



International Trade, Investment & Enterprise Development

MAI Overview

Founded in 1996, Market Access International, Inc. (MAI) is a small, woman-owned international trade, investment and enterprise development consulting practice headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia. The company also collaborates with its partner in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Market Access International Canada, Inc. MAI maintains strategic alliances in over 60 global markets enabling it to successfully serve its public and private sector clients in both short and long-term assignments.

MAI principal consultants and associates are fluent in English, Dutch, French, Italian, Russian and Spanish while our worldwide, in-country strategic partners offer fluency in native languages. Each brings high academic credentials as well as applied experience which sets it apart from other firms. These attributes enable MAI consultants to utilize both their intellectual and applied strengths in project design, implementation and evaluation.

Services & Competitive Advantages

MAI specializes in trade, investment and SME development. The company designs and implements a range of activities from sector analyses, market research, strategy development and implementation to mentoring, workshops, trade missions and trade show participation in the following areas:

- Market access and expansion
- Export sales development
- Sourcing new technologies
- Financial mobilization
- Cluster development
- Competitiveness analysis
- FDI & Trade promotion
- SME Policy Formulation
- Business development training
- Public Private Partnership Building

In addition to its developing country experience, MAI presents four rare strengths:

- Proven success in developing regions within the U.S., Canada and Europe;
- Its achievements as a small firm serving the private sector. MAI is known for its customized, hands-on approach resulting in increased sales, profitability and market share for its clients;
- Its network of contacts in the U.S. and Europe including strategic allies, distributors, agents, end-user customers, joint venture partners and investors. All offer opportunities for the developing world;
- Its role as the U.S. and Canadian National Counselor for the European Commission-sponsored Euro-partner and Interprise SME growth initiatives.

Increasingly, MAI and its partners are providing policy-oriented assistance to governments relating to trade negotiation capacity building, Foreign Economic Zone development, regional trade development and SME support.

Industry Experience

MAI brings experience in several sectors including agribusiness (seafood, specialty foods, beverages), services, light manufacturing, woodworking, consumer products, home décor, metalworking, boatbuilding, information communications technology, e-learning, tourism, building materials, technical textiles, environmental technologies and biotechnology.

The company has completed projects in every region of the world. Clients range from private firms, including SMEs and Fortune 500, to public institutions such as the European Commission, USTDA, USAID and its prime contractors and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency.



Sample Technical Experience

MAI presents below a sampling of its trade, investment and enterprise consulting activities. Each should be considered in the context of any one or more of the following:

- Firm-level Growth
- Market Access
- Competitiveness Development
- Trade and Investment Promotion
- Cluster Design and Implementation
- SME Policy Formulation
- Public-Private Partnership Building

SME Training and Mentoring

MAI has collaborated one-on-one with SMEs in Slovakia, Morocco, Egypt, Croatia, Malaysia, Singapore, Argentina, Canada, Sweden and the U.S., among others. Training/mentoring has involved a series of tasks including seminars over a 6-12 month period, development of marketing, business and international expansion plans, strategy implementation, weekly coaching, and staff training.

Design of Training Courses Addressing SME Competitiveness Issues

For example, MAI utilizes its Export Sales & Marketing Manual in workshops designed to meet the customized needs of SMEs striving to become more competitive on a regional and global basis. The manual is modular and includes topics such as how to: secure financing, price your products, select reputable agents/distributors, develop an export division, complete a winning business plan/export marketing plan, develop efficient shipping procedures, and form consortiums.

Sourcing new technologies for SMEs

Through individual agreements with SMEs, consortiums, and via trade missions, MAI has facilitated acquisition and use of new

technologies by SMEs in a variety of sectors. Technology includes software, hardware, management processes, inputs such as new machinery and components. As a result, firms increase productivity and employment.

Sector Export Strategies

MAI has completed export strategies for consumer products, arts & crafts, tourism, agro-food, technical textiles, ICT, building & construction products, biotechnology, metalworking, environmental technologies, woodworking and aerospace. These strategies included an implementation plan with specific timelines and activities.

FDI Analysis and Attraction

MAI works currently with or has completed investment development and attraction projects for state/provincial and federal investment promotion departments in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Malta, Sicily, Senegal, Northern Ireland, North of England, Malaysia (industrial park), Sweden, Morocco.

Women Entrepreneurs and SME Owners: Seminars and Workshops Addressing Trade and Investment Topics

MAI participated in a project, led by Advanse International, and sponsored by the U.S. Departments of Commerce and State, in Algeria and Tunisia. The activity aided women entrepreneurs with their business and financing strategies and related skill sets. Advanse International, MAI and in-country partners are currently designing a venture capital organization to facilitate economic and social development in the Maghreb by integrating women into the economy through financial and technical assistance to women-owned SMEs.



MARKET ACCESS INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Sample Technical Experience

SME Export Strategy Development

MAI has worked with hundreds of SMEs--new-to-market, new-to-export and SMEs expanding existing markets--typically over a 6-12 month period, to jointly develop and implement export strategies. Industries range from agro-food to ICT to manufacturing. Often, local economic development agencies are a partner and client throughout this process. MAI utilizes established tools and methodologies when offering this assistance.

