



# News Release

CONTACT:  
Ken Walsh  
314-425-3343  
ken.walsh@trade.gov

## **Federal, State and Private Partners Launch Missouri Trade Initiative**

*An Export-Focused Program Aimed at Small- and Medium-sized Businesses*

**St. Louis, Mo., March 3, 2010** – Over 90 St. Louis-area companies received letters of invitation to participate in the Missouri Trade Initiative (MTI), a program designed to provide Missouri companies a business plan to increase their export sales. The letters were sent from the office of Sen. Kit Bond and with an introductory brochure containing messages of support from members of the Missouri Congressional delegation.

The MTI brings together private sector and federal, state and local government resources in order to develop an international expansion proposal for Missouri businesses that will serve as a roadmap to achieve success in exports markets. Companies that participate in the program will receive counseling sessions with experts in operations, international marketing, trade finance and logistics and be presented with a plan to increase their exports in current markets and develop new markets for their products and services. There is no fee to participate in the program.

“The Missouri Trade Initiative targets small- to medium-sized companies who are either just beginning to export their products or have the potential to expand their current exports into new global markets,” said St. Louis U.S. Export Assistance Center Acting Director Cory Simek.

“This program is an important component of the efforts of the U.S. Department of Commerce to broaden and deepen the exporting base in the U.S. and compliments the National Export Initiative which aims to double American exports over the next five years.”

The organizations involved in the MTI are Armstrong Teasdale, LLP; Commerce Bank; Export-Import Bank of the U.S.; FedEx; Missouri Department of Economic Development; Missouri Enterprise; Springfield Chamber of Commerce; U.S. Commercial Service; U.S. Small Business Administration; and the World Trade Center Saint Louis.

The trade initiative was developed by FedEx and has been launched in Tennessee and Northern Illinois. Missouri will be the third location to implement this program. Additional information, including the initiative brochure, can be found at [www.buyusa.gov/stlouis/mti.html](http://www.buyusa.gov/stlouis/mti.html).

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The U.S. Commercial Service is the trade promotion unit of the International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce. U.S. Commercial Service trade specialists in 107 U.S. cities and more than 80 countries work with companies to help them get started in exporting or increase their sales to new global markets. Services include world class market research, trade events that promote your product or service to qualified buyers, introductions to qualified buyers and distributors and counseling and advocacy through every step of the export process.

To learn more about how the U.S. Commercial Service can help your company export, contact a U.S. Export Assistance Center near you or call 1-800-USA-TRAD(E). The St. Louis office is found at [www.BuyUSA.gov/stlouis](http://www.BuyUSA.gov/stlouis).