NEW ZEALAND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Manatū Aorere

Barriers and Challenges for Internationalising SMEs:

FACILITATING THROUGH CROSS-BORDER NEGOTIATIONS

Barriers and Challenges for Internationalising SMEs:

Facilitating through Cross-Border Negotiations

Siah Hwee Ang

Professor in Strategy and International Business
School of Marketing and International Business
Victoria University of Wellington

Fandy Tjiptono

Associate Professor in Marketing
School of Marketing and International Business
Victoria University of Wellington

The authors wish to acknowledge the research assistance provided by Associate Professor Thu Phuong Truong, Siyun Thompson, Chunxiao Lu, Marfiya Tatlik, and Dr. Laura Sessions

As we celebrate the ASEAN Australia New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA) Upgrade we welcome this research that was procured in lieu of the 2023 Integration Partnership Forum. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are a critical part of the trading environment in our region and the upgraded AANZFTA includes a new chapter to support further cooperation.

This research covers barriers faced by MSMEs in participating in international trade in the region and makes recommendations for businesses. We hope that it can be further utilised to support businesses in ASEAN, Australia and New Zealand and implementation of the upgraded AANZFTA agreement.

I would like to thank the contributions made by Siah Hwee Ang, Fandy Tjiptono and the team at Victoria University of Wellington and we are grateful for the valuable addition that it adds to the existing body of knowledge.

Keawe Woodmore

New Zealand Senior Official to ASEAN
August 2023

Introduction

There has been a proliferation of bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) in the last two decades. The traditional primary benefit of free trade agreements is lower tariffs, but this has reached a plateau for some countries.

In New Zealand, 13 free trade agreements are in force (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.). There are 17 for Australia (Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, n.d.). The Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN), a group of 10 countries that are New Zealand's closest neighbours beyond Australia and the Pacific Islands, has an array of free trade agreements with other major Asian economies, such as the ASEAN-China Free Trade Area, ASEAN-India Free Trade Area and ASEAN-Republic of Korea Free Trade Area. Within ASEAN, Singapore, which is a major hub for multinational corporations, has amassed 27 free trade agreements (Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry, n.d.).

January 2022 saw the enforcement of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). This multilateral FTA includes all 10 ASEAN nations, plus New Zealand, Australia, China, South Korea and Japan. This complements the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (AANZFTA), which has been in place since 2008. The AANZFTA upgrade negotiations were concluded in November 2022.

In December 2018, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) also came into force for Australia, New Zealand and Singapore, with Vietnam joining in January 2019 and Malaysia in November 2022. Since 2011, an ASEAN-CER Integration Partnership Forum (IPF) has also provided an opportunity for conversations among ASEAN countries, Australia and New Zealand.

In many of the multilateral FTAs, negotiations have extended way beyond lower tariffs. In particular, many have recognised the importance of MSMEs/SMEs (hereon SMEs in short) and their contribution to the (health of) economies (for example, Chapter 14: Small and Medium Enterprises in the RCEP).

Clearly, sustainable trade needs to include SMEs, which constitute 97-98% of all companies operating in almost all countries in the world. Understanding the barriers and challenges to internationalising and growing these companies is paramount to enhancing trade. Government can help facilitate and smooth these processes for SMEs.

This study takes a holistic view by identifying the barriers that SMEs face through an extensive, global literature review. It then looks specifically at studies in the ASEAN, Australia and New Zealand contexts. Finally, we make recommendations based on further insights from six case studies and a survey of businesses and trade-supporting chambers and councils.

A Literature Review of Barriers to Exporting and Internationalising

To establish a global perspective of what is known about the barriers to exporting and internationalising, we used major publication search engines such as EBSCOHost and ABI Inform. Our search process led us to a total of 3,975 publications, which were then downloaded and briefly assessed for their relevancy. The outcome of the screening process is as follows:

CONTENT CATEGORY	EXPORTING	INTERNATIONALISING
NZ	11	6
Australia	9	4
ASEAN	27	7
Rest of World	184	76
Sub-total	231	93
Not relevant	2,917	734
TOTAL	3,148	827

Once we removed duplicates, the final number of publications for our deep-dive review was 293 across both categories. The breakdown by region was NZ (14), Australia (13), ASEAN (30) and Rest of World (236).

