photo courtesy of Everttek Computer Corp.

as time zones shift across the world. Speaking directly with the client is still an essential part of the business process, developing closer ties and understanding the other's needs.

Ortley checks his BuyUSA.com account daily to see who has e-mailed him the previous day. Since BuyUSA.com includes links to member sites in addition to a product catalog, many potential buyers coming from BuyUSA.com go to the Everttek site, where they log in and view the purchasing process. BuyUSA.com does not currently have full transactional capability but plans to add it in the near future.

Ortley also appreciates the assistance he gets from the local U.S. Commercial Service office in San Diego, one of 107 throughout the country and 157 overseas. Trade Specialist Carrie Brooks first introduced BuyUSA.com to Ortley and persuaded him to sign up. Brooks advises Everttek on all aspects of the export process and provides Ortley with market research generated by her colleagues around the world.

What does she think of her client? "Everttek is an extremely successful company due to a completely integrated

marketing approach," says Brooks. "They have a no-nonsense Web site that loads rapidly, immediately displays their special promotions and products, provides real-time inventory, and allows new distributors to fill out an on-line application. They provide the best service possible for their clients. Everttek responds within 24 hours on nearly all requests, and ships as promised."

Ortley advises companies to consider the potential rewards of exporting and of working with the Department of Commerce's BuyUSA.com. "We are an e-commerce business, and we're thriving. The world is shrinking, and it's getting easier and less expensive to do business on a global basis." ■