

[New Web Portal Links Small Businesses to Export Grants, Loans, and Counseling](#)

Local News

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The Washington State Department of Commerce has launched a new www.exportwashington.com web portal that streamlines access to government and nonprofit programs to help small and medium sized businesses grow through exporting. The site is designed for all businesses, from young startups beginning to explore international trade to established companies with an exporting track record and a desire to expand to more countries. "Businesses in Washington are much more likely than businesses in other states to attribute a percentage of sales to international buyers. About 4 percent of our companies export, compared to the national average of 1 percent," said Leigh Felton, Assistant Director of the Business Services Division at Commerce. "Export Washington will help more businesses easily find the resources they need to expand and grow, and continue the legacy of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit that thrives in our state."

With resources available through the Washington State Department of Commerce, the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Small Business Administration, the Washington Small Business Development Centers, Export Finance Assistance Center of Washington, and others, companies can get help with:

- Building an export plan
 - Finding export grants and loans
 - Arranging one-on-one consultations with government trade specialists
 - Finding international network and business-matchmaking opportunities
- Visitors to the site can also learn from businesses that have successfully launched an export strategy.

ExportWashington.com Success Stories feature video profiles of Janicki Industries, Wood Stone Ovens, Swype, Stemilt Growers, and Anderson Hay & Grain, one of the country's top 50 exporters and based in Ellensburg, WA. ExportWashington.com was funded in part by a U.S. Small Business Administration's State Trade and Export Promotion (STEP) grant to Washington State in 2011. The STEP grant is part of the U.S. Small Jobs Act of 2010 and the National Export Initiative to boost the U.S. economy through trade. STEP programs offered through Commerce began in October 2011, and will continue for another year through September 2013. These programs help businesses build relationships in Europe, China and India, provide export vouchers up to \$5,000 to offset export-related expenses, and support one-to-one consultations with trade and export finance specialists at no charge. For information about STEP in Washington State or other Commerce programs that help Washington businesses grow, expand and locate, please visit www.exportwashington.com.