For these 293 articles, we then extracted the 57 articles in NZ, Australia, and ASEAN. For the Rest of World publications, we extracted similar information from publications with empirical evidence from 2015 and later.

The focus on post-2015 will help ensure the barriers are relevant in the current context, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through this process, we compiled a list of four key internal barriers and four key external barriers. Internal barriers refer to those within the control of the company, while external barriers are out of the control of the company or the environment in which the company operates.

The four internal barriers are informational, human resources, financial, and marketing.
Below is a description of these internal barriers:

Informational:
includes access to overseas collaborators; ability to contact potential customers; international market knowledge; understanding of international business procedures and regulations; and international business opportunity identification.

Human resources:
includes export talent and experience; network relationships; and aspiration and commitment to exporting.

Financial:
includes internal financial resources; access to external financing; export engagement costs; and international payments, exchange rates, and interest rates.

Marketing:
includes supply chain management; product innovation and management; geographic location; distribution networks; marketing capabilities and strategy; brand and country of origin; and after-sales service.

The four external barriers are procedural, tariff and non-tariff, government, and market condition. Below is a description of these external barriers:

Procedural:
includes foreign regulations; product and service standards in target countries; administrative and bureaucratic issues; complexity and clarity of export/import procedures; cross-border disputes and legal support; payments abroad; costs and risks of doing business overseas; and taxes and rates.

Tariff and non-tariff:
includes tariff barriers; non-tariff barriers; government policy and regulation; and protectionism.

Governmental:
includes unfavourable home government policy; government assistance and export promotion programmes; political instability; host country government policy; and institutional networks.

Market Condition:
foreign market characteristics; competition; infrastructure issues; liability of newness and smallness; and language and cultural barriers.

The following sub-sections explore each of these barriers in more detail.

Internal: Informational Barriers

Access to Overseas Collaborators

Access to foreign networks and business partners was found to be a major barrier to foreign market performance and general exporting for SMEs (Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Freeman *et al*., 2012; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). Freeman *et al.* (2012), for instance, discovered that the location of SMEs in Australia affected their ability to access domestic and foreign networks. This subsequently impeded their export performance. SMEs in Slovenia also found that difficulty in making contacts within the export market impeded their ability to succeed in their exporting endeavours (Celec & Globocnik, 2017). As general barriers to internationalisation, Shaw & Darroch (2004) found that New Zealand SMEs lacked access to overseas business partners.

The ability to locate reliable overseas agents and distributors has been identified as a barrier to SMEs across the globe (Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020; Haddoud *et al*., 2018; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kahiya *et al.,* 2014; Kahiya, 2013; Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2018). Horticultural product manufacturing SMEs in Australia were affected in their decision to export by their ability to obtain reliable overseas agents in foreign markets (Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996). Kahiya (2013), Kahiya *et al.* (2014), and Gerschewski *et al.* (2020) found that NZ SMEs were affected similarly, deciding not to export due to their inability to find reliable distributors and agents overseas. This challenge was also present for Algerian SMEs (Haddoud *et al*., 2018).

For New Zealand manufacturing firms, Kahiya & Dean (2014) found that when they did export, their success was limited by their ability to locate distributors. Generally, Isac & Badshah (2019) found that SMEs faced difficulty in sourcing foreign business partners. In Northwestern USA, Shooshtari *et al.* (2017) found that SMEs were challenged to find a foreign representative that they perceived as trustworthy.

