

Competitive horizons

Growth predicted for UK e-commerce

According to a report jointly carried out by Google, PayPal and OC & C Strategy Consultants, the next three years will see a £320 billion increase occur in the world's biggest e-commerce markets the United Kingdom (UK), Germany, China and the USA. By 2018, the UK market is set to double and reach £645 million. The report, as published by www.mybusiness.co.uk, cites the growing use of smartphones and other mobile devices as key drivers of e-commerce growth. The UK market is especially popular both with domestic shoppers and those from nations like Germany and China, whose purchase decisions are fueled by their belief in the choice, quality and price of British products. Online retailers can exploit this overseas interest but should be wary of concerns over data security and consumer frustration about problems with returns policies.

Russia encouraged to export organic products

A report published by www.pravda.ru claims that Russia is missing the opportunity to sell its organic food products in foreign markets. The products are grown in Siberia, an area rich in natural mineral resources. Although aluminium and nickel are exported from the region, there is little similar activity in the agriculture sector. The report cites lack of experience as a major contributory factor to this void. The popularity of organic food in many countries indicates that overseas markets are accessible to Russian businesses producers. For instance, China is one nation that has indicated its eagerness to import significant quantities of organic food products. To capitalize on the available opportunities, firms need to gain knowledge of the exporting process and how to target specific markets. It is suggested that acquiring the help of consulting services and lobbying agencies would represent a step in the right direction.

How to enhance teamwork in the organization

Building a successful workplace team is a challenging task. It is difficult to bring people from various backgrounds together and mould them into an effective, functional unit. A report published by www.about.com points out measures which can increase the chance of achieving this goal. For a start, team members must have an overall mission and clear direction that sets out expected goals. Commitment towards attaining them is vital. Mutual respect is essential, along with open communication that enables all individuals to contribute. Having the freedom to express their opinions also indicates that each member is valued for his or her unique work and life experiences. The report additionally notes the importance of nurturing an environment where creative solutions are actively encouraged as part of aims towards continuous improvement. Disagreements are unavoidable, so measures need to be in place to ensure that conflicts are resolved swiftly to minimize any negative consequences. It is important to make decisions as a group and have the support of a leader who participates in the team and provides the necessary guidance and direction.

The food and drink industry in Wales

A report published by www.foodnavigator.com points out that the Welsh government hopes to increase output by 30 per cent in its food and drink industry by the end of the current decade. The sector has continued to flourish even during the recent recession and is represented by a mix of global companies and domestic players. That firms have largely retained or even expanded operations in Wales despite the economic downturn is a key reason why the industry is now responsible for around 20 per cent of all employment in the nation. Education and training programs are in place to ensure that workers acquire the necessary skills, whereas publicity campaigns promote the industry as an attractive career option. Various government initiatives have helped the industry to grow. For instance, financial support packages and grants are available for different-sized companies, whereas backing for R & D projects can cover up to 70 per cent of costs involved. The report also notes the importance of location in persuading firms to base operations in Wales. Many sites are positioned in close proximity to seaports, international airports and motorway links to major cities in England. In addition, manufacturers can benefit from the valuable industry resources and specific support infrastructures for raw materials that the country boasts.