



New contract and agent for Elmeridge Cables in China

Fast facts

Company: Elmeridge Cables

Industry: Marine

Target Market: China

UKTI Service: Tradeshow Access Programme

www.elmeridge.com



After attending a trade exhibition in China with a Tradeshow Access Programme grant from UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), Elmeridge Cables secured a large new contract and found a local agent. The company is now well placed to pursue other opportunities in the region and will use UKTI's services to explore other markets too.

Elmeridge Cables has a history going back almost 30 years in cable design and manufacture. From its facility near Brighton, the company serves customers around the world. 75 per cent of its customers are in the subsea market, but Elmeridge also supplies a wide range of other industries with cables for use underwater, in high-temperatures and on railways. It makes bespoke cables too, for special applications and sources unusual, non-standard and hard-to-find cables and accessories from an extensive network of suppliers and distributors throughout Europe and beyond.

As well as producing the cables,

Elmeridge offers a complete technical service, from the earliest stages of project planning through to delivery and implementation. The company can produce cables in quantities as low as 200 metres. It also offers discounted rates for larger quantity orders and a free storage facility where customers only need take delivery of, and pay for, the amount they need at any one time.

"We are very customer-orientated and strive to provide the best possible service," says Darren Holmes, Director at Elmeridge Cables. "For example, if a customer knows they will need 5000 metres of cable over a 12 month period, they can take advantage of our call-off service, giving them the benefit of bulk purchasing without causing them problems with cash flow."

Exhibiting and exporting

Export has always featured in Elmeridge Cables' business strategy. Its biggest overseas market is Scandinavia, where the company serves the offshore gas industry and subsea exploration companies.

To promote its business, Elmeridge Cables has exhibited at the Oceanology exhibition at London Excel in the UK. This event draws major players in one place, so that buyers and sellers can meet and keep up to date with what's new in the marine science and ocean technology sector. Finding this to be the perfect showcase for its products, when it heard that the first Oceanology exhibition in China would be taking place in September 2013, the company decided it needed a presence there.

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Darren Holmes, Director, Elmeridge Cables

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The Society of Maritime Industries (SMI), of which Elmeridge is a member, was organising a UK Pavilion at the show where the company would pitch its stand. SMI suggested that Elmeridge apply for a Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) grant from UKTI to help cover the expenses of exhibiting. It did so, with SMI's support, and received £3000. Before the event, a UKTI International Trade Adviser (ITA) visited Elmeridge's offices to talk about what other support UKTI could offer and how best to approach growing its exports.

“We were interested to find out about the range of services and programmes that UKTI offers to British business to support their overseas growth, from funding, to market research, to reviewing their website to maximise its international impact,” says Darren. “Exhibiting overseas is an expensive business. Costs incurred are for flights, accommodation, and transportation of the stand and accessories. The TAP grant took care of a large amount of these costs, making the investment more affordable.”

New business

At Oceanology China, Elmeridge Cables generated a great deal of interest in its products. The company has since received a significant order from a large Chinese research organisation for a 10,000 metre steel tow rope. Although this was beyond its usual scope, Elmeridge successfully fulfilled the contract and delivered two weeks early. Once the cable has been used and tested, the company hopes to receive four or five similar orders from this customer every year.

Also at the show, Elmeridge secured an agent to represent it in China, who has since generated 12 new leads. A Trade and Investment Manager from the British Consulate-General in Shanghai visited the company's stand too and offered his support.

“Being in the UK Pavilion at the show gave us a key position, which attracted a lot of attention from buyers,” says Darren. “There is a large perception, especially in China, of UK products being of high quality. Even though the tow rope could have been produced within Asia with lower transportation costs, the customer told us that they were prepared to pay for quality and only wanted to buy British. Having delivered this contract and appointed a Chinese agent, we are in a good position to secure more new business in this region. Looking forward, when the time comes for us to explore other overseas markets we will certainly contact UKTI again for their assistance. Elmeridge would recommend the services of UKTI without any hesitation.”

The UK and China

The Chinese economy has grown at almost 10 per cent a year for the last 30 years, effectively doubling in size every eight years.

In 2013 the UK's goods exports to China increased by 17.1 per cent to £11.6 billion, making this the UK's largest goods export market outside the US and EU. Imports from China to the UK also grew by 5.2 per cent to £31.5 billion. Total bilateral trade in goods and services in 2012 was £46.5 billion (US\$73.8 billion), and the two countries have agreed a target to increase this to US\$100 billion by 2015.

The China-Britain Business Council (CBBC), UKTI's official trade service delivery partner for mainland China, provides advice and UKTI services to UK businesses via its network of offices across the UK and China.

For more information visit www.cbcc.org or www.gov.uk/ukti

Helping you attend tradeshows

Taking part in overseas exhibitions is an effective way for you to test markets, attract customers, appoint agents or distributors and make sales. UK Trade & Investment's Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) provides grant support for eligible SME firms to attend trade shows overseas.

Participation is usually as part of a group, a great advantage for inexperienced businesses, and is usually led by one of our Accredited Trade Organisations (ATOs). ATOs work with UK Trade & Investment to raise the profile of UK groups and sectors at key exhibitions.

UKTI was delighted to support Elmeridge Cables in its business overseas.



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