



Seven secures success in Portugal

Fast facts

Company: Seven

Industry: Creative & Media

Target market: Portugal

UKTI service: Special Assistance

www.seven.co.uk



In 2012, London-based content marketing content agency, Seven, formed a partnership with Portuguese agency, Plot Content. Being connected to UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) and the British Ambassador established Seven's credibility in this new market. The partners were subsequently awarded a contract worth around €2 million over the next 3 years, with potential for further work in Portugal and elsewhere down the line.

Seven was set up in London in 2002 to be a consumer magazine publisher. The agency has since grown, largely by acquisition, and in the last 5 years has broadened out to create content for multiple platforms, including digital, video and social media. Today, it has 150 employees and a turnover in excess of £20 million.

"People trust brands that do what they say they're going to do," says Sean

King, Chief Executive Officer of Seven. "Our job is to help brands to keep their promises. We create content that puts the audience first, making sure that our clients speak to them, not at them. We use our editorial thinking to define a brand's content strategy - the who, what, why and how of content marketing - to ensure that they're making the right content, getting it in front of the right people and working efficiently. We then use our expertise to deliver that content. Ultimately, we judge our success by the effectiveness of our work in growing a brand."

Partnership in Portugal

Seven has around 20 major clients, including MacDonalds, Fujitsu, Grant Thornton and Experian. It was the agency's experience working on a customer magazine and digital content for Sainsbury's that caught the eye of Portuguese agency, Plot Content. In 2012, they contacted Seven to discuss a partnership that would help to secure

a lucrative new project with Pingo Doce, part of the Jerónimo Martins Group and one of the largest supermarket operators in Portugal with over 350 stores.

Although it is itself one of the top 3 content marketing agencies in Portugal, Plot Content wanted to leverage Seven's experience and its British branding to fast track its own success. Working together, the 2 agencies put together a proposal.

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Sean King, Chief Executive Officer, Seven

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Sean King, Chief Executive Officer, Seven

Seven had previously worked with partners in the USA and in Germany, but was new to this market. In September 2013, the Director of UKTI, Portugal met with Sean in London to discuss the agency's plans. Sean welcomed an offer of in-market support in raising awareness of Seven's credentials.

Soon after, the British Ambassador met with the Chief Executive Officer of the Jerónimo Martins Group and highlighted the value that Seven could bring to the partnership with Plot Content. The Director of UKTI, Portugal also spoke with the Pingo Doce Director to reinforce the capabilities of the British agency. This gave Sean an additional entry point to present to the senior management team board of Pingo Doce when he visited to present the proposal in Portugal in 2013.

Seven and Plot Content were awarded a 3-year, €2 million contract to produce 6 magazines a year and customer-facing website content for Pingo Doce.

“The UK, and London in particular, is known to be a centre of excellence for content marketing,” says Sean. “We helped Plot Content to build a strong and compelling proposal. In Portugal, relationships remain a strong part of business decision-making. The meeting between the CEO of Jerónimo Martins and the British Ambassador gave us credibility, reassuring them that it would be ‘safe’ to deal with us as new-comers to the market. It was another good reason for them to appoint us and Plot Content for the project.”

Expanding exports

As the Pingo Doce contract gets underway, Seven is advising Plot Content on delivery. Now that it has a proven model, the British agency is looking for further opportunities in Portugal as well as other Portuguese-speaking countries, such as Brazil and Mozambique.

This taste for overseas markets has also inspired Seven to look towards the Middle East, which is home to several luxury brands and where there is a great respect for British services. UKTI will be on hand to provide relevant support here too.

“Our extensive work for Sainsbury's means that we can't work for other UK supermarkets, so looking overseas is a great opportunity for us to grow in this sector,” says Sean. “UKTI was very pro-active in helping us in Portugal. The role of a Business Ambassador was key – it is a fantastic resource to have access to and I was genuinely thrilled to have this support.”

The export advantage

International trade has always played an important role in the UK economy. Today it accounts for almost 20 per cent of the nation's GDP.

Exporting can be challenging, but the benefits can be the difference between profit and loss. Research carried out by UKTI shows that:

- companies that export become 34 per cent more productive in the first year alone
- 59 per cent of companies that exported either developed a new product or service or modified an existing one
- 85 per cent of companies reported that exporting led to a ‘level of growth not otherwise possible’
- 87 per cent said exporting had significantly improved their profile or credibility
- 73 per cent said exporting had increased the commercial lifespan of products or services

For more information about exporting please go to gov.uk/ukti

Helping you to do business abroad

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Through our Passport to Export programme we offer new and inexperienced exporters:

- free capability assessments
- support in visiting potential markets
- mentoring from a local export professional
- free action plans
- customised and subsidised training
- ongoing support once you're up and running

UKTI was delighted to support Seven in its business overseas.

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