



Getting it right first time, with UKTI

Fast facts

Company: Yellow House English

Industry: Education –
English as a foreign language

Target Market: China

UKTI Service: Market Visit Support

www.yellowhouseenglish.com



UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) introduced Yellow House English to Tencent, China's largest and most used Internet service portal. The two have signed a licensing agreement, setting the scene for a publishing deal with Peking University Press. A UKTI introduction to CCTV was also productive and an agreement with this national television network is currently being finalised.

When educationalist Claire Selby set up Yellow House English in 2009, she had a global vision for teaching children English as a foreign language. She had built up extensive experience in the field, including developing a highly successful home learning bilingual audio course in Poland and creating material to teach English to children in primary and pre-primary schools for publishers such as Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press and Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press in China.

By the end of 2012, Yellow House English had published two complementary handbooks: 'How to help your child learn English' and

'How to help your class learn English'; redeveloped the original audio course; and added to its product range two series of animated song-stories: 'Baby Beetles' for the under four age group and 'Tom and Keri' for the three to fives.

"I was living in Poland for a while and experienced first-hand the demand for quality material for children to learn English," says Claire. "I focused my first courses on pre-primary and primary ages. They were a great success: in 2002, the Ministry of Education of Poland approved them to be used not just at home but also in all primary schools. When I returned to the UK, I worked on similar projects with different publishing companies. When I set up Yellow House, my aim was to allow the world to communicate better and from a younger age, with English as its common language."

International markets

In 2011, Yellow House English began to target the international retail market, maximising the potential of new digital media by making Baby Beetles available through the internet, DVDs, CDs,

books and ultimately mobile applications. Baby Beetles was soon sold into Poland, Russia, India and Saudi Arabia followed. The next focus for the company was China.

Claire registered her interest in UKTI events with the South East, UK office and in July 2011 was invited to join an event in London for a UKTI inward mission of digital media businesses from China. She discussed her plans with UKTI's Creative Industries representative for Beijing, who introduced her to a number of the mission delegates.

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Claire Selby, Yellow House English



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Claire Selby, Yellow House English

One of these was Tencent, China’s largest and most used Internet service portal. The two went on to sign an agreement in October 2012 for Baby Beetles to be featured on Tencent’s kids’ pages.

“The Year of the Dragon, corresponding to 2012, is understood to be the most favourable,” says Claire. “This drove me to make a go of it within that calendar year. Being involved with UKTI allowed us to get it right first time. They introduced us to key players from their own local networks and helped us to make the most of market visits with their practical assistance and guidance.”

New business

Having secured the contract with Tencent, Yellow House English went on to form a vital publishing deal with Peking University Press (PUP). The company also has a deal with state-run digital partner China International Broadcasting Network (CIBN) for video-on-demand.

In August 2013, Yellow House English joined a reception for the UK delegates and local publishers hosted by UKTI as part of a UKTI Trade Mission to Beijing. Following this event, Claire had a meeting with the children’s buyer from national television broadcaster, CCTV. She was keen for CCTV to air Baby Beetles, and with the publication date for the PUP print series approaching, this was the last chance to meet the buyer before heading back to the UK. Talks were successful and they reached an agreement in principle. The official approval of the series followed just in time to be announced during Prime Minister David Cameron’s Trade Visit in December 2013 and negotiations of the formal licensing agreement are now well underway. Meanwhile, the Baby Beetles book, DVD, CD and toy set were launched in China in February 2014.

Keen to build on these international successes, Yellow House is now working with UKTI to learn more about opportunities in Germany and Brazil.

“Between the Year of the Dragon and the Year of the Snake, (known as the

little dragon), we have built a network of multimedia partners in China, from smart digital to information portal to print to merchandising,” says Claire. “UKTI’s teams both in the UK and China have been very proactive. Having their backing in forming relationships led directly to the licence agreements with Tencent and CCTV, which in turn helped us to secure the deal with PUP. Quality, reliable support is crucial when pursuing new business overseas. I would certainly advise other UK businesses who are looking to increase their exports to get in touch with UKTI at the earliest stage in their internationalisation planning.”

The UK and China

The Chinese economy has grown at almost 10 per cent a year for the last 30 years, effectively doubling in size every eight years

In 2009, China overtook Germany to become the world’s largest exporter; in 2010 it overtook Japan to become the world’s second largest economy; and in 2012 it overtook the US to become the world’s biggest trading nation (imports and exports). China is also expected to become the world’s largest goods importer by 2014.

In 2012, the UK’s goods exports to China increased by 12.8 per cent to £9.9 billion, making this the UK’s largest goods export market outside the US and EU. Imports from China to the UK also grew by 0.4 per cent to £32.9 billion. Total bilateral trade in goods and services in 2012 was £46.5 billion (US\$73.8 billion), and the two countries have agreed a target to increase this to US\$100 billion by 2015.

The China-Britain Business Council (CBBC), UKTI’s official trade service delivery partner for mainland China, provides advice and UKTI services to UK businesses via its network of offices across the UK and China.

For more information visit www.cbcc.org

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- Ongoing support once you’re up and running

UKTI was delighted to support Yellow House English in its business overseas.



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