

Export News for Florida

From the Florida U.S. Export Assistance Centers

U.S. Commercial Service, U.S. Department of Commerce

February 2005 Edition

Inside This Edition

1. Carlos Gutierrez Confirmed as Secretary of Commerce
2. Opportunities and Challenges for Florida Manufacturers
3. Interested in Exporting to Panama? Don't Miss the TEAM Santa Rosa Trade Mission to Panama!
4. New Opportunities in the Middle East for U.S. Exporters: Access Eastern Mediterranean Program and Made In America Trade Fair
5. One-Year Multiple Entry Visas Between U.S. and China
6. New Trade Pacts with Laos and Armenia
7. Rebuild Iraq 2005: Opportunities for U.S. Companies
8. Global Procurement Opportunities
9. Market of the Month: Morocco
10. Online Resources

1. Carlos Gutierrez Confirmed as Secretary of Commerce

On January 24, 2005, the Senate confirmed Carlos Gutierrez to be America's next Secretary of Commerce, replacing Donald Evans. Carlos Gutierrez is one of America's most respected business leaders. As CEO of the Kellogg Company, he has been an effective, visionary executive. He understands the world of business from the first rung on the ladder to the very top. He knows exactly what it takes to help American businesses grow and create jobs. Carlos will carry on the work of a distinguished leader, former Secretary Don Evans. During the past four years, our economy has overcome a recession, terrorist attack, corporate scandals, and the uncertainty that comes with war. In all these challenges, Secretary Evans has been a strong and steady advocate for America's businesses, workers, and entrepreneurs. For more information about Mr.

Gutierrez's nomination, please visit

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2004/11/20041129-2.html>.

2. Opportunities and Challenges for Florida Manufacturers

On Thursday, February 10, 2005, the Florida Foreign Trade Association, in conjunction with the South Florida Manufacturers Association and other partners, will present a seminar and luncheon entitled, "Opportunities and Challenges for Florida Manufacturers in the Global Market". This seminar will take place at the Doral Park Country Club, and will start at 10:00 a.m. The topics to be discussed include identifying and overcoming trade barriers, financing small U.S.

manufacturers, how the U.S. Commercial Service can help manufacturers export successfully, and Florida's latest manufacturing trends. For more information, please contact the Florida Foreign Trade Association (305-471-0737). To register, please visit

<http://www.ffa.com/NewSite/EventRegistration.asp?EventID=57>.

3. Interested in Exporting to Panama? Don't Miss the TEAM Santa Rosa Trade Mission to Panama!

The Economic Development Council of Santa Rosa County, in conjunction with the Pensacola Bay Partnership, is sponsoring an Enterprise Florida-certified mission to Panama on March 15-18, 2005. Industry sectors that hold the highest potential in Panama include: Telecom Equipment and Services, Computers and Equipment, Security and Safety Equipment, Food Processing, Building Products, Air Conditioning Equipment, Hotel and Restaurant Equipment, Water Resources Equipment and Services, Financial Services, Food Products, and all agricultural products and services including bulk products.

Due to its strategic location at the mouth of two oceans, Panama, from the time of the conquistadors, has served as the crossroad of trade for the Americas. Today, the country is an international trading, banking, and services center. Panama's dollar-based economy offers low inflation and zero foreign exchange risk. Due to the evolution and composition of Panama's largely services based economy, the extent and nature of local competition is limited in most non-service sectors, offering opportunities for U.S. firms. The United States is Panama's most important trading partner, with about 40% of its imports coming from the U.S. U.S. products enjoy a high degree of acceptance in Panama.

In addition to other scheduled events, all mission participants will have the option to use the U.S. Commercial Service's Gold Key Service, including one-on-one meetings with potential business partners arranged by the U.S. Embassy. If you are interested in the Trade Mission and would like further information, please contact Pat Lockard at the Santa Rosa Economic Development Council (850-623-0174), or visit <http://www.teamsantarosa.com>.

4. Opportunities in the Middle East for U.S. Exporters: Access Eastern Mediterranean Program and Made In America Trade Fair

Access Eastern Mediterranean Program:

The U.S. Commercial Service offices in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, and Israel & West Bank/Gaza have teamed up to offer an innovative and very unique trade promotion service that provides U.S. exporters a way to explore opportunities in these six markets of 150 million consumers through one unified program, which is Access Eastern Med (AEM). In 2004, this program helped to achieve \$1.3 billion in export sales to these markets. For more information, please visit <http://www.buyusa.gov/easternmed/>.