Ability to Contact Potential Customers

The ability to contact potential customers was identified as a significant barrier to exportation for SMEs across multiple areas (Freeman *et al*., 2012; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Revindo *et al*., 2019; Roy *et al*., 2016). Regarding the decision to export, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that for Indonesian SMEs, not being able to contact potential customers affected their export status. In Ethiopia, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) identified the same factor in an SME's decision to enter the export market. For Indian SMEs, Roy *et al.* (2016) found that an inability to contact potential customers acted as a barrier to internationalisation. Morini *et al.* (2021) recognised that customer contacting was also a barrier to exporting for Brazilian SMEs in Sao Paulo.

International Market Knowledge

General knowledge about overseas markets was identified across many regions as a barrier to export status, performance, and general engagement with export processes (Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Haddoud *et al*., 2018; Hashim, 2015; Ismail & Isa, 2021; Kahiya & Dean 2015; Malca *et al.,* 2020; Narayanan, 2015).

Haddoud *et al.* (2018) identified that a general lack of knowledge about foreign markets stopped Algerian SMEs from exporting overseas. Australian horticultural product producers identified, specifically, that a lack of knowledge about the social and cultural backgrounds of overseas markets prevented them from engaging in foreign markets (Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996).

When SMEs do export, their success is impeded by their lack of knowledge. In the context of Malaysia, knowledge was found to be a hindrance to exporting (Ismail & Isa, 2021). Further abroad, Slovenian SMEs suffered from a lack of knowledge about venture markets (Celec & Globocnik, 2017), and Peruvian SMEs faced challenges to their success due to a lack of knowledge about overseas market demand specifically, as well as the provision of overseas marketing information (Malca *et al*., 2020).

Narayanan (2015) concluded that for SMEs across the globe, a lack of knowledge about target markets was a significant barrier to export engagement. For New Zealand manufacturing firms, Kahiya & Dean (2015) recognised that not knowing how to market successfully overseas was a challenge, and in Malaysia, Hashim (2015) found that a lack of market and product knowledge impeded SMEs from further exporting.

The lack of knowledge of foreign business practices was also identified as a main barrier to export status, performance, and further engagement. Kahiya (2013) found that, for manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand, a lack of knowledge about foreign business practises affected their decision to export their products. Similarly in Ethiopia, in a study with both non-exporting and exporting SMEs, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) identified that this knowledge influenced SMEs' export status. When SMEs did export, their performance was impeded by a lack of knowledge in this area.

In a study of 129 New Zealand manufacturing exporters, Kahiya & Dean (2014) identified that NZ SMEs suffered in their export performance when they did not sufficiently understand foreign business practises. For exporting SMEs in Peru, Malca *et al.* (2020) reached the same conclusion: SMEs' success was hindered by a lack of knowledge.

Furthermore, the lack of data and information accessibility was identified by multiple sources as a significant barrier to SMEs in their decision to export, their foreign market performance, and generally when engaging with export activities (Celec & Globocnick, 2017; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Kahiya, 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Morini *et al.*, 2021; Nguyen *et al.,* 2008; Pavlak, 2018; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Sibiya & Kele, 2019).

In Indonesia, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that obtaining information about potential markets and accessing reliable data on target market economies were significant factors in SMEs' export status. In Ethiopia, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) showed that SMEs' export propensity was influenced by inaccessible and insufficient information about foreign markets. For Slovenian SMEs, Celec & Globocnik (2017) found that firms' success overseas was shaped by their ability to capture market information and analyse export data. In the context of Peru, Malca *et al.* (2020) identified that the accessibility of general export literature and publications shaped the export performance and overseas success of SMEs. Julien & Ahmed (2005) found that, specifically for Australian SMEs, the ability to gather accurate information on foreign markets for marketing purposes was impeded, which then affected the firms' export performance.

