



## Radley & Co. expands into its 12th market with help from UKTI

### Fast facts

**Company:** Radley & Co.

**Industry:** Fashion

**Target Markets:** Taiwan & South Korea

**UKTI Services:** Overseas Market Introduction Service, GREAT Trade Mission to South Korea

[www.radley.co.uk](http://www.radley.co.uk)



**Through its Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS), UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) has helped Radley & Co. to expand its business overseas. As a result, the fashion and accessories company has opened new international stores, appointed numerous stockists and increased its sales.**

Cute little dogs hanging off bag straps are a fairly regular sight in the UK and are becoming increasingly more so overseas. The logo was the creation of iconic British fashion and accessories brand, Radley London, which was founded in 1998 by designer Lowell Harder. Frustrated by the lack of colour in the UK bag market at the time, Lowell set about creating a range of colourful leather handbags and accessories with a distinctive style. Today this range also includes watches, eyewear, iPhone and iPad cases, luggage and passport covers, washbags and scarves. Radley's headquarters is in London

and the company's first store opened in 2005 on Kings Road. There are currently 33 Radley stores in the UK, with a distribution centre in Milton Keynes. The brand is also stocked in over 200 locations in the UK, at major retail and department stores. Radley started selling its products online in 2007, and they can now be bought through the company's own website, and that of John Lewis, House of Fraser, Next and Shop Direct.

"As well as our stores across the UK, we have begun to sell our products abroad," says Xavier Simonet, Chief Executive Officer at Radley & Co. "Radley has been a great success story in the UK and enjoys a loyal and growing customer base here, this success allows us to now take our great British brand overseas."

### Japanese influence

Radley considers exporting not just to be an extension of its business, but very much a requirement. One of the

company's first key overseas markets was Japan, which had always been a great source of inspiration for Lowell's designs.

In 2013, Radley made contact with UKTI's enquiry team to understand more about support available to British businesses looking to expand into new overseas markets.

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Chief Executive Officer, Radley & Co.

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Xavier Simonet, Chief Executive Officer, Radley & Co.

An International Trade Adviser met with the company’s CEO and International Director and presented on UKTI services. He recommended that Radley use OMIS, through which local UKTI teams in the company’s target markets would provide market and sector advice, analysis of market entry strategies, support during overseas visits, and identification of possible business partners. Radley commissioned its first OMIS report to search for potential partners in Taiwan and with the help of the UKTI team in Taipei successfully appointed a local distributor. The company then went on to commission OMIS reports for its other target overseas markets, including Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. It has also received advice from UKTI’s teams in Scandinavia, across Europe, the US and Canada.

“Exporting brands is really my passion and our products can currently be found in almost every continent on the globe”, says Xavier. “For a new business or a small brand, it can be quite daunting to launch internationally, but that’s where UKTI comes in. They make new markets accessible and give you a starting point. UKTI has a lot of services to offer companies. We have used OMIS to research several countries. We are in regular contact with our ITA - it’s absolutely fantastic to be able to speak to and meet with someone on the ground here in the UK. She’s come to our showroom in London and knows us and our brand. She understands our strategy and also our challenges and offers her guidance and advice to help us progress.”

### Large-scale global expansion

Radley now has a presence in Malaysia, Germany, Russia, Singapore, South Africa and Switzerland with openings later this year in Taiwan and Australia. The company is currently seeking a new partner in South Korea and in February 2014 it participated in the GREAT trade mission to further investigate this market. The GREAT South Korea mission focused on the key pillars of design, fashion and food and drink.

During the visit, Radley took part in a fashion showcase where the company had the opportunity to exhibit its collection and was introduced to potential local partners as well as key retailers. UKTI provided the participants with special assistance in preparing for the event and throughout the mission.

“I would encourage any British brand to start exporting and to use UKTI’s services to help you,” says Xavier. “It is critical to have a success story on your domestic market before you start to approach overseas markets, and to have a distinctive brand, because that’s what’s going to create interest. We are looking to expand our business in South Korea, and possibly find franchise partners in Saudi Arabia. In 2014 we are also opening six new concessions in Germany. UKTI’s support has been incredibly valuable to us in getting to this position, and we look forward to carrying on working with them as we continue to grow.”

### The UK and Taiwan

Taiwan has a strong trading and investment relationship with the West, and is keen to diversify and build on its European links. It has excellent infrastructure and logistics systems and it is a safe market in terms of intellectual property protection.

Taiwan imported £750 million of British goods and services in 2009 and the UK is highly visible in the Taiwanese domestic market. The UK’s major exports to Taiwan include machinery and transport equipment, chemicals, Scotch whisky and manufactured goods, but there are opportunities for British firms in wide range of sectors.

The country’s natural trading partners are its neighbours in North East Asia, so it can be a good stepping stone to the larger and more complex China market.

**For further information about business opportunities in Taiwan, please go to [www.gov.uk/ukti](http://www.gov.uk/ukti)**

### Helping you access international markets

Doing business in another country can be a challenge, so it’s good to know that UK Trade & Investment is there to help you succeed.

Through a range of unique services, including participation at selected trade fairs, overseas missions and providing bespoke market intelligence, UK Trade & Investment can help you crack foreign markets and quickly get to grips with regulations and business practices overseas.

UK Trade & Investment’s Overseas Market Introduction Service (OMIS) is a flexible business tool, letting you use the services of our trade teams, located in our embassies, high commissions and consulates across the world, to benefit your business.

A service package could include:

- Market, sector advice
- Analysis of market entry strategies
- Support during overseas visits
- Identification of possible business partners

UKTI was delighted to support Radley & Co. in its business overseas.



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