The AEM program in 2005 targets five carefully chosen industry sectors, based on potential in the markets:

- Education
- Telecommunications
- Healthcare
- Automotive and Spare Parts
- Safety and Security

Made In America Trade Fair

"Made In America 2005," the third annual trade fair to promote U.S. products and services, will be held on September 1-3, 2005, in Beirut, Lebanon. In 2004, some 160 U.S. companies

exhibited their products and services at the fair. Due to this trade fair, many U.S. companies established serious contacts and are expecting to sign deals soon. Over 5,000 visitors attended the fair. The feedback from the public and business communities was overwhelmingly positive. Exhibition fees for New-To-Market U.S. companies are free of charge. For more information about Made in America, please visit www.buyusa.gov/Lebanon.

5. One-Year Multiple Entry Visas Between U.S. and China

As of January 25, a new agreement between the United States and China allows tourists and business executives to travel between the two countries under a single visa for 12 months instead of seeking new visas for each trip. The change in policy is expected to dramatically improve U.S. manufacturers' abilities to sell goods and services to their customers in China and create jobs for Americans, according to U.S. House of Representatives Small Business Committee Chairman, Don Manzullo. For details, go online at www.house.gov/smbiz/press/asp_display_press_releases.asp?pressReleaseID=66.

6. New Trade Pacts with Laos and Armenia

President Bush recently signed into law a broad trade package that extends normal trade relations to Laos and Armenia, suspends tariffs on hundreds of products not produced domestically, and repeals a dumping law ruled illegal by the World Trade Organization. The entire article appears on the U.S. State Department web site at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/eur/Archive/2004/Dec/07-732694.html>.

7. Rebuild Iraq 2005: Opportunities for U.S. Companies

The 2nd International Trade Exhibition for the rebuilding of Iraq, **Rebuild Iraq 2005**, will be held in Amman, Jordan, the gateway to business with Iraq. Jordan's geographical proximity, and history of trade with Iraq makes it the natural and preferred venue for international companies eager to meet and do business with Iraq. Rebuild Iraq 2005 has adopted a special program to support and maximize the number of qualified Iraqi businessmen who plan to attend the exhibition and meet with hundreds of exhibitors from around the world keen to participate in the rebuilding of Iraq and hoping to appoint agents and distributors for their products.

Given the more than \$18 billion dollars our Government has committed to the Iraq reconstruction effort and the opportunity for immediate and long-term export sales, this could prove the best export opportunity of the year. Enormous benefits will be derived, not only from possible on-site sales, but also from contacts leading to future sales. This is an opportunity not to be missed! Don't be left out, the Italians already have more than 70 participating companies and Turkey more than 100. For information on how your company can participate in the U.S. Pavilion, contact the show organizer Bechara Nacouzi, International Trade Fairs, Tel: 514-685-3530 - Fax: 514-685-6873, or via E-mail bnacouzi@videotron.ca. For more details about the Show, please visit <http://www.rebuild-iraq-expo.com>.

8. Global Procurement Opportunities

The Department of Commerce, Trade Compliance Center (TCC) provides links to web sites containing information on government procurement opportunities offered by foreign countries, including members of the World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA), international organizations, and the United States. The links may direct you to procurement sites that charge a fee to access tender opportunity information. Many of the web sites are hosted by non-members of the GPA, and therefore may not be subject to the GPA's requirements of transparency and national treatment in government procurement. For additional

information go to: <http://www.tcc.mac.doc.gov/cgi-bin/doiit.cgi?226:54:6b753ea6727752796890d120cad6fa6fb7a8e61984df8bd436461496ab0ef8ac:5>.

9 Market of the Month: Morocco



Why Morocco?

Strategically located along the Straits of Gibraltar, Morocco is a regional hub for transportation, transit, and business. Morocco is an expanding economy, strategically situated at the crossroads of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. Morocco's moderate Mediterranean climate on 2,750 miles of coastline and its developing infrastructure make it an increasingly important and attractive location for business. With the implementation of the U.S.-Morocco Free Trade Agreement (FTA), opportunities for U.S. companies in Morocco will continue to expand.

The democratically-elected Moroccan government has launched a comprehensive economic reform program aimed at reducing inflation, developing the tourism sector, and liberalizing and privatizing key sectors such as telecommunications. The FTA, with its emphasis on the rule of law, improved competition and trade liberalization, and will enhance and solidify these reforms.

Morocco is now steadily progressing internally toward greater modernization and globalization, with the creation of the country's first commercial courts and new streamlined customs departments. By further reducing trade barriers, fomenting transparency, and by institutionalizing international business law, accounting procedures, and standards, the FTA will open Morocco up to increased U.S. business, direct investment, and agricultural and service sector exports.

