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Report Categories:

CSSF Activity Report

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Report Highlights:

The ATO Japan used CSSF FY 2009 funding to create and maintain the bilingual business website www.us-ato.jp. The website has opened a number of new avenues for communication. Businesses in both the United States as well as Japan are now able to access previously hard to reach information because of the services offered by the website.

General Information:

Introduction

Creating a greater understanding and building relationships between exporters in the U.S. and businesses in Japan are some of the major goals of the U.S. Agricultural Trade Office Japan. It is only fitting that the website, www.us-ato.jp, launched on January 22nd, helps to achieve these goals. The website has a carefully designed layout which caters to the needs of the individuals and companies involved in trade between the U.S. and Japan. Ultimately what is achieved through the website is a platform for business, communication and dialogue.



The Website

Entrance:

Upon reaching the website, the visitor is greeted with the option of choosing their language preference of either English or Japanese. This bilingual format allows the visitor to feel more comfortable with what they are reading, and it also helps to identify the intention or purpose for visiting the site. Although both the English and Japanese portions of the site have much in common, the perspective layouts are strategically designed to target the needs of either the Japanese industry or the American exporters.



U.S. Restaurant Report (Japanese):

Within the Japanese section of the site one can access specific outlets of information. For example, the National Restaurant Association (NRA) has teamed-up to provide restaurant intelligence which gives insight to current existing trends within the Japanese restaurant industry. Also, organizations such as the Food Marketing Institute (FMI) and FMI Japan have contributed useful marketing intelligence used within the United States.

U.S. Retailer and Companies Report (Japanese):

Connecting Japanese partners to new products and companies is a common request, which is why the Japanese portion of the website includes a promotional section. By posting company names, types of products, and a short description of the history behind the name and an e-mail contact address our Japanese partners can build a strong and confident foundation for engaging new companies and ventures.

Top Interview (English):

Understanding how to work with Japanese companies and their demands is a common concern amongst U.S. exporters, which is why the Top Interview section of the website offers the perfect solution for such worries. These interviews with prominent people, from within the Japanese business world, offer invaluable insight pertaining to the expectations of U.S. exporters and their products.

Supermarket Circular, Chirashi (English):

One of the more unique aspects of the website is that U.S. exporters have the opportunity to see how their products are being advertised within Japan. Providing supermarket circulars allows for the exporters to observe and understand how their product is being presented to the public. This in turn strengthens the relationships between the U.S. exporters and

their Japanese associates.



Events and Future Trends (English/Japanese):

Some other valuable features which can be found are the updates on new events of cooperators. By staying up-to-date on upcoming events, exporters can be confident that no opportunities to make new connections are being missed. Continuing with the theme of staying current, existing trends between college students are analyzed as well as a comparison between other Japanese trends and rituals in the media.



Promotional Calendars (English/Japanese):

In order to help bridge the gap between the different cultures a promotional calendar has been assembled for both the Japanese and American markets. United States exporters get insights as to potential events available for marketing products in Japan and the Japanese importers are able to gain stimulating new ideas on how to market their products.

Inquiries (English/Japanese):

This portion is essential in creating and maintaining a high level of service to both the Japanese importers and American exporters. Since this section is directly linked to U.S. agriculture it is also the most efficient way in discovering new business connections. This aspect of the website makes it easy to understand the value and quality of service offered to participants, as well as the necessity to revisit and utilize the website on a regular basis.



Recommendations

In order to better take advantage of our business website

U.S. Exporters Should:

Send us your information so that we can upload it onto our website and make sure you stay current and connected with the Japanese market. We would like to know any specific details about your company and products and also if you are export ready. Please keep in mind that it is always a good idea to work with your State Regional Trade Group (i.e. Food Export USA, WUSATA, SUSTA). Lastly, try to check the website on a regular basis, as we are frequently making updates and adding useful information.

Cooperators Should:

Send us your product information and please remember to copy your State Regional Trade Group (i.e. Food Export USA, WUSATA, SUSTA) and Japanese representative office.

