

Marketing in the USA



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If you are in the early stages of planning your growth in the USA, or already doing business in the USA and looking to establish a more permanent presence, this booklet will help raise your awareness of the most effective approaches to business and marketing in America that will support you to realise your ambitions there.

About the author



Allyson Stewart-Allen has written this updated, popular brochure on 'Marketing in the USA' for the Department for International Trade, and is co-author of best-selling book 'Working with Americans' and Founder of specialist-marketing consultancy International Marketing Partners Ltd., helping UK firms across a range of industries to grow their businesses in the USA. Based in London for over 25 years, she is originally from Los Angeles and is a dual British and American citizen.

Introduction

Your benefits from this booklet

Given you are likely to be in the early stages of planning your US growth, or already doing business in the US with the intention of a more permanent presence, this booklet is intended to highlight the ways you can use marketing practices cost-effectively to achieve a measure of profitability practically and quickly. The aim of applying some – if not all – of the marketing principles in this publication is fundamental: to build on your past successes in the UK/Europe with your target US consumers, clients, suppliers and/or buyers.

Thus, our goal is to ensure you have the benefit of:

- Advice for how to avoid the several pitfalls that beset UK companies when launching or expanding their businesses in the USA
- Help in deciding the best methods of expanding in the USA, be it organically, via alliances or acquisition
- Suggestions for how you can promote your products/services cost-effectively in the USA

Your opportunities

As a British company, you already have an advantage in the US market, since Americans hold the quality of British goods and services in high regard. Ways to make sure you stay ahead and further your success in the States include:

- Using your website and SEO techniques for Google and Yahoo to help your US customers and suppliers contact you easily, without the associated costs of trans-Atlantic phone charges or multiple time differences (there are six time zones across the 50 States!) Know that Americans turn first to your website for information about your organisation.
- Offering local product or service support and information.
- Selling your target markets on the history or story behind your company, product and/or service.
- Exploiting the heritage and perception in the US of Britain as a world leader in highly-designed/ engineered products, services, luxury goods and intellectual property (film, TV, music, leisure concepts). Helping your US business partners better understand their own EU markets.

Your options for accessing the market

One way to help you define your best route to your US market is by first defining your own objectives for such a significant undertaking. These might be objectives for profit levels, types of contract, human resource levels and calibre of your degree of control over the US operation, among others.

Objectives	You	Your partner
Profits	Maximise over the long term	Reinvest for future growth
Contracts	Detailed measurable results	Brief, adaptable, ambiguous?
Staffing	Employ maximum number of local people	Economies from production processes, not through people?
Control	Regular reporting on progress against objectives	Retain 51 per cent of shares in the venture company?

Your main entry options are:

- Agents, distributors, representatives
- E-commerce
- Mail order catalogues
- Own office with own staff
- Own office with partner's staff
- Contract sales consultants
- Joint venture/strategic alliance
- Acquisition

Despite the similarities in language and culture between the UK and USA, each year many UK companies make the foray into the US market but soon return home empty handed, having neglected some fundamental cultural and structural differences which could have saved them large amounts of time and money. Some considerations for you and your team to consider include the following:

Structural alternatives

One option is the 'go it alone' route, which means putting your own managers and staff on the ground in the US and starting your office organically.

Another option is the 'alliance' – also sometimes called a joint venture, joint marketing agreement or strategic alliance – which usually means finding a mail-order bride and then gambling that the marriage is a long, faithful and rewarding one.

Then there's the 'virtual presence' option, which involves having a US presence of some kind by way of a virtual office or staff who represent your interests in a more or less permanent way.

And then there's the 'hired taskforce' method, which involves paying a marketing consulting firm, contract sales force or marketing organisation for a fixed period to go out and find leads for you in the US and feed them back to your UK base.

Or, you may want to 'acquire' a local company which already has a US presence in your target markets, some goodwill established and perhaps a reputation in the territory that helps your own products or services. And last, but not least, there's E-commerce as one of your routes to expanding in the USA.

