

## Classic Motos

### Languages – the driving force for success

*Classic motorcycle part suppliers, Classic Motos of Leicester, have used their languages skills to boost sales in France by 30%. With help from UK Trade and Investment's Passport to Export Scheme the two business partners have developed a multilingual catalogue and website which has helped them overcome French customers' wariness to trade with a 'foreign' company.*

Classic Motos Ltd employs three people and a French student on work placement at their Leicester base. The company sources parts for classic British motorcycles from the 1940s to 1970s, such as the Triumph, Norton and BSA. 80% of sales are to France but the company also sells to Germany and Belgium.

Language skills and an understanding of the French market have been essential in securing success on the other side of the Channel: the company now has 1500 customers in France alone. One partner is French and speaks good German; the other is a UK-born linguist who speaks fluent French and German.

#### **Overcoming French resistance**

The company has undertaken several measures to overcome barriers to doing business with France. Knowing the French can be way to deal directly with an English company, Classic Motos has established a French language website, catalogue and a French mailing address. Setting up a business in France can seem bureaucratic and time consuming to a UK business. The partners' ability to understand and communicate in French, coupled with an in-depth knowledge of the country and its cultural differences and business norms, have been vital in getting the business established and winning valuable customers.

Lorraine Harris, a partner in the company, said:

“Setting up the multilingual catalogue and website has been crucial in boosting our sales in France. We’re now hoping for the same success in Germany. One thing we know is that our language skills and understanding of the culture will be fundamental in doing this.”



<p><b>Contacts</b></p> <p><b>Classic Motos Ltd.</b> www.classicmotos.com</p>	<p>For more information about RLN East Midlands please contact us at:</p> <p><b>RLN East Midlands, UK Trade and Investment, International Trade Centre, Innovation House, Riverside Park, Raynesway, Derby, DE21 7BF.</b></p> <p>Tel: 01332 826432   <a href="http://www.rln-eastmidlands.com">www.rln-eastmidlands.com</a></p>
--	---

# Case study