Trade Missions and Trade Shows

MAI has designed and implemented over 40 trade missions and attendance at trade shows from Canada, West/Central/East Europe, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Taiwan, Egypt, Morocco, Argentina, Africa (Stock Exchange representatives) among other. The range in number of SME participants is 3-90 for any one mission and/or show. These activities are typically either industry-specific or multi-industry, depending upon the country or region. MAI pre-arranges targeted, one-on-one meetings, conducts market research and export strategy development, facilitates meetings on the ground and conducts in-depth follow-up assistance for each participant. This process typically covers a 6-9 month process of preparation, mission or show participation and follow-up as well as project evaluation. MAI has led delegations of SMEs to a variety of trade shows in the U.S. and Europe from the Boston Seafood Show to the Atlanta Gourmet Food Show to TechTextil.

MAI is currently the U.S. National Counselor for Euro-partner business development events which has enabled the company to work with SMEs from the U.S. and 65 other countries. For example, MAI was the U.S. National Counselor for the Adriatic Sea Partenariat 2002 Croatia-Split, in charge of

mentoring U.S. SMEs, preparing them for participating in this 2-day partnering event and facilitating their attendance as well as offering follow-up assistance. MAI teamed with the Croatian Chamber of Economy – Zagreb Chamber of Economy, Udruuga Malih I Srednjih Poduzetnika Small and Medium Entrepreneurs' Association, and the Ministry of Economy. MAI also delivered a seminar in Croatia to SMEs interested in accessing the U.S. market.

Study Tours

MAI has implemented in partnership with CFI and USTDA several Orientation Visits from Vietnam, Taiwan and Africa. In designing these tours, MAI takes care to identify the particular strengths and interests of the tour participants and matches them with appropriate site visits, business briefings, seminars/workshops and networking opportunities.

Access to Finance

MAI has assisted SMEs to secure financing for marketing efforts, working capital, project and trade finance as well as seed, equity and venture capital. MAI reviews business plans, short-lists, introduces and negotiates with appropriate private and public sector financial institutions and develops presentation materials for use during road shows to various financial entities. For example, MAI develops relationships with U.S. agribusiness multinational corporations with in-house venture capital departments seeking to invest in new technologies, typically developed by smaller firms, for its own use. MAI trains SMEs and investment promotion agencies on how to effectively generate investment funds, introduces these clients to the targeted investors and assists with follow-up.



Sample Technical Experience

Cluster Development and Competitiveness

MAI is collaborating with regional economic development agencies and interconnected companies and the sectors they serve to research, plan and develop cluster strategies that will increase employment, attract higher-paying jobs, improve quality of life and promote economic growth. MAI is currently working together with the province of Newfoundland, Canada and its many industry stakeholders to research “best practices” and customize them in an effort to further develop clusters in Aquaculture, value-added food products, nutraceuticals, and aerospace involving academia, government and the private sector.

Establishing Consulting Firms

MAI has shared its knowledge and experience in growing its own company with individual consultants and other small consulting firms in the developing world. We have met periodically through partnering events and conferences which have facilitated mutually beneficial discussions and sharing of ideas, contacts, technologies and processes. Many have become strategic allies with MAI. As a result, MAI is developing training tools to more systematically offer assistance.

Operational Start-up Assistance

Once it is determined that a market exists in the U.S. or Europe for clients' products or services and an effective entry strategy is established, MAI helps guide successful initial implementation of the strategy via: representation in-market; warehousing; liaison with distributors, licensees, joint venture partners, suppliers; initial sales support; final site location, staffing.

Policy-Related Reports and Activities

MAI managed and participated in specific activities under the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialogue and Trans-Atlantic Small Business Initiative in an effort to influence SME policy issues. This involved coordinating with the Appalachian Regional Commission, its 13 member U.S. states, the U.S. Department of Commerce and European Union member countries on SME trade and growth issues.

MAI has also produced SME policy reports for its Canadian federal and provincial government clients. These deliverables are based on our company's hands-on experience collaborating with individual SMEs, industry associations and trade and investment promotion agencies as they engage in the public-private partnership dialogue addressing SME growth challenges. Final reports related to our SME development activities also include lessons learned which are fed back into the policy decision-making process.

Countries Worked

Slovakia, Senegal, South Africa, Croatia, Tunisia, Morocco, Argentina, Singapore, Malaysia, China, Egypt, Jordan, Eastern Caribbean, Canada, Australia, EU States.

Industry Experience

Consumer products, arts & crafts, tourism, agro-food, nutraceuticals, aquaculture, marine technology, building & construction materials, biotechnology, technical textiles, metalworking, automotive assembly & component parts, petro-chemicals, ICT, financial mobilization services, environment.

Contact: Diane Alleva Cáceres,
Managing Director, diane@marketaccessintl.com