Go it alone

Let's start with the positive elements of this approach. Not only does the 'go it alone' method mean you have management control on the ground, but it also means you have first-hand local market intelligence and direct access to customers. On the down side, the learning curve for exceptional performance in that US market will be long and steep and you will find you need to meet the financial costs up front, which will be high, and the risks/failures are all yours. You will also need to start from scratch building your client base, which can take a great deal of time, energy and resource.

Alliance

On the plus side, you have access to local market intelligence, access to customer bases through your partner and shared risk and rewards with another organisation, whether or not these involve customer development and retention. You might even find the alliance nets you some benefits in your UK market by way of your partner, reciprocally, needing your help to develop his UK business, or that the alliance gets you access to technologies you may not otherwise have.

On the other hand, with alliances you tend to lose some control as far as marketing, information systems, human resources and financial decisions are concerned. The learning curve is a little shorter than the 'go it alone' path, but still pretty significant. The other factor weighing against your alliance is the fact that you are at the mercy of your partner's reputation and actions in the local market, and what effects these will have on your brand, reputation and/or marketing strategy. Also let's not forget that the time involved in screening and then negotiating with the series of alliance partners you'll want to interview is extensive. You ought to budget about 12 months for the entire process, from courtship to marriage.

Virtual presence

Not only is this a more affordable, 'instant' route to establishing your US base, it also gives the right impression to those with whom you are trying to do business – that you are taking the US market seriously enough to establish a base there. Your virtual presence might be as simple as an American "1-800" toll-free phone number which connects your US callers directly to your UK office for a minimal monthly or per-call charge. It might also take the form of a US mailing address using any of the many post office box services based across the 50 states.

The costs, however, are not merely the office and answering service you hire, but the fact that you can't respond personally to your clients/customers who might need your help at short notice. Your control, therefore, over problem-solving is fairly limited. Your learning curve is even steeper than the 'go it alone' approach since you probably have no one from your team dedicated to feeding back market trends and intelligence.

Hired taskforce

By hiring a SWAT team in the States, you are able to flatten your learning curve and establish your base cost effectively and rapidly. But, do consider the fact that your ability to control the quality and speed of response of such experts might be limited by distance and time zones.

Getting local market information may also be sporadic, as the team is focused on developing your business rather than providing you with market research, which is a different business activity. The trick here is managing these experts well and defining in advance what you want from them within a realistic timeframe.

Acquire

You have the option to buy that market share in the form of a competitor or supplier that is already actively competing in the United States. Not only does this get you an instant presence, local market intelligence, access to customers and complete quality control, you also acquire that company's infrastructure such as its offices, staff, intellectual property assets, websites and inventories.

Against these benefits is the price tag of your target, which might be quite high considering the real returns you achieve. The time involved in identifying and researching these targets can be monumental, and this often distracts your senior management to the detriment of your on-going business in the UK. Yet another cost to be considered is the legal fee for completing the transaction, which can also be significant if there are many subsidiaries or companies that you are purchasing.

E-Commerce

Lastly, you have the option to sell your products and services over the internet via your website. The advantages of this route are its low costs associated with adaptations for the American market (e.g prices in US Dollars, shipping and credit terms, refunds and returns, size and description changes, American spellings).

The investment required will be the cost to equip your website's operational capability – the "back-end" – for supporting electronic payments, credit cards, US addresses and zip codes. Additionally, it's well worth investing the time to decide which of your products/services are relevant for your target US customers/clients. What works in your home UK market may not be totally successful in America, for instance colours, designs, descriptions and product sizes (metric vs. imperial measures).

Conducting market research

So what are the tricks to doing your homework about your US market before risking millions of hours, pounds and potentially expensive and high-profile mistakes?

