



Lumsden wins projects after UKTI Trade Mission to Russia

Fast facts

Company: Lumsden

Industry: Creative & media – retail design

Target markets: Russia, USA, UAE

UKTI services: Trade Mission, Introductions

www.lumsdendesign.com



Having joined a UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) Trade Mission to St Petersburg and Moscow, Lumsden went onto secure £45,000 of business on new projects: for the Museum of Cosmonautics and Museum of Moscow. In 2015, the company expects these concepts to be rolled out across 9 other museums in Moscow, establishing the company in the Russian market.

Callum Lumsden trained as a furniture designer and interior designer at the Royal College of Art in London before setting up the design agency that bears his name. Lumsden has an impressive portfolio of projects for iconic museums, galleries and visitor attractions including the Tate Modern, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Museum of Modern Art, NYC and Warner Bros. Studios. The company is based in London and has a turnover of £500,000.

“Museums, galleries and visitor destinations have emerged as a very

vibrant part of the retail sector, with potential to generate considerable turnover,” says Callum. “So-called ‘gift shops’ require a different approach to create an environment that appeals to a broader range of shoppers. Visitors span a broad spectrum - from school children, to seniors, to tourists, to academics – and they want to take home a reminder of their own personal experience of the attraction. Our work at Tate Modern was a real turning point for us. It won several awards which raised our profile and attracted new clients from outside the UK. As a result, we were invited to work on the Albertina Museum in Vienna, our first overseas commission, and our reputation grew from there.”

Long term plans

In late 2013, UKTI invited Callum to join a Creative Industries HVO Task Force of the UK’s top 100 UK’s key creative sector small and medium sized businesses. The aim of the initiative is to help them to win £500 million worth of high value overseas contracts in the next 3 years. Together with other

members of the Task Force, Callum was invited to an evening at the National Portrait Gallery with Prime Minister David Cameron in October 2013. There, he made a presentation to a delegation of site developers from Macao that UKTI had brought to the UK. He also took the opportunity to find out more about UKTI’s work helping British businesses to export.

“It was really interesting to hear about the long term plans for developments in Hong Kong and Macao,” says Callum. “The retail part will come into play later down the line, but relationships are important so in the meantime we will keep in touch with the people we met through UKTI. I was also pleased to hear about the services UKTI offers to help and promote British exporters, and came away from the event feeling certain that we could benefit.”

Russia

In November 2013, Callum attended a seminar where he met UKTI specialists from around the world and heard about opportunities in different markets.

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Callum Lumsden, Founder, Lumsden

He learned about a UKTI Trade Mission to St Petersburg and Moscow which would involve meetings with local museums, and signed up.

One of the people that the delegation heard from during the mission was Karina Srtylan, who had been newly appointed by the Moscow Ministry of Culture to develop retail in museums. On his return to the UK, Callum stayed in contact with Karina and became a great support to her in her work. He arranged meetings for her with his contacts at places like the British Museum, the London Film Museum and the National Theatre, to help her develop products for the museums in her remit.

When a tender was put out by the Ministry of Culture for Moscow to come up with a retail design and implementation strategy for its museums, Lumsden submitted a bid and was successful. The company is now working on its first projects in Russia - for the Museum of Cosmonautics and Museum of Moscow - due to open in April 2015. This is worth £45,000, but more importantly, provide a foothold in this market and the potential to generate further business. There are already plans for the design to be rolled out across 9 other museums in Moscow and the possibility of work on 3 general shops run by the Ministry.

“I hoped that joining the UKTI Trade Mission would help me win one project in Russia, which would allow us to prove our concept of museum retail, and it did just that,” says Callum. “Building relationships with potential clients overseas can be a challenge, but UKTI made sure we met the right people. We got a great return on the money we invested in the trip - having UKTI behind us as we approached this new market gave us credibility and a solid foundation on which to build.”

Looking forward

Lumsden has recently worked on 2 major projects in Los Angeles - one for Warner Bros. Studios and the other for Universal Studios. The British Vice Consul is now helping the company to access other film companies in Hollywood. The UKTI team in New York is also making introductions to people at a number of museums and visitor destinations there.

Meanwhile, despite the recent slowdown in the Russian economy, and the fall in value of the rouble, there remain significant opportunities for UK companies in this market. Lumsden continues to be alert to new opportunities overseas, such as plans in the United Arab Emirates for 3 major new museums on Saadiyat Island. No doubt, UKTI's local teams will be available to help as needed.

“I have spoken to people about what UKTI has already helped us to achieve and they are surprised that such a small company can have so much clout overseas,” says Callum. “Networking is crucial to winning new business and UKTI has in-market contacts all over the world that they are happy to share with British businesses like us. We've been really impressed with UKTI and we're confident that with them behind us, our international business will continue to grow.”

The export advantage

International trade has always played an important role in the UK economy. In 2013, exports accounted for 30% 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:

- Exporters have higher labour productivity (measured using gross-value-added) than non-exporters;
- 88% of companies that export plan to either develop a new product/service or modify an existing one in the next 3 years;
- 83% of UKTI supported companies export to achieve a “level of growth otherwise not possible;
- 68% of UKTI supported companies export to improve their firms profile and credibility; and
- 67% of UKTI supported companies export in response to orders/enquiries from overseas customers.

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

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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.

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 Lumsden in its business overseas.

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