



Middlesex-based business secures contracts in India

Fast facts

Company: Wig O Mania

Industry: Beauty/ Healthcare products

Target Market: India

UKTI Service: Overseas Market
Introduction Service

www.wigomania.com



With on-the-ground help from the UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) in-market teams, Wig-O-Mania has made great strides in selling its range of high-end hair extensions and wigs in India.

In 2006, Tasneem Hasnain decided to start her own brand in the UK, manufacturing and promoting a new range of high-end synthetic wigs, human hair extensions and pony tails. Believing in the potential for her business, she invested her own money to set up Wig-O-Mania, placing initial orders with factories in Hong Kong who now produce exclusively for the company. Tasneem's husband, Hasnain Mohamedali, brought his 25 years of experience working in business, banking and finance in Dubai, Hong Kong and the UK to the table to help Wig-O-Mania succeed. Today, the company not only sells directly to the public through its website and home shopping channels but also to salons in various parts of the world.

"People wear wigs for various reasons," says Hasnain Mohamedali, CEO of

Wig-O-Mania. "Some do because they've lost their hair with age, or as a result of treatments like chemotherapy. They might want the wig to look very subtle so that it looks like their own hair. Others simply want to change their look, perhaps to something striking and eye-catching that makes a statement. Whatever the reason, our stylish, high quality wigs fits the bill. They look and feel like natural European hair, and come in a range of beautiful colours that never fade in both Japanese Fibre and Remy Human Hair."

Looking East

In 2009, looking for increased margins and new sales, the husband and wife team decided to explore overseas markets for their business. As Hasnain is originally from India and knew the potential of the company's product range in the region, they decided to start exploring the opportunity. They soon found a local agent in India, but he was unable to successfully introduce Wig-O-Mania into the local market in a way the company had originally hoped.

Previously, having registered for email

alerts from UKTI, Wig-O-Mania received a notification about the India Marketing Strategy Scholarship Programme, an intensive five-day workshop for British brands, due to take place in March 2010 at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad. The specially designed executive programme would present the latest marketing management theories and case studies, delivered by renowned lecturers and guest speakers from across Indian industry. The company applied to join, and was delighted to be accepted.

"India's a huge market and I always felt that it offered good potential for our business," says Hasnain.

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Hasnain Mohamedali, CEO of Wig-O-Mania



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Hasnain Mohamedali, CEO of Wig-O-Mania



“But, having had our fingers burnt once, this time I wanted to do it right or not at all. UKTI’s Scholarship Programme gave me a world of information about how to do business in India. It was quite a revelation. I heard about the issues we would need to consider and learned how to develop an effective marketing strategy. The calibre of speakers was extremely high, including Managing Directors of companies from around the country, most of whom were themselves alumni of the prestigious IIM. I took the opportunity to map out a plan for Wig-O-Mania, and set about implementing it straight away.”

Joined-up support

After completing the Programme, Wig-O-Mania connected with the UKTI teams in Mumbai and Delhi. In June 2010, the company commissioned an Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) report to identify potential partners, clients and distributors, and UKTI arranged face-to-face meetings with the people Hasnain wanted to speak to. As Wig-O-Mania prepared to expand into South India, UKTI in Chennai was on hand to provide advice, introductions and references. This joined-up support by the UKTI teams set the company on route for making solid contacts which resulted in contracts to supply its synthetic hair products to chains of salons around India.

When in 2011 Wig-O-Mania set up a proprietary company in India, representatives from UKTI came along to support the launch.

“UKTI’s support has been very useful in helping us to enter the Indian Market, successfully this time,” says Hasnain. “They have held our hand as we grow our client base in Mumbai and Chennai. Today, most of the high end salon chains are clients, including Enrich, VLCC, Page3, Naturals, Spalon and White Cliff stock our products. We aim to become the top UK/European brand of wigs and hair extensions across India. We’re developing an online ecommerce website to directly cater to end users. Our experience is borne out of what we learned from UKTI: success in India doesn’t come overnight, and you really need a local presence to make it work. We have found the UKTI staff to be pro-active and encouraging. Knowing they are there to offer moral and practical support has given us the reassurance we needed to push forward with our plans. I continue to keep in close touch with them as we continue to grow.”

The UK and India

India is the UK’s second largest export market in the developing world after China.

India’s economy is one of the fastest-growing in the world, with a rapidly expanding consumer class. The UK has strong ties with India, and UK companies are well positioned to take advantage of this growing export and investment market.

Liberalisation of the economy continues, with trade barriers largely removed, and the role of the private sector is gradually increasing, including in areas that have been dominated by the public sector in the past.

For further information about business opportunities in India, please go to www.ukti.gov.uk/india

Helping you access international markets

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it’s good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

UK Trade & Investment’s Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) is a flexible business tool, letting you use the services of our trade teams, located in our embassies, high commissions and consulates across the world, to benefit your business.

A service package could include:

- Market, sector advice
- Analysis of market entry strategies
- Support during overseas visits
- Identification of possible business partners.

UKTI was delighted to support Wig-O-Mania in its investment overseas



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