

## Medi-Direct International – small team, big on languages

*Based in Nottingham, Medi-Direct distributes its pain-relief products around the world. The four-strong management team all speak a number of European languages and they are convinced that this will play an important role in the expansion of their business.*

“Ours is a fast-moving business,” remarks Axel Scholz, Medi-Direct International’s General Manager. “As we develop new products, it’s important for us once they are approved, to market them without delay. Speaking our customer’s language means that there is no hindrance in accessing markets where English is not the mother tongue.”

### **The international dimension**

The management team at the company’s West Bridgford office may be small, with only four staff, but the international dimension is immediately evident. Products are manufactured in Italy using components sourced in the EU, and end markets in Europe include Scandinavia, Netherlands, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Greece. Outside Europe, Medi-Direct products are distributed in Australasia and South Africa and there are plans to expand into the USA and Brazil as well as the Middle and Far East.

This international nature of the business is reflected in the team’s language skills. Axel Scholz is German and the Managing Director, Raffaella Kalisiak is Italian with some competence in Spanish and French. Sales Manager Richard Chaplin can conduct business in German and also speaks some French and Senior Administrator, Julie Russell is an Italian and German speaker as well as having some skills in Swedish.

### **Individually-tailored literature**

While the ability to communicate with suppliers and clients in their own language is important, there is a further dimension to the company’s trading in overseas markets. As Raffaella explains, it’s important to modify the promotional literature to suit the market. “We have a standard product description and a set of images that all our distributors use to produce material for hard copy and for their websites,” she says. “But we are conscious that consumers in continental European countries generally want to learn more about the technical aspects of our products than their British counterparts, and we encourage distributors to tailor the literature to the needs of their own consumers.”

This means that the company's brochures and point-of-sale materials are adapted and localised for every market in which they trade to highlight the features and benefits that are considered important for the country or region in question. Qualified translators with relevant expertise in the field are used to produce the copy, which is then quality checked before release.

### **Recruitment of language speakers a future priority**

Not content with this already impressive international network, the company has ambitious plans to develop the business in the near future. "Our intention is to expand the product range significantly over the next 12 to 18 months," says Axel Scholz, "and this will mean increasing the workforce at Medi-Direct."

Those looking to apply for these forthcoming posts would do well to ensure that as well as possessing all the necessary technical and business qualifications, they are also able to highlight on their CV their ability to communicate professionally in languages other than English.

<b>Contacts</b>  <b>Medi Direct</b> <a href="http://www.medi-direct.co.uk">www.medi-direct.co.uk</a>	<b>For more about RLN East Midlands please contact us at:</b>  <b>RLN East Midlands, UK Trade and Investment, International Trade Centre, Innovation House, Riverside Park, Raynesway, Derby, DE21 7BF.</b>  Tel: 01332 826432   <a href="http://www.rln-eastmidlands.com">www.rln-eastmidlands.com</a>
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