1. Profile your target customers/clients, not just from US industry data or published reports but also by going out and observing those contacts first-hand. How do Americans interact with your product/service and why? How are your US customers' tastes different from those at home in the UK?
2. Visit the leading US trade shows in your immediate and adjacent sectors to see your competitors' latest innovations. It can also be a handy excuse to meet customers/clients, current and potential suppliers, the key players in your distribution channels, potential employees, the journalists and trade publications covering your sector, conference organisers as well as of course possible strategic partners to help you set upon-the-ground if that is part of your expansion strategy. Much intelligence can be gathered by being on-the ground, walking around a US trade show gathering views on industry trends and opportunities to further refine your US value proposition
3. Interview your target customer/client segments to assess how well they match your preconceived notions. It may be that there is a fantastic match and that little refinement is needed to your current range of products/services in the UK
4. Alternatively, a major product or packaging redesign might be necessary as the content of your product labelling is very important to ensure regulatory compliance (imperial measurements, font size, usage instructions, etc.). You might want to engage the services of a private consultant who is familiar with package and labelling standards, or undertake some competitor analysis of your own by performing in-market research.
5. Use a variety of research methods – not just one – to develop a well-rounded picture of your US market. Often companies rely solely on quantitative methods and miss the wood for the trees as a result. The best approach is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods that provide a picture not just of preferences and strength of beliefs of your consumers or clients, but also the anecdotes which often are profoundly useful in the PR and advertising messages about the benefits expected – in words and priorities that differ from your UK market. Cost-effective (often free!) and easy-to-use online research tools exist to help you do this, including Survey Monkey.
6. Analyse the findings while asking yourself, “So what does this imply I need to do differently from the way I do it in the UK?” Research tables are dull reading at the best of times, and miss the important issue of how your future marketing activities abroad may be affected. By asking, “What do I do as a result?” after looking at the raw data, you’ll find yourself talking in terms of actions rather than facts.

Menu of marketing tactics

Challenge 1: Create awareness on a small budget

There are several ways you might create awareness with a limited amount of investment. These can include the use of:

- Issue driven (commercial), authoritative newsletters/papers sent to current and potential clients
- Email shots
- Speaking engagements
- Publishing articles in journals read by your target clients
- Networking, including through meaningful professional bodies
- Attendance at trade shows with the support of DIT's Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) and/or your industry trade association
- Themed round tables/lunches/webinars/special events at your offices (these should be driven by some burning commercial issues you share or understand are at work in your target client base)
- Distribution of your corporate literature as widely as possible

Some of the resources you're likely to require in order to achieve these activities include:

- Obtaining lists of email addresses for your target prospects and current customers as well as licenses for email newsletter software (such as Constant Contact or MailChimp)
- Contacts you or your colleagues have cultivated in

- The trade and quality press
- Conference organisations
- Transatlantic business networks, such as the British American Business Council (www.babc.org)
- Alumni and Expat associations
- Social media networks (e.g. LinkedIn)
- An ongoing/rolling list of 'hot' issues in your industry sector to drive the publication of issue papers and round table lunches, to serve as the platform for your spin-off events
- Time to manage and carefully plan your campaigns

Challenge 2: Stretching the budget

The options available to you are vast, each with its associated level of risk, rewards and management time. You might consider:

- Strategic alliances/joint ventures/joint marketing agreements which allow you to provide 'add on' or complementary products or services with companies you believe to be competitors in other areas
- The 'virtual' organisation, created by employing the specialists (often referred to as 'associates' in this context) which your business requires on a project by- project basis Barter/service exchange

Challenge 3: Awareness for no spend

There are even ways to raise awareness of your activities, and the benefits to your customers or clients, that do not cost your organisation in cash terms.

For example, you may consider entering a US contest or applying for industry awards, both of which provide vast public relations opportunities (the chance to tell your customers of some noteworthy achievements). The Department for International Trade (DIT) can provide a wide range of export support, and this can be accessed through their website:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-trade Many organisations rely on the securing of high profile investors or board directors to help them spread the word. Most directly, your firm can generate press releases regularly and fairly frequently for the US trade and business media, or by hiring a local public relations firm that have relationships with journalists and business leaders. (There is always a market for stories that inform their audiences creatively, as well as promote your activities).

Some of the resources you may require include:

- Contacts within trade associations, chambers of commerce, professional and banking institutions
- Knowledge and training in how to write effective press releases
- Time for completing grant or award applications
- Research/development activities in order to launch a new product/service

- Press contacts to place your releases or help sell your news story

Developing a plan for regular communication with your US customers/clients is a good way to gain feedback from them which can be incorporated into your promotional and marketing objectives and campaigns. The marketing, or promotion, of your company's expertise in the US should be fun and enjoyable, as you're more likely to hear compliments than criticism from your customers (or they wouldn't be customers!).

