



## Route to Profits®

June 2010

*Sometimes all you need is a little direction...*

### Jump-start or Accelerate Your International Growth *Resources and opportunities for international business*

In her recent Inaugural Address imagining the future of Houston, Mayor Annise Parker said, “We don’t have to imagine Houston as an international city – we already are! The whole world lives in Houston. This city’s cosmopolitan, international, diverse and tolerant nature is not secret to us.”

Increasingly, Houston area businesses are looking for opportunities to profit by operating internationally. Resources and infrastructure abound in the Houston area for those who want to go or grow the “international” in their business.

Houston’s international character::

- 92 Consulates – third in the U.S.
- 18 foreign trade and commercial offices
- 32 active international chambers and trade associations
- 2800+ companies doing business internationally
- Over 700 foreign owned firms
- The second largest exporting city in the U.S. and the first in Texas, the leading U.S. exporting state
- First U.S. port in foreign tonnage and second in total tonnage The third U.S. city to house a World Bank Private Sector Liaison Officer

Many executives we interact with in the marketplace now include an aspect of international business in their strategic plan, but are unsure of the resources available to assist them. With this Route to Profits®, we offer to make you aware of what’s available.

#### **Greater Houston Partnership – International Business Division**

The Greater Houston Partnership (GHP) promotes trade, commerce and economic growth

in the Houston region. As the primary advocate for regional businesses, the GHP offers an array of services to start-ups or businesses wishing to expand or relocate in the area. The International Business Division works with international companies interested in growing here. The Houston World Trade Center and the Houston World Bank office are housed within the GHP. They also organize and participate in in-bound and out-bound trade missions.

Contact information for the consulates, foreign trade offices and international chambers can be found on [www.houston.org/international-business](http://www.houston.org/international-business).

#### **U.S. Commercial Service**

The U.S. Commercial Service has trade professionals in 105 U.S. cities and 83 foreign countries. To assist U.S. companies, they provide:

- Market intelligence to help U.S. exporters target the right market(s) for their products and services
- Trade Counseling to provide information needed to navigate the export process from beginning to end
- Business Matchmaking to connect U.S. businesses with the right partners and prospects
- Trade advocacy for U.S. companies, leveling the playing field for international procurement

Key services, such as the Gold Key Matching program, allow you to get the most out of your next international business trip by scheduling meetings before you arrive, and International Company Profiles provide you with background reports on companies in a large array of countries.



Contact information and services for the Houston U.S. Export Assistance Center can be found at [www.buyusa.gov/houston](http://www.buyusa.gov/houston).

### National Export Initiative

Since President Obama announced a goal of doubling U.S. exports in five years to create 2 million new jobs, an Export Promotion Cabinet has been formed, and the following strategic initiatives adopted:

- Provide more funding for export promotion and more coordination between government agencies
- Ensure commercial advocacy objectives obtain government-wide support and we advocate more effectively for U.S. products
- Create an Export Promotion Cabinet, consisting of leaders from the Departments of Commerce, State, Agriculture, Ex-Im Bank, U.S. Trade Representative and the U.S. Small Business Administration
- Increase government focus on barriers preventing U.S. companies from getting free and fair access to foreign markets

Updates on the NEI and tools to help with U.S. exporting are at [www.export.gov](http://www.export.gov).

### District Export Council

District Export Councils are businesspeople appointed to serve as volunteers by the Secretary of Commerce to contribute leadership and international trade expertise to complement the U.S. Commercial Service's export promotion efforts. They counsel businesses on the exporting process and conduct trade education and community outreach.

The Houston District Export Council (HDEC) mission is to help foster U.S. economic growth and create American jobs by stimulating and facilitating the export of goods and services from companies located in Southeast Texas. Its members and associate members represent an extensive array of manufacturers, service companies, export facilitators, educators, professional advisors and government agencies.

If you are interested in attending one of the HDEC's monthly meetings, email Andrea Price at [aprice@pkftexas.com](mailto:aprice@pkftexas.com).

### Mayor's Office of International Affairs and Development (MOIAD)

The overarching goal of the MOIAD is to oversee the City's seven International Affairs & Development Councils to expand the constructive dialogue between Houston's international community and the City government and jointly identify opportunities to promote the city of Houston globally - economically, educationally, culturally as well as touristically. The seven designated geographic areas represented by councils include: Africa, the Americas, Asia / Australia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East / North Africa and South Asia.

More about these divisions and their respective activities can be found at [www.houstontx.gov/moiad](http://www.houstontx.gov/moiad).

### Pannell Kerr Forster of Texas, P.C. (PKF Texas)

PKF Texas has served the international middle market for more than 20 years with tax, assurance and business advisory services, both in-bound and out-bound businesses. PKF Texas has access to global international resources through our associations with PKF International and the Leading Edge Alliance. We have recently launched International Healthy Start®, a tailored menu of services to ensure that your new or growing international business is served and advised effectively and efficiently, from basic accounting services to complex international tax and accounting compliance and advice. PKF Texas is involved with and connected to each of the international resources discussed in this *Route to Profits*®.

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