



GUIDE 4

e-Trade Desk Action Plan

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INTRODUCTION

The accumulated experience of the WTPF indicates that e-TradeDesks are more likely to be successful if they implement an action plan based on a realistic market strategy. In order to fulfill their role in helping SMEs participate more widely in international markets and e-commerce, e-TradeDesks must have clear objectives and a well-targeted customer base.

Determining the e-TradeDesk services on the basis of a market analysis involves defining how to incorporate sufficient flexibility to be able to adapt the service structure to changing conditions. It involves exploring which companies are likely to benefit from e-TradeDesk services, which type of services are likely to result in performance improvement of SMEs in international trade and e-commerce, and how to market these services. Marketing is an extremely important aspect by promoting the WTPF brand, e-TradeDesk stand to gain from an internationally consolidated image. The central services provided by the WTPF are also an excellent anchor for the marketing of additional e-TradeDesk services.

The e-TradeDesk's Action Plan should cover a period of 2 years. The present document sets down some of the basic elements involved in the plan preparation, intended to serve as a guide to addressing those aspects conducive to successful functioning. Each e-TradeDesk can of course mold its Action Plan to its specific needs and local circumstances, in so far as these lie within the boundaries of the Terms & Conditions... document signed with the WTPF.

BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE ACTION PLAN

A. DESCRIPTION AND STRATEGY

The Action Plan should start with a description of the e-TradeDesk, its role and aims, its vision (what you would like it to achieve), and its target market. The e-TradeDesk's formal position, interaction and responsibilities within the host institution and a brief description of the WTPF should also be included.

The aims of the e-TradeDesk should be placed in the context of :

a) the local business community:

- ✓ a brief overview of the role and activities of the host institution should be given. Perhaps the host institution is already engaged in assisting SMEs to enter international markets and hence shares the goals of the WTPF. Does the host institution have in-depth knowledge of the local market to make available to other e-TradeDesks or Trade Points? Does the host institution have close links to local enterprises? What is the nature of the relationship? Does the host institution provide training courses and other tools that it could provide to the e-TradeDesk and Trade Point community/the WTPF?
- ✓ Will the e-TradeDesk partner with other entities to provide some of its services? Give details of these partnerships (the legal form and nature/content of the partnership agreements)

b) the World Trade Point Federation : how will the e-TradeDesk contribute to the functioning and goals of the e-TradeDesk Network as a whole and constitute an asset to the WTPF?

Defining the action plan of the e-TradeDesk involves basically showing how it intends to gain a competitive edge in the target market. For the evaluation of local market conditions in the strategic section you can make use of the same market analysis data you gathered for the Background Document. The following are some of the points to be covered:

The demand for e-TradeDesk services: What is the potential market for e-TradeDesk services? Comment on the number of exporting/importing enterprises in the area covered by the e-TradeDesk and other entities that might be interested in e-TradeDesk services. Elaborate here on the initial information provided in the Background Document accompanying the formal letter of request to set up an e-TradeDesk, and refer to the critical mass of companies to which it will be delivered the eTradeID, as indicated in the Terms & Conditions document signed.

What are the services that are most in demand? How is the number of potential clients likely to develop in the next two years?

What links already exist between the host institution and potential clients of the e-TradeDesk? Does the host institution have a database of clients who could also be offered e-TradeDesk services? Will the e-TradeDesk be physically set up in a place with good visibility and of easy access for businessmen? etc. .

Market niche for the e-Trade Desk: How will the e-TradeDesk position itself in the market with regard to the existing competition? What (groups of) services will it provide? What market niche does it intend to occupy? In sum, what will the e-TradeDesk's competitive advantage be in this particular niche as compared with competitors (if competitors exist)?

Hurdles and how they will be dealt with: In outlining how you plan to go about achieving your objectives, overcoming any hurdles and deciding on the necessary steps to take, it may be useful to include a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) Analysis. Carrying out an analysis using the SWOT framework will help focus the activities into areas where the e-TradeDesk is strong, and where the greatest opportunities lie. The following table provides an illustration of the type of concepts to be included.

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The e-TradeDesk staff has experience in the export/import, e-trade and is therefore able to give practical advice to SMEs. - The host institution has a very good reputation with the business community. - The e-TradeDesk will be able to draw on this reputation to build a large customer base. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The e-TradeDesk is not always able to respond quickly to clients' needs. - The e-TradeDesk has a limited number of staff and each person has to cover several areas of work. - The strong link with the host institution restricts possibilities of cooperation with private partners and curtails freedom and flexibility in the pricing policy.
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The country has considerable import/export potential. - Very few existing organizations will be in a position to compete with the e-TradeDesk, making a high market share feasible. - The WTPF network offers an excellent platform for international cooperation with other e-TradeDesk and the dissemination of trade information and SME oriented services developed by its partners. - The WTPF offers global visibility to e-TradeDesk and companies with eTradeID delivered. 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budgetary problems of a host institution. - The customer base of the e-TradeDesk is threatened by general economic difficulties in the region. - The e-TradeDesk does not have sufficient capacity to react rapidly to technological changes occurring in e-trade. - There may be a risk of overlap between the services of the e-TradeDesk and those of its host institution.

B. ACTION PLAN

Having defined where your e-TradeDesk is heading you next have to design an Action Plan to take you there. This will involve a description of the tools to be used to achieve your objectives, covering a list of the products and services to be provided and the corresponding **Marketing Plan**.

