



Innovation Paves the Way for International Success!



[Bellingham Marine Industries](#) (BMI) is a global leader in the design, manufacture and construction of marinas.

BMI entered foreign markets in the mid 1980's, starting with Australia and New Zealand, and its export sales have grown ever since. While its largest customer base is in the U.S., international sales make up a significant part of the company's overall business portfolio.

Bellingham Marine launched its move into exporting with an unconventional but innovative approach that has paid off handsomely. Bellingham recognized that the nature of its products and services required a unique approach to international markets, and developed a template still used today— Bellingham Marine In a Box. While it varies slightly from country to country, the general concept remains the same and allows the company to set up abroad with technical and design expertise, forms, tools, equipment and key personnel to design and construct projects that meet local market demands. The team looks to locally based partners to counsel on material sourcing, customs, cultural considerations and overall business practices.

But Bellingham's international success was not achieved without challenges. Each market is unique and only through trial and error and less-than-perfect first attempts has BMI been able to achieve export success.

The company shares one great example of how it overcame barriers to entry in a foreign market. The complexities of trying to sell product in China are real and significant. Cultural differences and risk of payment are some of the biggest hurdles to navigate. After struggling for many years to close a deal, BMI opted to partner with an existing customer in Singapore who had the connections, expertise and cultural know-how to succeed in China. Bellingham's technical knowledge and expertise, combined with its Singapore partner's knowledge of the market, enabled them to build a world-class marina in China.

Contrary to popular belief, you don't need to make "widgets" to be successful at exporting! Service-related businesses flourish abroad, and BMI is a perfect example.



The benefits to exporting are vast and NMMA's Export Development program is here to assist members achieve export success. At NMMA, we believe that exporting isn't a luxury but a necessity for any company that wishes to compete effectively in today's global economy.



To learn more, visit nmma.org/international or contact us at 954-441-3234.

If you'd like to be considered for a Global Star, please contact NMMA's Sr. Director for Export & Workforce Development Julie Balzano at jbazono@nmma.org