So bear in mind when marketing your company in the US:

- Be creative—the sky's the limit. The object is to think as laterally as possible, to consider as many types of distribution points and customer bases as possible
- Know your true unique selling points vis-à-vis your competitors. This way, you've identified your niche, and can position yourself effectively within it (as you've defined one which hopefully has few, if any, other players within it!) This may require tailoring your marketing materials for different audiences.
- Promote benefits, not features. Make sure what you're selling the customer can answer their question "What's in it for me?"
- Cultivate contacts across as wide a net as possible. This may include journalists, clients/customers, suppliers, former colleagues, fellow alumni, expat, and professional bodies like trade and government associations
- Develop a strategy for your communications approaches which always assesses the payback to you, your organisation and your customers/clients

Challenge 4: Using Social Media as a strategic tool

Of course you might already know of Americans' increased reliance on social networks, the most business- friendly being LinkedIn and Facebook. Finding common connections is what excites the extrovert tendencies of US business professionals, so having your company and personal profiles in these virtual networks gives you credibility. It also helps overcome the significant physical distance since online information is accessible on demand.

- You might consider:
- Creating a company Facebook page and keep in touch with those who “like” your products and services
- Crafting LinkedIn profiles for the key officers in your organisation, inviting those Americans you meet at trade shows or other face-to-face events to connect with you
- Starting a special interest group on LinkedIn to invite customers, prospects and others to join it for sharing your company's latest products/services, innovations, observations on the industry sector and trends
- Holding regular webcasts on your company's latest products and services or points of view on the trends affecting the industry
- Using Twitter to promote new products, services, client wins, innovations since Americans value anything new or improved
- Starting a company blog with stories featuring your very happy US customers/clients and their enthusiasm for what you and your organisation have to offer
- Growing the number of websites that include links to that of your organisation and web pages about your products/services, press releases and latest developments

And, last but not least...

Follow-up! By telephone – not email or LinkedIn – the personal touch is very important. Since most of your competitors do not follow-up, you have a natural advantage in creating an ongoing dialogue with your customers and clients!

Tips for planning your marketing success in the USA

So how have UK companies like yours achieved their success in the United States?

Carefully. Because of the massive size of US markets compared to the UK's home market, successful companies tend to do their homework well in advance in order to avoid the most blunders and the most embarrassment. Similarly, successful UK companies take care in choosing their marketing partners abroad, assessing their business philosophies, gracefulness, reputations and deftness in managing the market.

Methodically. By carving up this vast geographic market in order to target (and thus manage) a series of smaller ones, or segments, many small and medium-sized companies coming into the US can focus on using their resources to best effect. Like an orange, it's much easier to digest in smaller bites than one large one.

You might consider defining your segments in a number of ways:

- By the products/services you wish to market
- By the different mix of benefits sought by each distinct group of customers
- By where your product/service is available for purchase
- By the time of year your product/service is available (if it's seasonal)
- By the method of payment (standing order vs. credit card vs. retainer etc)
- By industry sector

- By customer size or type (industry sector, number of employees, turnover, number of offices etc)
- By consumption patterns (heavy user/light user).
- By geography, by targeting certain states that are most relevant for your offering.

Each segment can then be prioritised and treated as a distinct market (for your marketing and sales budget are finite), at which your pricing strategy, product mix, promotions and points of distribution can be aimed in a logical way – in line with the benefits each such market expects from your product/service.

Indigenously. Many UK firms enjoy the benefit of hiring American marketing expertise in America – whether in the form of management consultants or hired management. Generally, this is a more common way forward than it is for US firms expanding into the UK and hiring UK managers for key positions. The advantages of having knowledge of US business practices and customs, social and professional 'networks' and marketing practices are increasingly recognised as a valuable asset to the budding UK company in the States.

Unobtrusively. UK firms sometimes try to play down the fact that they are not of US origin in order to integrate in their new market. Often, use of the word 'American' in the company name is seen as a way to minimise any possible prejudice that comes with being a foreign company.

