



**MATHEW CLARKE**, *Director SME Connect Australasia*  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/mathew-clarke/>  
[www.smeconnect.com.au](http://www.smeconnect.com.au)

Mathew is a small business operator, working in the non-profit sector leading teams and producing results. Skilled in Marketing Management, Business Planning, Coaching, Training, Sales, Corporate Governance, International Business, Project Management and Retail. Strong business development professional with a Masters in Business Administration (Supply Chain & Logistics), Advanced Diploma in Hospitality Management, and Sustainability, Certificate IV in Property Services (Real Estate) and Training & Assessment

## TIP 1. ARE YOU READY TO EXPORT?

Your product needs to meet the requirements of Australian exporting guidelines (if applicable) and the importing countries requirements, check that your labelling, packaging and ingredients are approved by the importing country first. This may include laboratory testing and certificate of origin requirements.

## TIP 2. CREATE AN EXPORT PLAN

Why? It will help you to prioritise your direction, objectives and maps out what you want to achieve and the timeline. Keep it real and understand that success takes time, effort and hard work.

Determine how you want to enter the market and what you prepared to commit. This will also help you with financing should you need it

## TIP 3. FUNDING

Once you have completed your Export Plan, it is important to realise how you will fund your export, sometimes you will need to pay suppliers, logistics and permits upfront, and wait to get paid. If you are providing credit terms, can you handle the exposure or do you require external funding?

## TIP 4. TRAINING

TradeStart is a great place to start, they are a network extension of Austrade They help small and medium-sized exporters achieve long term success and can connect you with various trade related organisations.

Business Associations are a great connector and can offer affordable, or even free, training to assist exporters and traders, plus they can link you up with their contacts overseas

## TIP 5. INTERNATIONAL MARKETING AND IP

Your product may sell well in Australia and your marketing works, however when you enter new markets you may need to adjust or redefine your marketing plans, branding, logistics and more to help generate sales.

Local expertise helps in the market you wish to operate but watch your budget.

There are many helpful resources available that are free – use them! Intellectual Property registration is critical to protect your brand, logo and more, get some advice and always get a couple of quotes.



## TIP 6. DEVELOP YOUR UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION

This will help you develop your market, work out why your product is different, better or even more affordable. If the consumer is paying more than your competitors - why? Be ready to explain. You need to understand your consumer and if they want your product and are they prepared to pay for it? Research, samplings, influencers and your existing customer base can all be sources of information.

## TIP 7. PARTNERSHIPS

Going it alone can be very daunting and stressful, plus expensive.

Work out if you should get a distributor, wholesaler, traditional retailer or sell online. There are many models you can choose to first enter your new market - slowly and carefully then expand as demand grows. There are many service providers that can offer you many options, take your time and choose wisely. Contracts are very important, and they must clearly outline your expectations and payment terms

## TIP 8. LOGISTICS

Shipping your products can be done many ways, depending upon cost, weight and size - you can choose the best option for you, Stock levels need to be considered in your new market too, the cost of storage can be expensive and shelf life plays an important role when deciding how to ship and store. Import costs and shipping times can impact your orders to new customers, it is very important to set expectations that are achievable!

## TIP 9. VISIT YOUR NEW MARKET REGULARLY

Before you export your goods, visit your potential market, do some research, check out your competition and make sure you can compete with them. Get a feeling for where you want your product to be positioned, is it affordable or premium? Where would your potential customers buy your products? With so many markets, and even sub-set markets in some countries, do your homework and make sure you know your market well

## TIP 10. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK OR FAIL

No business runs smoothly and perfect all the time, and expect that when you partner with others to export and sell your products there will be many challenges that come up. There are many free advisory services from the Australian Government and various business associations, join their events and reach out to experts for advice.

Should your first export not succeed, do not be afraid as you will learn from any mistakes and, over time, things will get better and easier, plus: if you have the right partners things will go easier!