SMEs in many countries have suffered from a lack of accessible data and information as a general barrier to exporting. Kahiya (2017) found that SMEs lack information to analyse foreign opportunities across the board, which challenges their export engagement. Across Vietnamese SMEs, Nguyen *et al.* (2008) found that firms had difficulty in collecting accurate information on foreign markets. SMEs in Northwestern USA faced challenges when exporting, as they did not conduct market research (Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017). Instead, SMEs in this region relied on foreign networks and contacts, which was a barrier to their export involvement. The lack of access to 'best practises', like their competitors, acted as a barrier for SMEs in the region (Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017). A lack of correct and effective business practises set SMEs in this region back when engaging in export activities.

Additionally, Isac & Badshah (2019) claim that SMEs generally don't know where to find information about foreign markets. In India, Roy *et al.* (2016) recognised that data holds access to foreign opportunities; therefore, an inability to access such data is a barrier to foreign markets for SMEs. For SMEs in Montenegro, Jovovic *et al.* (2017) identified a lack of information in general about foreign markets, which prevented SMEs from internationalising. Insufficient information about foreign target markets was identified as a barrier for SMEs in the Czech Republic, Croatia, and South Africa also (Kapralova, 2017; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Pavlak, 2018; Sibiya & Kele, 2019). In Brazil, SMEs faced export barriers with an inability to access data sources about foreign markets, as well as insufficient general market information (Morini *et al.*, 2021).

Understanding of International Business Procedures and Regulations

Not knowing export procedures and a lack of familiarity with foreign laws are additional barriers to export engagement for SMEs. A lack of this knowledge affects SMEs' decision to export (Kahiya, 2013), their success in foreign markets (Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Malca *et al.,* 2020), and acts as a general hindrance to export activities (Isac & Badshah, 2019; Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016).

In the context of New Zealand manufacturing SMEs, Kahiya (2013) found that knowledge, or lack thereof, of export requirements and procedures strongly influences a firm's export status. Similarly, an increased familiarity with foreign laws and export procedures was associated with increased export performance for New Zealand SMEs (Kahiya & Dean, 2014). In Peru, Malca *et al.* (2020) identified that a strong understanding of general regulations associated with exporting was linked to export success for SMEs.

New Zealand manufacturing firms experienced general export barriers in the form of a lack of knowledge of export procedures and foreign laws (Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016). Isac & Badshah (2019) identified that, across the globe, a lack of knowledge about exporting rules affected SMEs negatively.

International Business Opportunity Identification

Identification of foreign opportunities is a pervasive barrier for SMEs in all regions. It was identified widely as a strong barrier to exporting for SMEs (Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Kahiya, 2013, 2017; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Malca *et al.*, 2020; Morini *et al.*, 2021; Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). For Australian horticultural product producers, Remaseshan & Soutar (1995, 1996) found that they particularly struggled to identify potential customers and buyers overseas. This affected their decision to export. For New Zealand manufacturing firms, when deciding to engage in new overseas ventures, Kahiya (2013) recognised that the identification of foreign market opportunities shaped the decisions made by SMEs to export or not. In the context of Indonesia, the probability that SMEs would decide to export was found to be affected by the firm's abilities to identify foreign market opportunities (Revindo *et al.,* 2019). Studies of Slovenian and Peruvian SMEs that export identified that success was negatively affected by a lack of identification of potential customers and market opportunities (Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Malca *et al.*, 2020).

As a general barrier to SMEs exporting, Kahiya (2013) and Isac & Badshah (2019) both found that a lack of awareness of foreign market opportunities negatively affects all types of SMEs in exportation. In New Zealand specifically, Shaw & Darroch (2004) identified the limited knowledge of overseas market opportunities contributed to negative perceptions of exporting, which acted as a barrier towards export engagement for SMEs. This is further supported by Kahiya *et al.* (2014) and Kahiya & Dean (2015, 2016), who found that the identification of opportunities was a general export barrier for New Zealand manufacturing SMEs. Overseas, both Indian and Brazilian SMEs faced export challenges due to a lack of identification of foreign customers (Morini *et al.,* 2021; Roy *et al.,* 2016). An Australian study similarly found that SMEs there lacked awareness of favourable export stimuli and opportunities in general, which influenced their export status (Tan *et al.*, 2018).

