

## ***Case Study***

# **STEP Grant for Translation**



## **Background:**

STEP is a grant program provided by states, and supported by the US Small Business Administration, that provides grant money toward helping small businesses expand in international markets. STEP stands for State Trade Expansion Program, and provides grant money for specific purposes to support export initiatives for small businesses. One of the approved categories for the use of grant money is the translation of web sites, marketing materials and targeted advertising in overseas publications.

It was through a STEP Grant that Rapport International started working with Comptus. Comptus is the leading global producer of quality commercial and industrial application wind sensors, environmental sensors, transmitters and controls. Their instruments are designed for applications where accuracy, durability and repeatability are essential. The company's objective is to be the environmental sensor manufacturer of choice, whether for standard or unique applications.

Owner Andrew White bought the company in 2012 and recognized the opportunity for global growth. As a small business, he saw huge opportunity in the global market for their sensors, but he sought support for this expansion by turning to state and federal resources. Andrew found the STEP Grant program, which helped him connect with Rapport International for his translation of marketing materials into his target markets.

## **Scope:**

The internet has made international customers more accessible to small businesses. It used to be that when a business wanted to expand into an international market they would need to write a strategic plan, find a distributor in-country, set up a relationship with a bank that could handle international payments, and worry about logistics. It was a long, cumbersome, and expensive process. Now, because websites are accessible world-wide, customers from every country can potentially find a website and seek to purchase goods, no matter where the business is located. This has made the process of international expansion more reactive than proactive. It has also helped small businesses grow faster, in markets that were previously cost prohibitive.

A single request for information about goods or services is often indicative of more interest by potential customers who have not taken the next step. One of the best ways to encourage these untapped customers is to speak to them in their native language. Studies have shown that 75% of consumers are more likely to purchase from a company who provides information in their native language. It is now up to companies to decide which markets offer the greatest potential, and then find the funds to move forward. This is where a STEP Grant can help.

Comptus received a request for more information from a potential customer in Turkey. After receiving approval for a translation grant from the state's STEP program, the owner consulted with Rapport International and decided to translate a product brochure into Turkish to help them sell into this new market. They then went on to translate their brochure into French Canadian because they had received interest from customers in Canada as well.

## Process:

Rapport International consulted with Comptus to help them decide what the best course would be for their expansion into these new markets. As experts in exporting and the language service industry, Rapport International can provide translation services, and advice on localization/globalization efforts, we perform brand name testing, and we will guide you on the best, and most cost efficient, course for exporting into new markets.

## Outcome:

Comptus is now doing business in more than 16 countries around the world. The STEP Grant, and working with Rapport International helped them expand into new markets and increase their business exponentially.

Translation of marketing materials and websites should not just be considered an operating expense, it is fuel for sales growth in new markets, and a STEP Grant can be a huge boost to get a small business started toward this expansion and growth. Rapport International is a big supporter of using STEP Grants for translation of websites and marketing materials to increase business and tap into new markets for growth, and we are available to advise and guide companies to help them toward this goal.

<https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/oit/resources/14315>