



## An Ascent to Overseas Success, One Step at a Time.

Expert advice from UKTI is helping an award winning PR company take their business to new heights.



Expert international connections and the guiding hand of an experienced International Trade Adviser from UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) are helping an award winning PR company take their business to new heights, from the edge of the Derbyshire Peak district to the heart of the Austrian Tirol.

Ashbourne based Shepherd PR have a unique 'bright thinking' approach to communications. Linking traditional public relations with online strategy and video to create a cost-effective, integrated solution, they now have a growing portfolio of commercial, industrial and corporate clients as well as a host of trade associations and professional bodies.

With an early career built in international PR within the construction industry, Account Director and company founder Jane Shepherd had experienced first-hand

a successful blueprint for international success. So unsurprisingly, after her company had become well established in the UK, the time was right to look towards overseas expansion.

"Two things struck me," Jane explains. "Austria had less of a profile in the tourism sections of the UK's regional media than it deserves, and what they were doing in sustainable construction is light years ahead of the UK. I've spent a lot of time in Austria over the years and realised that with our expertise we could do well in both these areas."

While attending a UKTI Business German for Beginners course, she met Kathryn Borg, a UKTI International Trade Adviser and the journey began to turn the idea of offering a UK media presence to Austrian clients into reality.

"Shepherd PR were an ideal candidate for our Passport to Export programme," says Kathryn. "They knew their niche well and understood where they could add value to the market but they were still relatively

new to exporting. Passport offered them access to a range of support, events and new contacts which allowed Jane and the team to take their plans to the next level."

At the beginning of the programme Jane attended a range of specialist workshops designed to improve the company's export capabilities. A comprehensive review of their website followed, conducted by an international communications expert from UKTI. As PR experts and ex-journalists, the team knew a lot about communications but were still genuinely impressed by the depth of expertise shown. Armed with a raft of accumulated knowledge and a £1500 grant from UKTI towards website development, Shepherd PR were able to develop a professionally crafted, easy to navigate, German language website to support the launch of their new venture.

At a local 'Meet the Expert' event Jane was introduced to Miles Fisher, a senior commercial attaché from the British Embassy in Vienna.

“I learned more from my 10 minutes with Miles than from anything else. Because of the conversations I’d had, the process of registering our office in Innsbruck was so much easier than it would have been.”

“UKTI has helped us to shape the opportunity; Kathryn has set the agenda and is moving us very methodically through the whole export process. The fact that we also have access to local, on the ground knowledge and expertise through Miles helps us to focus and move forward with confidence.”

To provide a truly accessible service for prospects from Austria, Jane has also taken advantage of UKTI’s Postgraduates for International Business Scheme which helps companies employ the expertise of foreign-language speaking students based at local universities. Five high calibre candidates from Nottingham University Business School were interviewed and Julia Nentwich was appointed.

Julia has helped improve the website further and manages the social media presence for Austria in her native German. She also accompanied the team to Ecobuild, the premier event for sustainable design and construction, and helped with interpretation in discussions with potential clients from the Austrian contingent represented there.

“The feedback has been tremendous,” says Jane. “They were very impressed with us. We’ve not only got a professional German-language website and brochure but also having Julia with us really demonstrated the seriousness of our commitment to the Austrian market.”



For Jane the connections she’s been able to make through UKTI have been invaluable. She found an excellent export PA service, operated by Nottingham-based Angela Kühn, whilst attending a local Explore Export event. An introduction to the Austrian Business Agency from the British Embassy is also proving to be a successful collaboration.

“I’ve always had half an eye on export, but if UKTI hadn’t got involved it’s an idea that we could still be just talking about now. It has saved us a huge amount of time and effort.”

With a wealth of expertise, professional and bi-lingual marketing resources, plenty of leads to follow up and plenty of enthusiasm, Jane and the team look set to make their mark in Austria. Bright thinking indeed.



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## Fast Facts

**Company: Shepherd PR**

**Location: Ashbourne, Derbyshire**

**Sector: PR, Social Media and Video**

**Size of business: 10 employees**

**Years trading: 15 years**

**Years exporting: First year**

**Exporting to: Austria**

**Passport to Export is UKTI’s programme for new and inexperienced exporters.**

### How can Passport to Export help you?

The 12 month programme includes:

- One day workshop
- Capability assessment
- Action plans
- Mentoring and support from a UKTI adviser

This 12 month programme puts together in one simple responsive process all the tools that exporting companies need to grow their business.

For further information please call us on **0345 052 4001**.

**UK Trade & Investment is the Government department that helps UK based companies succeed in international markets. We assist overseas companies to bring high quality investment to the UK’s dynamic economy. We provide companies with the tools they require to be competitive on the world stage.**

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