Internal: Human Resource Barriers

Export Talent and Experience

Export status is affected strongly by a lack of skilled and experienced personnel (Gerschewski *et al.*, 2020; Haddoud *et al.,* 2018; Kahiya, 2013; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Patterson, 2004; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Tan *et al.*, 2018). The inability to handle export documentation, for instance, has been identified as an issue for SMEs generally (Kahiya, 2017), and specifically for firms in New Zealand (Kahiya, 2013; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Gerschewski *et al.*, 2020). For example, New Zealand manufacturing firms experienced a lack of export documentation handling, which impacted both their export status (Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020; Kahiya, 2013) and their export performance (Kahiya & Dean, 2014). Across various SMEs, Kahiya (2017) identified that the inability to handle export documentation created a barrier to export development.

A lack of planning and organisation was found to be a barrier to SME internationalisation (Majidli, 2020; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017). Majidli (2020) found that organisational skills can affect the success of SMEs generally in foreign markets. In the USA, Shooshtari *et al.* (2017) found that organisational skills and firm competencies were barriers to entry. They identified a lack of follow-up on trade leads, as well as a lack of proactivity, caused significant challenges to their ability to succeed internationally.

In the Australian service industry, firms were restricted by limitations in their 'know-how' (Patterson, 2004). Tan *et al.* (2018) found that across 290 Australian SMEs, firms lacked the appropriate knowledge and experience to involve themselves in export activities. They also lacked managers specifically who were familiar with international markets and procedures (Tan *et al.*, 2018). For New Zealand manufacturing firms, both Kahiya (2013) and Gerchewski *et al.* (2020) demonstrated that a lack of qualified personnel affected SMEs' decision to export. In ASEAN, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that Indonesian SMEs had an inadequate quantity and capability of personnel, which shaped their export status. SMEs in Ethiopia and Algeria were found to lack the same personnel and skills, similarly affecting their decision to export. Ethiopia lacked general export skills and people trained in export operations (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015), and Algeria required employees that were experienced in export handling (Haddoud *et al.,* 2018).

Insufficient personnel and experience have also been shown to hamper SMEs' export performance (Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Malca *et al.*, 2020; Mubarik *et al.,* 2020; Njinyah, 2018; Rubino *et al.*, 2017). SMEs in Queensland, Australia lacked personnel to continually supply exports and manage international trade activity (Julian & Ahmed, 2005). The New Zealand manufacturing industry lacked staff and sufficient experience, which were strong barriers to foreign market engagement and export performance (Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016; Kahiya *et al.*, 2014; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). Malaysian halal food companies lacked managerial exposure to international markets, which in turn affected their performance (Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015). Manufacturing firms in Pakistan, cocoa exporters in Cameroon, and SMEs in Italy and Peru all required more management capability, general expertise, and international experience for increased success in foreign markets (Malca *et al.*, 2020; Mubarik *et al.,* 2020; Njinyah, 2018; Rubino *et al.*, 2017).

A lack of skilled employees and managers has been demonstrated to have wider impact on SMEs' ability to develop and succeed internationally (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Boscor, 2017; Hashim, 2015; Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Kahiya & Dean, 2015; 2016; Kahiya *et al.,* 2014; Kapralova, 2017; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Mueller-Using *et al.,* 2020; Pellicano & De Luca, 2016; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017). Malaysian SMEs also lacked skilled personnel, specifically due to the lack of skilled workers available in the market (Hashim, 2015). A lack of workers generally means a lack of specific foreign market and export knowledge, and thus a reduced capacity and willingness to engage with foreign markets across the domestic sphere. Turkish manufacturers suffered in their ability to obtain skilled workers, specifically due to foreign worker quotas, higher taxes on foreign workers, and the requirement for professional certifications (Agan & Erdogan, 2016). SMEs in India, Romania, Montenegro, the Baltic Sea Region, Brazil, and the USA; wineries in Italy; Turkish and Croatian manufacturers; and Czech exporters all labelled inadequate and/or inexperienced export personnel as a significant barrier to foreign market entry and success (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Boscor, 2017; Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Mueller-Using *et al.*, 2020; Pellicano & De Luca, 2016; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017).

