



“Our export strategy started out as extremely reactive,” said Shah. “It was challenging to know exactly what global markets to focus on. We did some market studies on our own, and that’s when we became aware of the statewide resources available through agencies like the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.”

—Harshad Shah,
President and Founder
Eagle Technology

The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the state’s lead economic development agency, partners with a network of more than 600 regional and local entities to help businesses start, grow and locate In Wisconsin.



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CASE STUDY

Eagle Technology



PROACTIVE EXPORT PLAN HELPS WISCONSIN COMPANY BOOST ITS BOTTOM LINE

Eagle Technology has had global ambitions since it was founded in 1987. The company, which is based in Mequon, Wisconsin, develops enterprise asset management software for use in factories, hospitals, education institutions and other large buildings. Its multilingual software uses intelligent integration with other digital factory software such as manufacturing execution systems, supply chain software and ERP software to enable the factory of the future to be more efficient, more adaptive and more productive.

While Eagle Technology has been working with global customers from early on, its international strategy, much like its product offerings, has evolved over time. Most recently, the company leveraged statewide resources to develop and execute an export plan that is more productive and more profitable.

BUSINESS NEED

From day one, Eagle Technology’s president and founder, Harshad Shah, and his leadership team knew that an international export strategy was important to the growth and success of the company. They kept this strategy top-of-mind during initial software development, creating a product for the world market—and one that could easily be translated into multiple languages.

Following years of product development, the company built enterprise asset management software that was applicable for customers around the world. Today, the company’s multilingual software fulfills functions including tracking maintenance schedules and the condition of machinery; ensuring systems are functioning properly for the comfort of building occupants; and maximizing energy efficiency.

For many years, Eagle Technology’s export philosophy was responsive to opportunities that presented themselves.



The company invested in online advertising and marketing to reach target customers abroad and fulfilled requests as they came through the website. From there, the team serviced these international leads, helping shape the company’s initial global business strategy.

This strategy helped Eagle Technology reach a variety of customers around the world. By 2015, more than one-third of its business was outside the U.S. However, company leaders thought they could be doing more to expand their approach to targeting customers abroad.

SOLUTION

With plans to develop a more proactive export strategy to target international markets, the Eagle Technology leadership team discovered plentiful state resources to help them hone their strategy.

Early in 2016, Eagle Technology enrolled in and completed the ExporTech™ Program for export readiness and expansion. The program, offered by the Wisconsin Center for Manufacturing and Productivity (WCMP) with support from the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), helped Eagle Technology create a “go-to-market” strategy and develop a customized international growth plan in targeted export markets.

Company officials also received access to subject matter experts; individualized coaching and consulting; customized support; and guided development of an international growth plan. Because of the ExporTech Program, Eagle Technology began choosing export markets strategically rather than waiting for inquiries and orders to come in from abroad.

“ExporTech certainly helped us develop a more proactive export strategy,” added Shah. “Through the program, we learned more about which countries were ideal for our business and our products.”

After identifying Germany as its most promising export market, Eagle Technology participated in the Wisconsin delegation at the 2016 Hannover Messe industrial trade fair in Hannover, Germany, purchasing booth space with assistance from WEDC and the U.S. Small Business Administration. The company’s attendance at the trade show has helped it add representation in Germany, and Eagle Technology is currently in negotiations with potential distributors for its products in that country.

“There’s definitely something to be said for face-to-face meetings—they make a big difference in a relationship,” said Shah. “We do most of our communications through



web conferencing technologies, which has worked well for us, but at a certain time in the relationship you have to meet your customers in person. For this reason, we are definitely interested in attending another trade venture with WEDC.”

Eagle Technology also leveraged the help of an International Market Access Grant from WEDC to translate its website into seven languages, and is in the process of translating its product documentation into German to support further export growth.

Also in 2016, Eagle Technology completed Scale Up Milwaukee’s Scalerator program, designed to help small companies that have survived the startup phase, but nevertheless may benefit from some guidance in taking their businesses to the next level.

