

NEWSLETTER

 ENGLISH VERSION



INTERNATIONAL

EXTERNAL EXPERTISE: DRIVING SUCCESS IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS



by **Christian Tegethoff**

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ACCELERATING MARKET ENTRY WITH EXTERNAL SPECIALISTS

Accelerating Market Entry with External Specialists

When entering new markets, companies face numerous fundamental questions: Will our products be in demand in India, Saudi Arabia, or Central Asia? What expectations do local customers have regarding delivery times and service quality? Which certifications and approvals are required? Which sales model is suitable for the respective market?

The initial decisions made will shape further development in the target market. Mistakes at this stage tie up capital, delay market access, and are difficult to correct later. Therefore, for many medium-sized companies (SMEs), a cautious approach via importers is the first step, followed by establishing a representative office. If the outcome is favourable, then a local legal entity is established.

Export managers often encounter a classic chicken-and-egg dilemma: executive boards tie the establishment of a local presence to achieving certain turnover thresholds. But how is an annual turnover of five million euros in Central Asia supposed to be generated without local networks or sales structures? While companies wait, competitors secure customers and partners in the target market. The time lost is usually difficult to make up for later.

To prepare for market entry, many companies work with trade promotion organisations or consulting firms. While their market analyses provide useful foundations, they often lack deeper industry knowledge and personal access to the local business community. For companies without internal staff familiar with the region, this frequently results in generic recommendations that are difficult to implement in practice.

A highly effective alternative is to temporarily engage a local external industry expert. This individual knows the market first-hand, through previous employment with a competitor, distributor, or many years in the local industry. They are not a consultant in the traditional sense, but an operationally experienced specialist who examines the market from the client's perspective. The expert analyses competition, pricing, sales models, and regulatory requirements, and produces a concise report, with reliable cost projections and realistic scenarios for the first 12 to 24 months.

Aside from ensuring successful market entry, there are other advantages to working with a local industry expert. They are also highly effective when reviewing and adapting existing business models in dynamic environments. Political shifts, sanctions, or localisation initiatives like those seen in India and Saudi Arabia, can reshape market conditions rapidly.

Christian TegethoffManaging Director,
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For many exporters, “sleeping markets” are a familiar challenge. These are regions, where a distributor was appointed years ago, but now generates little or no revenue. A local expert can uncover the reasons, reassess market potential, and develop efficient sales and partner structures.

Market Entry Advisory via an Interim Consultant from CT Executive Search

Concept

- **Fixed term recruitment instead of hiring a consulting firm:** Rather than outsourcing the task to a consultancy, an experienced industry expert who knows the market from practice is hired on a fixed-term basis. This could be a former senior employee in an international company, for example, an ex-sales director in a well-known company in the target country.
- **Market analysis:** Within three to six months, the expert analyses the market (competition, demand, pricing, distributor structures, existing supply relationships, etc.) and leverages his network of distributors, authorities, and end customers.

Outcome

- **Final report:** The expert delivers a structured report, with concrete recommendations, such as establishing a subsidiary, designing a dealer strategy, or defining a service concept. An action plan, with a timeline and cost framework serves as the basis for decision-making.

Implementation

- **Continuation:** During the project, the option of extending the collaboration or transitioning the expert into a permanent role, for example, as representative office manager or managing director may be considered.

Advantages of Working with an External Market Specialist

- **Cost efficiency:** Lower expenses compared to hiring consulting firms.
 - **Industry and product expertise:** Access to deep market and product knowledge from a locally experienced expert.
 - **Tailored industry-specific guidance:** No generic templates—only practical, customised recommendations.
 - **Operational relevance:** Actionable analyses and realistic implementation proposals.
 - **Long-term potential:** Option to retain the expert in an operational leadership position.
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I Country



INDIA

Client: Medium-sized supplier in the steel industry

Aufgabe: Following an outcome that fell short of expectations, from a long-standing exclusive distribution partner, it became necessary to obtain a clear and reliable understanding of the current market situation. The goal was to design and implement a local market strategy based on the available data, which could potentially lead to the establishment of the company's own sales subsidiary.

Consultant profile: A former sales manager for India of an international manufacturer of materials for the steel industry, with comprehensive experience in the technical and commercial evaluation of investment projects.