Strategically. UK firms also often use the US as a stepping-stone for Southeast Asian markets, or as an export base generally for other parts of the world (e.g. Miami as the gateway to South America). UK manufacturing companies who have made their way into US markets are now consolidating and working smarter with fewer people.

Your planning checklist

1. Analyse the radar screen. Make sure you know who your competitors are in your US market as it is likely they will be quite different to those in your backyard at home. Knowing their strengths and weaknesses vis-à-vis your own is key, as is considering the radar in the BROADEST possible sense: don't just spot the other firms similar to your own on the map, but also consider how other US service businesses you may not have thought about might offer your services too (example: US accountancy firms and legal firms co-locating and sharing clients).
2. Remember that marketing is not only about selling or public relations. For many UK organisations doing business in the US, marketing is generally perceived purely as a range of public relations activities or sales promotions. However, you should – now that you've read the sections above – have the advantage of knowing that marketing is (and can be) significantly broader, taking into account your pricing strategies, the product or service mix and composition, the ways you distribute your products or services and the way you promote them.
3. Give your executives in the US freedom to act. Why not use your US colleagues as door openers, marketers and ambassadors for your UK company?
4. Allowing them to interpret the business development brief in a way that suits their US environment, in ways that will be supported by your UK head office, allows your talented executives to be as effective as possible.
5. Know what you want from your US market in terms of results. It may be that your UK expectations are not going to be easily met in the US because of the cultural, language and business differences between the two markets. Many marketers (on both sides of the Atlantic) often aren't prepared for the question from their opposite number "What do you want from your relationship with us?" If you can't articulate what you want from your US customer, client, buyer or supplier relationships, then you may never know when you're getting what you need.
6. Analyse results on a milestone, 'per customer' or 'per project' basis. It could be that a US customer you acquire is either unprofitable or too costly to serve effectively or efficiently, sapping your valuable UK talent that could be deployed more profitably elsewhere (such as here at home). By conducting these reviews and analyses, you are able to identify weaknesses in your international organisation clearly and correct them quickly. The old axiom "you can't manage what you can't measure" goes for transatlantic expansion too!

7. Import or hire local marketing expertise from outside your sector. Sometimes an organisation needs to find, and implement locally, the best practices from any industry, not just its own sector in which it finds itself. By applying marketing thinking that's "outside the box", you minimise the risk of applying insular, repetitive and uncreative solutions where more innovative ones are needed, especially if your sector may not be highly differentiated (e.g. legal services, IT, financial services).

8. Market throughout the financial year, not just when US business seems slow. The benefits of this approach include not only minimising your cash flow fluctuations and sales fluctuations, but maintaining a constant level of awareness of your company in the US marketplace. Often this forces the company to create a US marketing strategy and agenda where, hitherto, none existed.

9. Assume you're in an international knowledge-based (or information-based) business and manage accordingly. Centralise databases about your US clients and prospects so everyone in the organisation – regardless of location – can track your US contact histories, while simultaneously destroying internal fiefdoms.

10. Apply new, international solutions to your current US clients, rather than old templates to new clients. It's better to have many repeat US customers or clients who use your products or services because they are global, innovative and sophisticated rather than repetitive and predictable. By exposing your team to as many industry sections and US business approaches as possible you spot and apply best practice, and your customers benefit, regardless of the nationality or roots of your solutions.

Last but not least...

11. Know when to walk away from a US opportunity. Not every customer or client is fulfilling or profitable, even if they have the cachet of being a certain size, or are in a glamorous industry or location. Not every US customer deserves your time or attention. Not every US customer appreciates the VALUE of what they are getting from your organisation. However, the majority of clients should be accounted for in your US marketing strategy and the direction in which you're trying to lead your organisation.