Best Prospects for U.S. Exporters: Waste Water Treatment, Tourism Support Services, Engineering and Consulting Services, Solid Waste Management, IT Wireless & Internet, Airport Ground Support Equipment, Security & Safety Equipment & Services, Automotive After Market Equipment, Low Cost Housing, and Education.

Understanding the U.S.-Morocco FTA

Morocco signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with the U.S. on June 15, 2004, over two hundred years after being the first country to recognize the U.S. as an independent nation. The U.S.-Moroccan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is one of the most comprehensive FTAs that the U.S. has ever negotiated. The FTA is scheduled to be implemented in spring 2005. Morocco is the second Arab and first African nation to have an FTA with the U.S. In addition to further opening Moroccan markets to American exports by eliminating tariffs on 95 percent of all bilateral consumer and industrial exports, the FTA will help level the playing field with European competition and provide additional protections for U.S. investors.

Moroccan officials anticipate that the FTA will be a catalyst for accelerating and deepening the economic reform process by allowing greater competition, encouraging the formation of international partnerships, and by greatly liberalizing the Moroccan textile and agricultural tariff structures. In addition to calling for a more transparent judicial system and stricter accounting standards, the FTA also provides a high level of intellectual property protection, consistent with the standards set by U.S. law. This includes state-of-the-art protections for trademarks and digital copyrights, expanded protection for patents and product approval information, as well as tough penalties for piracy and counterfeiting.

There are already 120 American businesses operating in Morocco. American manufacturers are expected to capitalize on Morocco's 11-million member workforce in continuing to produce popular American textiles in Morocco.

FTA Specifics

The U.S.-Morocco FTA marks one of the best market access packages to date of any U.S. free trade agreement signed with a developing country. More than 95 percent of current two-way trade in consumer and industrial products will become duty-free immediately, with all remaining tariffs to be eliminated within nine years.

Morocco will provide immediate duty-free access to 92 percent of Moroccan non-agricultural, non-textile imports from the United States, including imports of many goods of significant commercial interest to the United States. Most U.S. exports of civil aircraft, capital intensive machinery, chemicals, construction, and medical equipment will enjoy immediate duty-free access upon entry into force of the agreement.

The FTA creates substantial market access opportunities for U.S. service providers in the telecommunications, banking, insurance, environmental services, and e-commerce sectors, among others. The FTA also requires Morocco to provide a high level of IPR protection, consistent with U.S. law, including state-of-the-art protections for trademarks and digital copyrights, as well as expanded protection for patents and product approval information.

MEBIC: To Morocco and Beyond

Morocco is a great place for U.S. companies to begin exploring commercial opportunities throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Windfalls from high oil prices, combined with the falling dollar and significant economic reforms in many countries around the region, offer American companies some of the best commercial opportunities in a decade.

Recognizing that one of the primary obstacles to business in the region is the difficulty of getting timely, reliable market information, the U.S. Commercial Service is developing the Middle East Business Information Center (MEBIC). MEBIC is a comprehensive initiative to promote, assist, and facilitate U.S. business in the markets of the Middle East and North Africa. MEBIC will help you:

- Take the basic steps to enter the various markets in the Middle East
- Find qualified buyers, distributors, and agents
- Understand the different laws, regulations, and customs
- Leverage the U.S. Commercial Service and our world class market-research

The MEBIC website is an interactive tool for business development and a centralized source of country-specific business information for U.S. companies looking to explore new markets. MEBIC will be a joint effort among federal government agencies with cooperation from regional business associations and industry organizations. In addition to the website, a critical component of the MEBIC initiative will be a team of Middle East specialists, located both domestically and overseas to offer advice and market regional opportunities to interested U.S. companies. Look for MEBIC to be launched in early 2005!

If you would like further information on Morocco, please visit <http://www.buyusa.gov/morocco>.

10. On-Line Resources

Best Free Reference Sites – 2004

<http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/mars/marspubs/MARSBestRef2004.htm>

The American Library Association's Best Free Reference Sites 2004 is a collection of sites that librarians recommend. It's a page worth bookmarking, because it has links to sites about history, the environment, banking, food, science, market research, homework help, company research, word definitions, and much more.

Super Searchers on Competitive Intelligence

<http://www.infoday.com/supersearchers/ssci.htm>

It's a high stakes world in business these days, and no company can afford to be ignorant of their competition. Luckily, there are lots of ways you can research your competitors on the Web. Just go to Super Searcher on Competitive Intelligence, and you'll find hundreds of links to good sources of information. There are free and fee-based sites for specific industries, financial data, news services, market research, university libraries, company profiles, and research tips, just to name a few.