II Country



QATAR

Client: European Manufacturer of Explosion Protection Products

Assignment: The external expert was tasked with examining the local framework conditions in order to establish the prerequisites for a future supply to the Qatari oil and gas industry.

Consultant profile: A retired top manager of a local oil and gas company with active contacts in the industry.



III Region

CENTRAL ASIA

Client: European Manufacturer of Measurement Technology

Assignment: A market analysis of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and other Central Asian states, in order to develop a distribution strategy. The analysis included existing supply structures, current competitors, price levels and margins, as well as the identification and evaluation of potential distribution partners and end customers in the region.

Consultant profile: A former Regional Sales Manager for European equipment manufacturers, with extensive experience in supply relationships with oil, gas, and mining companies.





SENIOR ADVISOR — STRATEGIC GATEWAYS TO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS

Senior Advisors – Strategic Gateways to International Markets

In an era of growing protectionism, unstable supply chains, and geopolitical risks, having a strong product and a solid strategy is often no longer enough for a successful market entry. For medium-sized companies operating in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, or Asia, access to local networks and decision-makers plays a crucial role. Research in the SME sector shows that personal networks, cultural insight, and access to external expertise correlate with stronger growth in international markets.

Networks and Market Knowledge as Competitive Advantage

In this context, Senior Advisors act as strategically positioned, locally rooted facilitators and door openers. With their reputation and interdisciplinary experience, they help international companies build trusted relationships with market decision-makers, and establish strategic partnerships.

The role of a Senior Advisor differs from that of a traditional consultant. Core responsibilities include facilitating high-level introductions to key clients and partners, maintaining relevant contacts in politics, public administration and associations, and advising on business culture, regulation, and market logic in the target country. A Senior Advisor supports negotiations, identifies business opportunities, and assists local top management in the strategic development of the subsidiary.

Senior Advisors in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and India

In markets such as India, the Gulf states, or Eastern Europe, a solid reputation, as well as access to key decision makers, business owners and political stakeholders is often a prerequisite for success.

Since international subsidiaries typically operate with limited staffing resources and local management is heavily involved in day-to-day operations, Senior Advisors can close this gap. They bring the valuable outside perspective of an experienced senior professional, analyze the business environment from a strategic viewpoint, and drive the subsidiary's success by leveraging their networks.

Christian Tegethoff

Managing Director,
CT Executive Search

→ **Biography**

When to Engage the Services of a Senior Advisor

The added value of a Senior Advisor becomes especially clear, when market entry or expansion involves political sensitivity, complex stakeholder dynamics, or lengthy approval processes. This may relate to participation in industrial policy programs, access to the owners of major corporate groups, or the preparation of high-level talks with public authorities. A Senior Advisor also helps evaluate potential partners and stabilizes communication during periods of economic or political uncertainty.

CT Executive Search: Identification and Engagement of Suitable Senior Advisors

CT Executive Search supports companies in identifying, approaching, and selecting suitable Senior Advisors in target markets.

Our candidates are experienced leaders from the corporate and government sectors, as well as business associations. These experts have excellent networks and a thorough knowledge of the business environment in the region of interest.

With an international network of offices and partners across Eastern Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, we help our clients secure Senior Advisors who create tangible value as door openers, strategic guides, and ambassadors of the organization in the target market.

THE AUTHOR



CHRISTIAN TEGETHOFF ...

... is the Managing Director of CT Executive Search.

With a wealth of experience that spans over 20 years, Christian is one of the leading international HR experts, particularly, when it comes to executive recruitment.

His main area of expertise includes the recruitment of top talent to senior positions within companies with operations in Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

Prior to founding CT Executive Search, Christian worked with other international HR firms such as Kienbaum Executive Consultants. He's also loaned his HR expertise while partnering with international trade bodies.

A graduate of the Free University of Berlin and the Humboldt University of Berlin, Christian also holds an executive MBA from Cass Business School/City University London.



EXECUTIVE SEARCH

EXECUTIVE SEARCH EXPERTS IN EASTERN EUROPE AND THE EMERGING MARKETS

CT Executive Search focuses on placing key positions in Eastern Europe and the Emerging Markets – in CIS, Africa, the Middle East and Asia. We are experts in cross-border search processes and identifying high-performing candidates, adding value to international companies. Leveraging a broad network of analysts and consultants across Eastern Europe and the emerging markets, CT Executive Search has established itself as a reliable partner to well-reputed multinational companies.

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