Essential information for doing business in the US

Ensure your business card is the same size as US cards as Americans tend to place them in pre-cut wallets

Create either a separate US domain (.com), or a

US section on your existing website

Quote all prices, shipping costs, and any duties in US dollars

Review your marketing literature to ensure it is short, concise and robust (bullet points help), making sure it details how you differ from the competition and make sure it's the right size to fit into US filing cabinets! Also be sure to check for US spelling, grammar and style

Standard paper size is 8.5" x 11" and not A4

There are six time zones across all 50 States and four on the continental US:

- Pacific Standard Time (PST)
- Mountain Standard Time (MST)
- Central Standard Time (CST)
- Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Ensure your compliance with the two tier legal system when undertaking business across State lines: State and Federal laws will apply

US businesses value responsiveness, especially from companies based abroad: make sure that you provide them with requested information or quotes within seven days to ensure they perceive your company as responsive

Imperial measures are used as standard in the US, with little fluency of metric equivalents

Cultural Differences: Top 10 Tips for Marketing to Americans

1. Time is Money. Be on time or a few minutes early for meetings. Respect the Americans' need to maintain a schedule. Deadlines are serious. Meet delivery times or risk losing the piece of business. Promptly respond to emails and voicemails, even if it is to just acknowledge that you've received them.

2. Looks Matter. Packaging is important for people, products and presentations. Neatness and attention to details are important. Is your presentation polished? Do you look the part? The definition of 'looking wonderful' and appropriate business attire is often unclear. Avoid wearing casual clothes to a company with a formal corporate culture. Do as the Americans do -- ask before you go -- what's the expected dress code? How formal will the meeting be? Research the corporate culture in advance as much as you can.

3. What's the Bottom Line? Get to the point and be prepared to quickly provide specific information about your products and services, including pricing. Arrange your material, your story and facts in simple formats. Can you distil your proposition on a one page Executive Summary? Develop a 30-60 second 'elevator pitch' of what your business offering is and why someone should work with you.

4. Business before Pleasure. Be willing to do business first, build the relationship second. Americans develop relationships through doing business. If they don't take time to get to know you personally, remember no offence is intended -- they just are keeping to a schedule.

5. Equality for All. Treat everyone as if they are going to be the person who signs your contract. Everyone, no matter rank or age, should be treated as equals. Don't be insulted if addressed by your first name after an initial, brief introduction...it's the American style.

6. Tailor Made. Americans want choices, to have their opinions and preferences recognised. Be sure to involve your target customer or client in decisions. Provide options so your customers/clients feel you really recognise and cater for their needs.

7. Enthusiasm Expected. Don't be insulted when your American colleague suggests getting together but doesn't follow up with a specific invitation. They are sincere in the wish to get together but too rushed to follow up. You can propose a time or just simply appreciate the interest.

8. Advisors at the Ready. Americans use outside advisers as a regular part of their business lives. If lawyers or consultants are included in your meetings, don't be offended or anxious. They routinely act as upstream advisors to be sure issues are addressed now to avoid problems later. It is commonplace to have lawyers involved in business development in business decisions due to complex regulations and laws and the high level of litigation in the United States.

9. Plan, Plan, Plan. Don't be surprised when you're asked to describe your marketing plan, your business plan, your expansion plan, or your plan to increase revenue or even where you plan to go on vacation. The assumption is always that you have a plan because without one, you might not reach your goals.

10. Do it Now! Even with this emphasis on planning, Americans still may make decisions seemingly on impulse. In their rush to "get things done" they try to decide quickly and worry about the consequences later.

Next Steps

Take a few minutes to gauge the likely success of your company in the USA. You'll see from the questions below that marketing in the USA is not only down to you, but everyone in your company!

Your US readiness questionnaire

1. We survey our US customers'/clients' attitudes and perception regularly.
2. All of us in the organisation feel responsible for planning how we delight our customers/clients in the US.
3. We regularly listen to, and act on, suggestions for marketing improvements from all staff.
4. We communicate US client/customer feedback regularly to all staff.
5. All of us in the organisation, including support staff, have had input to the US marketing plan and know how we contribute to its achievement.
6. We have clear performance measures that let us recognise our US marketing success.
7. Our US marketing performance measures are known to all staff, who helped formulate them.
8. All of us in the organisation have the power to solve US customer/client problems on the spot.
9. We train our professionals and support staff to ensure our US customer care performance is exceptional.
10. We regularly look for ways to use new technologies or processes in the US market to ensure we will continue to offer the best service or product

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The Bottom Line.