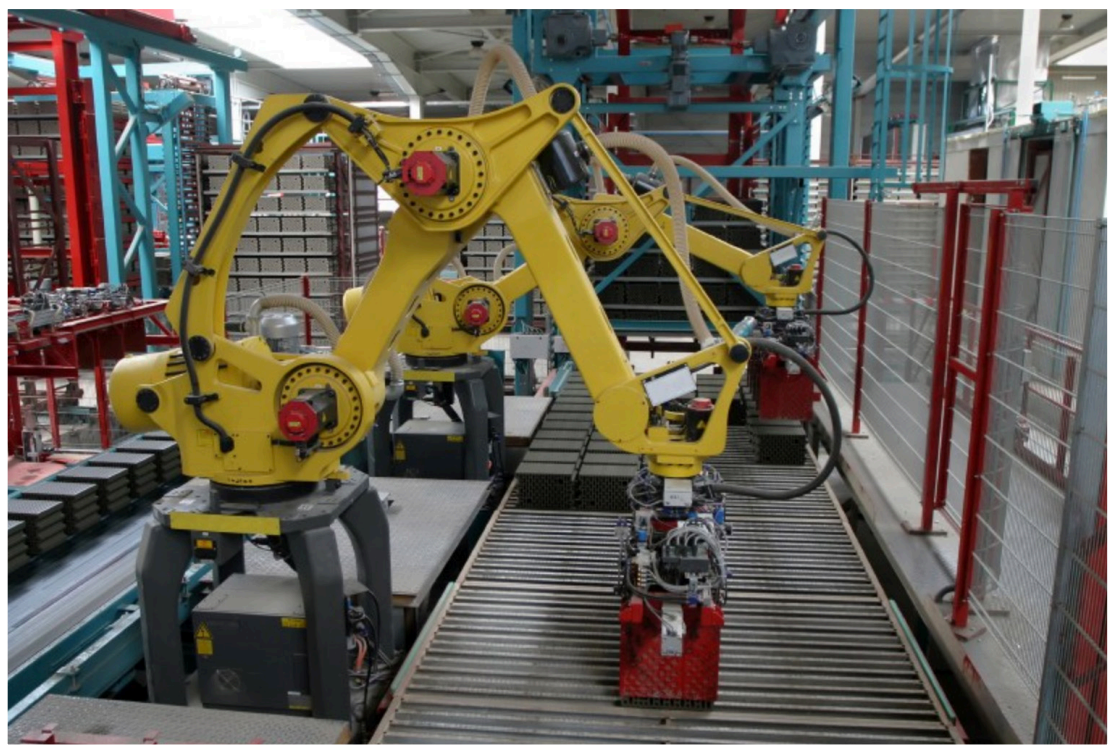
“I come from an engineering background, and I’d never been to business school,” says Shah. “The quality of the faculty and instruction with Scalerator was excellent. Based on some of the things I learned in Scalerator, Eagle was able to land the biggest contract in the company’s history.”

SUCCESS

Shah attributes the company’s recent success to the multitude of resources available in Wisconsin. Today, Eagle Technology’s software is used by several hundred companies in 34 different countries. The company has also increased its sales by 76 percent and has hired additional staff to assist this growth.

“Eagle Technology is a great example of a seasoned exporter that saw substantial results by accessing the business and exporting resources available in Wisconsin,” said Katy Sinnott, vice president of international business development at WEDC. “While familiar with conducting business in international markets, the company needed help targeting the right markets abroad, and we were able to help them find viable opportunities to reach those markets.”

In addition to the many valuable statewide resources Eagle Technology leveraged, the company has found tremendous talent in the area and benefits from the hard work ethic of the people in Wisconsin.



“I’m really happy with the business environment here in Wisconsin,” added Shah. “The talent and personalities I’m able to hire are an asset to the company and have led to much of our success. I applaud the state and WEDC for their continued efforts to help entrepreneurs through resources and funding—with that kind of support, we won’t need to look elsewhere to continue growing the company.”

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