



CHAMBER CERTIFICATION SERVICES

SEEING CLEARLY OVERSEAS

Chamber Certification Services help Vision Alert stand out from the crowd in International markets.

Situation

Leeds-based Vision Alert is a specialist manufacturer and supplier of audible and visual safety and warning systems for vehicles and buildings. Its products range from beacons and lightbars to warning lights, sirens and speakers and are sold in 56 countries worldwide.

Export Sales Manager, Neil Park, said: "Our export business has grown steadily since our launch in 1994, driven by a real demand for safety products made in the UK. That is, the majority of our sales are health and safety driven, where the quality and reliability of the product is paramount – and there is a perception worldwide that the UK leads the world in that respect. That perception gives us a clear advantage in overseas markets, one that we have always been keen to capitalise on."

According to Neil, proving that Vision Alert's products are designed and manufactured in the UK, to UK standards is a crucial marketing lever: "Vision Alert is a UK manufacturer, and proud of it. Proving that, and converting leads into sales is vital to our success, and a large part of that is about export certification."

Given the importance of certification, and the scale of the job, Vision Alert has always been very careful to ensure that export paperwork is as streamlined as possible, without compromising on its credibility. Neil said: "Very often, certification is a potential deal breaker. Customers make it clear that only the most trustworthy certificates are acceptable. However, it is not a job we can do ourselves – we simply do not have the contacts and resources, and in some cases we are not allowed to self-certify. We have always needed to work with an expert partner, the best in fact. Getting the paperwork done, and to the standards demanded by overseas customers demands it."

Solution

Almost from the beginning, Vision Alert has relied upon its local Chamber's Certification Services to look after its export paperwork: "Chamber Certification is the only choice for us and has been a hugely influential part of our export success over the years."

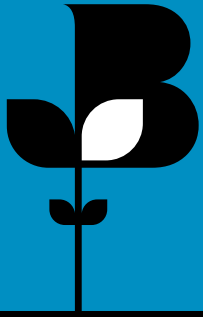
The Chamber looks after every aspect of Vision Alert's export certification, which varies widely depending on the destination country. Neil explained: "The Middle East is an important market for us, but is also a real challenge in terms of the level of paperwork. We usually need a Certificate of Origin and EUR1 and if the deal is struck based on letters of credit, then the whole process gets very complicated. The Chamber simply takes on the job for us."



Outcome

Neil is unequivocal about the importance of Chamber Certification Services to Vision Alert's export operations: "The services are absolutely crucial. Without it, we simply would not be where we are now in terms of International sales."

First and foremost, the services give Neil peace of mind that vital certification is being handled efficiently: "It saves an awful lot of time, but that is not the end of it. The Chamber people are incredibly knowledgeable about export issues, and are always available if you need a bit of advice. Knowing that they are looking after our export documentation fills me with confidence that the job is being done properly and I have never been let down."



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Confidence is also an important issue for Vision Alert's customers and, as a result, Chamber Certification Services provide Neil and his team with a powerful selling point. He said: "Many customers demand we use Chamber Certification Services as a condition of any deal. Having access to Chamber experts and their contacts doesn't just make life easier, it genuinely adds to the credibility of our products. It sets us apart from copy-cat products and says 'This is the real thing'."

For Neil, the Chamber is a source of much more than certification. He turns to Chamber staff for advice and guidance, and is a regular attendee at export training events: "The Chamber is an excellent source of help and information - I would always start there when looking at new markets because I know I can find the expertise I need at every step along the way. The Middle East is a case in point because of the importance of local knowledge and robust certification. It is now our most important export market, accounting for sales of around £300,000 per year. That would have been impossible without the Chamber."

Vision Alert, Leeds