



# BEXA

British Exporters Association  
(est. 1940)  
Broadway House,  
Tothill Street,  
London SW1H 9NQ

Tel.: 020 7222 5419  
FAX: 020 7799 2468  
Email: [hughbailey@bexa.co.uk](mailto:hughbailey@bexa.co.uk)  
Website: [www.bexa.co.uk](http://www.bexa.co.uk)  
Director: Hugh Bailey

## SPRING RECEPTION NEWSLETTER House of Commons, London, 7th May 2013

TO SUPPORT, REPRESENT AND PROMOTE THE INTERESTS OF THE UK EXPORTING COMMUNITY

**Chairman's word** *It would appear that this year Spring is mimicking the economy – growth is patchy and, where there are signs, it is slow and prone to frosting – more 'brown roots' than 'green shoots' to date.*

*The trade deficit fluctuates but remains firmly in deficit and the balance in goods remains persistently weak. Against this background, the Government's focus on increasing exports and numbers of companies exporting is admirable. The economy needs rebalancing but this will take time. BEXA continues to lobby Government for internationally competitive export support from UK Export Finance, in particular the implementation of the Export Refinancing Facility and the Direct Lending Facility. We were clearly disappointed that both these products, which were expected to be available to exporters during the first 4 months of the year, are still not available. We've highlighted this delay to the Chancellor and trust that both products will be implemented at the earliest.*

*BEXA Committees have continued to be well attended this year. In particular numbers attending the SME Committee have increased dramatically from the inaugural meeting, when we had 6 attendees, to the March meeting when around 15 members turned out. A big 'thank you' therefore goes to Terry Partridge and Jason Ashley, who co-chair the SME Committee and have provided such an impetus to its work. I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking David Benton of Rolls Royce, who is stepping down from his role as Chairman of the Industry Committee. I'm sure that all members who have attended meetings chaired by David during the last 2 years would join me in commending him for his strict timekeeping rules; there's no such thing as a late lunch when David's in the chair.*

*Looking ahead, on 29th October we will hold a seminar in Glasgow to be hosted by Ernst and Young, details to follow but put the date in your diaries - it's a good 2 weeks after our Annual Lunch, so plenty of time to recover*

**Jon Coleman, Chairman**

### **BEXA Interview – with David Cant (Albion (Overseas) Ltd.)**

**1. In your opinion, what are the benefits for UK companies when exporting to Russia?** The most obvious thing to say is that Russia is the biggest country in the world. What a lot of people may not be aware of is that it is the UK's fastest growing export market. More importantly, they have money, with growth of over 3 to 4% per annum. The Russians like to do business with the UK, because they regard British suppliers as reliable, and our quality to be high. This applies not only to obvious "Brand Britain" products, but also for instance to precision engineered products, equipment, spare parts, components and so on. So long as a company is not lazy about it, simply visiting a trade fair, appointing a distributor and waiting, (not usually a very successful approach), then there are massive benefits. Most companies that do business in Russia just wish they had started sooner. There is money out there, and margins are higher.

**2. Is it a difficult market to sell in?** It surprises many people but I think on most industrial estates around the UK there are companies already doing business with Russia. I have been in this job many years, and have visited hundreds of companies exporting to Russia. People worry about being paid. I have had payment problems with British companies, but not once with a Russian company. That's in 24 years. Not only that, but it is possible, indeed normal to be paid in advance, particularly at the beginning of the relationship. Corruption is often mentioned, and the Russian Government is trying to address this. There are western companies making the problem worse by engaging in it, but it is receding and more importantly, is far smaller than the press would have you believe. I have never been asked to make a payment to secure a contract, or anything of the sort. It is actually unusual. People worry about language, about culture, about whether their product or service will be understood. But we have seen time and time again that these are non-issues. The issue is: do you have a good product at an acceptable price?

**3. What more should Government be doing to boost UK exports?** The Government is doing a pretty good job at providing the tools needed for doing business overseas. I think it is often the companies themselves that could be more imaginative, more bold. Stop just selling to western Europe, the USA and so on, where everybody is clambering over each other to sell the same stuff. Russia remains relatively open. And with the flight from London or Manchester being less than four hours, it's the BRIC on your doorstep so to speak. Successful companies don't just do what others do. And they don't "try anything so long as it's free". They consider; they budget; they select; they drive. The companies that have a strategy are the companies that will win.

**4. What have been some of Albion's high points over the past 12 months?** Interestingly, we have never been so busy as we are now. It's as if Russia has suddenly popped onto everybody's radar screen. In fact, in a few weeks time we are having to airlift virtually the whole of our UK staff to our Moscow office because we have so many clients in town at the same time! It's a high grade problem! Our company is not a typical consultancy; we also have our own warehousing because we are distributors as well. Not only is the consultancy business booming, but the trading business too. We keep breaking through our credit limits with suppliers, so paying far ahead of the due dates! This is why we have had to renegotiate these limits because they were set years ago, and the trade is far quicker now than these limits could keep up with.

**5. What is the main benefit of membership of BEXA?** We have over the years been members of various bodies, but BEXA is very refreshing. They are very active, receptive to members' ideas, and always helpful. So as well as coming up with their own busy schedule of activities, they show a genuine interest in working with their membership. It is a virtual impossibility to please a diverse and numerous membership, but we are very pleased to be members and look forward to a long and active relationship. We enjoy the events, the networking, but also valuable information and of course the committee meetings, which we are now becoming involved with, are very useful indeed.

### **THE QUEEN'S AWARDS FOR ENTERPRISE 2013**

Congratulations to BEXA member, Gapuma Group. It has been recognised for record levels of growth in its export business over the last three years. Jack Bardakjian, Managing Director, will be interviewed in the next BEXA Newsletter.

### **BEXA LUNCH**

Monday, 14th October 2013  
at The Mansion House,  
London.

### **GTR BEXA YOUNG EXPORTER AWARD**

Brings recognition to a young exporter (under 35 on 31/12/12) and a prize of £1,000. Apply now! Details on [www.bexa.co.uk](http://www.bexa.co.uk)



*half price subscription for the period ending 31st December 2013 - for corporates attending BExA's Spring Reception on 7th May 2013*

## **Application for Membership of The British Exporters Association**

For consideration by the Association's Council

1. Applicant Company:

Name:  
Registered Address:  
Postcode:  
Company registration number:  
Web-site:

2. Representative:

Name:  
Job Title:  
Postal Address (if different to registered address):  
e-mail address:  
Office Telephone:                      Mobile Telephone:

3. Accounts:

Link to the company's last available audited accounts:  
*(or send a hard copy to BExA Director)*

4. Export Business:

Manufacturer     Bank     Insurer/Broker     Export House     Other

Description of export business *(Please attach a company annual report and promotional material if available).*

Main export markets:

Main reason for wanting to join BExA:

Number of employees engaged in UK export-related activities:

1-25     Over 25

**Annual Subscription 2013:** 1 - 25 employees: £235, **special rate: £120 + VAT**; Over 25 employees: £850, **special rate: £425 + VAT**. Council reserves the right to call for an audited statement of the number of employees engaged in export.

Signed by Representative \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: The Director, British Exporters Association, Broadway House, Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NQ