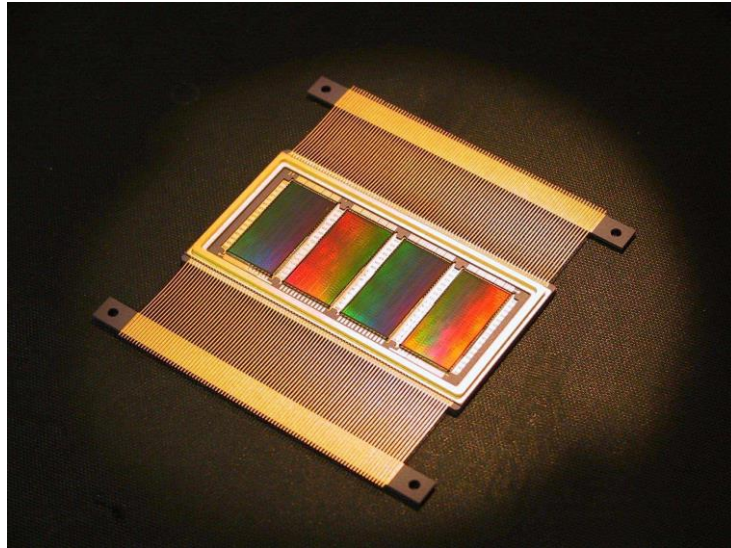


Case study written by Kate Philbin

**MCE**  
**Improved Communications Starting Here and Now**



“An Export Communications Review is designed to help companies to improve the way they communicate with overseas customers. We examine the situation as it is here and now and suggest a range of practical measures that will make a real and immediate difference. Each review is totally orientated towards the individual company and the recommendations are tried and tested. In short, it can have a real impact on a company’s export business.”

This comment from Hilary Charman, Export Communications Adviser for the East Midlands and Gloucester region, came as the Export Communications Review was ranked among the top 10 services for exporters by UK Trade & Investment. The Review has proved popular with companies due to its pragmatic approach and success in delivering what companies need to succeed in a global marketplace.

One company that benefited from an Export Communications Review is Tewkesbury-based Micro Circuit Engineering (MCE). This leading supplier of high performance custom electronics supplies overseas customers with highly technical products, communicating mainly in English. It felt that more business could be won by communicating with customers in their own language and had already begun creating multi language versions of its website - [www.micro-circuit.com](http://www.micro-circuit.com) - before International Trade Adviser, Mike Lee of UK

Trade & Investment recommended an Export Communications Review.

Mike explained: “Micro Circuit Engineering was following the Passport to Export programme, which takes them through all the processes in the export journey. I felt that an Export Communications Review would be beneficial as it provides an independent assessment of what you are doing and discusses how you could do it better. In my role as mentor, it is helpful to be able to signpost companies to schemes that will make a real and measurable difference to their export performance.”

The Review undertaken by Hilary Charman looked at all of MCE’s export functions, including sales, engineering, quality and order processing. After this in-depth audit, the company received a comprehensive report. Hilary said: “It is important that recommendations are realistic and achievable. For example, one of the main problems facing MCE was time pressure, with busy people being asked to become more involved in communicating with overseas customers. To help them overcome this, I suggested using foreign language speakers, such as translators, and bringing in short-term support in the form of work placement students when timing is tight.”

Dave Fruin, General Manager of MCE-Tewkesbury commented: “The most revealing aspect of the report was the emphasis on keeping the language simple in presenting a highly technical subject to overseas customers and native speakers. It is easy to forget that the high level of jargon and technical terminology within the electronics field is not understood by everyone, particularly when translated. The Review was helpful in highlighting issues that we had already suspected and offering useful information to move things forward. Since receiving the report, we have completed foreign language versions of our website, prepared company overviews in different languages and used UK Trade & Investment’s Overseas Marketing Introductory Service to identify potential representatives for MCE.”

An Export Communications Review costs £400, however, a UK Trade & Investment subsidy bring the cost down to £50 plus VAT for the majority of companies. For more information contact British Chambers of Commerce on 02476 694484 or visit [www.chamberonline.co.uk/exportzone/ecr](http://www.chamberonline.co.uk/exportzone/ecr).

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