1. Products and services to be offered by the e-TradeDesk

This is the very core of the Action Plan. It is of utmost importance that the e-TradeDesk services be well designed to address the identified target client and to show that it brings added value to the host institution instead of competing with it. Explain what services the host institution offers, how e-TradeDesk services fit into this scheme, and how the e-TradeDesk will add value to the host institution services.

Explain the nature of the individual services and/or service packages to be offered by the e-TradeDesk, specifying which will be provided directly by the e-TradeDesk and which will be provided by partner institutions. Can the potential e-TradeDesk clients be categorized into different market segments (e.g. by size and area of activity, foreign/local, government/private sector)?

You may summarize the information on the main products and services of the e-TradeDesk in a series of tables using the following example.

Name of product or service	Description
Description	
Targeted market segment	
Provided by e-TradeDesk staff or in cooperation with a partner	
Mode of delivery	
Price	
Resources needed for the development and provision of the product/service	
Date of delivery	

Minimum services that a functional e-TradeDesk is expected to provide.

Remember that in order to be awarded functional status an e-TradeDesk must have fully submitted to WTPF the information for their web profile and offer **at least**:

- the services included in the **e-TradeDeskCENTRAL** service module (see the first module of the **e-TradeDeskSERVICE PACKAGES** Guidelines)
- advice and consultation on all aspects of international and e-trade transactions
- information on providers of trade-related services in the country and the range of services they offer to clients

A word on the e-TradeDesk profile present in the WTPF website.

The WTPF has provided a dynamic website with ample high quality trade-related information and tools into which each e-Trade Desk will have its profile inserted by WTPF. e-TradeDesk must assure a constant update of its own profile by sending to the WTPF regularly updated information.

e-TradeDesk must have clearly inserted in the host entity Home page the e-banner with the link to the WTPF website.

ETradeID. Delivery together with WTPF of a critical mass of local companies and further expansion of the database requires e-TradeDesks to include in their Marketing Plan a strategy aimed at increasing the number of companies participating in the system.

ETO trust system. e-Trade Desks are expected to draw up a plan for the collection and dissemination of electronic trade opportunities at the local level, whether by e-mail, website, fax, bulletin or newsletter, or in a targeted manner (trade alerts for specific categories of opportunities) and also to routinely upload trade leads into the ETO trust system. Explain how this will be carried out and where the trade leads will be sourced.

Some examples of additional services that can be provided by e-TradeDesks.

<p><i>General information services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Market profiles; e-Impo/Expo/ Investment Guides - E-bulletin with business news; 	<p><i>Matchmaking services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Search for e-business partners and matchings with ETOs; participation in trade e-fairs; buyers-sellers' virtual meetings
<p><i>Market Research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tailor-made market research / Price surveys 	<p><i>Consultancy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal aspects of international e-trade - Business plans
<p><i>Business Facilitation</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Centre services: design and printing of promotional documentation; translation / Interpretation services; organization of visits and business interviews 	<p><i>E-commerce/Information technologies services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Web page design (company presentations, virtual catalogues...); design and implementation of databases; design and production of multimedia products;
<p><i>Training</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Webinars on specific trade-related topics - Web campaigns and online events for companies 	<p><i>Transaction-related services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issuing of trade certificates - Freight forwarding - Customs clearance - Insurance services - International payments

2. Implementation Schedule

The implementation schedule can most usefully be presented in the form of a timeline or a chart. If text is preferred, the schedule must be very clearly outlined.

3. Physical Infrastructure and Human Resources

Describe the office infrastructure, organizational structure set-up to be made available in the e-TradeDesk.

Regarding ICT structure, please consult GUIDE 6 ICT Requirements.

Human Resources:

Give details of the human resources structure of the e-TradeDesk. Comment on competences present in the e-TradeDesk. In what fields does/will the staff have strong know-how? Where could bottlenecks occur?

4. Marketing Plan

How will the e-TradeDesk promote itself among its target groups ? What communication channels and materials will be used: seminars, events, radio emissions, TV spots, brochures, e-mail lists, on-line banners, reports on e-TradeDesk activities, etc. ?

How will the initial promotion related to the launching of the e-TradeDesk be managed? (Who will be invited, what will be presented? etc.). How will the promotion be maintained thereafter? With what periodicity / on what occasions will the target groups be approached? Are there any special marketing campaigns/events planned? Give details.

How will the e-TradeDesk foster good relations with the press? What contacts already exist? (Frequent and positive appearance in the press is a very effective and “objective” – as compared with paid publicity – way of promoting the e-TradeDesk and its services.)

How will internal marketing of the e-TradeDesk vis-à-vis the host institution be managed so that the latter regards the e-TradeDesk as an asset?

Promotional methods: Direct promotion concentrates on more direct means of communication with potential clients and includes means like:

- face-to-face contact telephone calls
- customized fax, mail and e-mail promotion
- customized online contacts

Arguments in favour of this type of promotion: it allows for immediate feedback and customized promotion approaches, and helps build loyalty relationships. The drawback is that it can be relatively costly and not effective if response rates are low.

Indirect promotion includes promotion through:

- advertisement on the radio/TV
- advertisement/articles in the press
- advertisement in brochures, posters, flyers
- promotion on the website
- promotion through partners, distributors, agents, etc.

Arguments in favour: its low cost and larger potential audience. However, it is not focused and therefore may not result in a high response rate. For this reason, it is difficult to evaluate its impact.