If you answered 'No' to any of these important factors that predict the likelihood of your US marketing success, you may not be using your customers or clients as effectively as possible in your planning process.

Other sources of information

The Department for International Trade (DIT) is the Government Department that helps UK-based companies succeed in the global economy. They also help overseas companies bring their high-quality investment to the UK's dynamic economy, acknowledged as Europe's best place from which to succeed in global business.

DIT offers expertise and contacts through its extensive network of specialists in the UK, and in British embassies and other diplomatic offices around the world. We provide companies with the tools they require to be competitive on the world stage.

For information on the services available to you, or to locate your nearest International Trade Team, please visit our website: gov.uk/dit

The Department for International Trade has teams located in the British Embassy in Washington DC and eight British Consulates around the United States.

U.S. States

If you are looking for advice on establishing a presence in the United States, Select USA is a programme under the US Department of Commerce that explains the benefits and puts you in touch with relevant US Economic Development Agency contacts: selectusa.commerce.gov

In addition, many US States maintain offices in the UK or elsewhere in Europe. The US state governments are a good source of advice and information about business conditions in their states. Please visit the Council of the American States in Europe website for more information: www.case-europe.com

U.S. Lawyers

A list of American attorneys based in the UK is available on the US Embassy website: www.usembassy.org.uk

The American Bar Association website provides extensive lists of law firms across the United States. You can search by geography, area of practice or just browse the list of law firms to search for ABA-certified lawyers by state and by specialty: apps.americanbar.org/legalservices/lris/directory

Select U.S. Government Resources

All US federal agencies

www.usa.gov/directory/federal/index.shtml

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB)

www.ttb.gov/index.shtml

Regulates Alcohol & Tobacco

American Embassy, London

london.usembassy.gov

Represents US diplomatic interests abroad

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

www.cpsc.gov

Regulates Consumer Products

Customs & Border Protection (CBP)

www.cbp.gov

Regulates and facilitates international trade, collecting import duties, and enforcing US regulations, including trade, customs and immigration

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

www.ftc.gov

Presides over Dissatisfaction with Business Practices

FedWorld

www.fedworld.gov

Online locator service for a comprehensive inventory of information disseminated by the US Federal Government

Food & Drug Administration (FDA)

www.fda.gov

Regulates Cosmetics & Drugs, Food, Medical Devices, Veterinary Medicines & Electronic Product Radiation

Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

www.irs.gov

Responsible for tax collection and tax law enforcement

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

www.nist.gov

Promotes US innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve quality of life

Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA)

www.osha.gov

Assures safe and healthful working conditions by setting and enforcing standards and by providing training, outreach, education and assistance

Small Business Administration (SBA)

www.sba.gov

Provides support to entrepreneurs and small businesses

United States International Trade Commission (USITC)

www.usitc.gov

Provides international trade statistics and the Harmonised Tariff Schedule

United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)

www.uspto.gov

Issues patents to inventors and businesses for their inventions, and trademark registration for product and intellectual property identification

UK Export and International Business Development Resources

British American Business, Inc.

www.babinc.org

Leading transatlantic business organization, dedicated to helping companies connect and build their business on both sides of the Atlantic

British Standards Institute

www.bsigroup.com/en

Multinational business services provider that advises on how to meet technical standards and approvals procedures

Export Control Organisation

gov.uk/dit

Part of the Department for International Trade
Helps businesses regarding export procedures and documentation.

UK Export Finance

gov.uk/dit

Part of the Department for International Trade
Export credit agency that provide assistance with credit insurance and financing products

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HM Revenue & Customs

gov.uk/hmrc

UK department responsible for the collection of taxes

Company Information

Better Business Bureau

www.bbb.org

Dun and Bradstreet:

www.dnb.com

Oanda

www.oanda.com

Foreign exchange rates, current and historical.

Nasdaq

www.nasdaq.com

US Securities and Exchange Commission

www.sec.gov

Forbes Magazine

www.forbes.com/forbes

US News & World Report

www.usnews.com

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