Network Relationships

A lack of experience leads to a lack of network relationships. Managerial network relationships were demonstrated to be important in the performance and development of SMEs in various foreign markets (Ahimbisibwe ***et al.,*** 2020; Cicic ***et al.,*** 2002; Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Nguyen ***et al.,*** 2008; Nikmah ***et al.,*** 2022; Puthusserry ***et al.,*** 2021; Zain & Ng, 2006). In Malaysia, Ismail & Kuivalainen (2015) found that a lack of overseas network relationships challenged the performance of SMEs in foreign markets. Another study by Zain & Ng (2006) found that network relationships had a significant impact on Malaysian SMEs and their decision to export their goods.

In India, Puthersserry ***et al.*** (2021) discovered that early-internationalised Fintech SMEs specifically lacked social networks, which limited their access to foreign network resources, and thus affected their general international development and access to exports. Australian and Ugandan SMEs identified network relationships as an influence on export success (Ahimbisibwe ***et al.,*** 2020; Julian & Ahmed, 2005). In a study of Indonesian SMEs, Nikmah ***et al.*** (2022) found that firms lacked networking capabilities, which influenced their export status.

Regarding export profitability, Julian & Ahmed (2005) found that Australian exporters had difficulty arranging joint venture agreements with foreign firms. Cicic ***et al.*** (2002) found that a lack of foreign connections impeded internationalisation amongst Australian service firms. Vietnamese SMEs identified the same difficulty in arranging joint venture agreements (Nguyen ***et al.,*** 2008). In a study by Ahimbisibwe ***et al.*** (2020), Ugandan SMEs identified a lack of international networking as an obstacle towards export success.

Aspiration and Commitment to Exporting

Some SMEs and managers lack aspiration and commitment to exporting, which has been found to negatively impact their export status, performance, and general access to foreign markets (Faruk & Subudhi, 2019; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya, 2013; Patterson, 2004). There is evidence that SMEs focus on domestic market development, which creates further challenges for their overseas market development (Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya, 2013; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016). For example, Shaw & Darroch (2004) identified that some New Zealand manufacturing SMEs were not willing or not interested in expansion. This attitude impacted the firms' involvement in export activities generally.

Patterson (2004) found that management characteristics among Australian service industry SMEs influenced the export status of the firms. Patterson (2004) uniquely identified the 'unpreparedness to invest' as a barrier. A negative attitude towards export investment subsequently factored into these firms' decisions of not to export. Among exporting firms in Queensland, Australia, managers were found to be 'indifferent' to exporting (Julian & Ahmed, 2005). The same study found that management characteristics were a significant influence on the export performance of those firms. Managers focused on domestic markets, which reduced their ability to succeed in overseas markets (Julian & Ahmed, 2005).

For New Zealand manufacturing SMEs, a lack of marketing effort, commitment and aspiration to export negatively affected their export status (Kahiya, 2013). The managerial focus on developing domestic markets inhibited export performance and general export development for these SMEs (Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016). For Vietnamese SMEs, managerial focus on domestic markets also influenced exporting in general (Nguyen ***et al.***, 2018).

Furthermore, perceptions of exporting have been found to create significant barriers to entry for SMEs (Kahiya ***et al.***, 2014, Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016; Patterson, 2004). In Australian manufacturing SMEs, the managerial perception of the benefits and risks of exporting was found to have an impact on whether firms decided to export (Patterson, 2004). New Zealand manufacturing SMEs perceived exporting as costly, and they had low cost-to-benefit expectations, a perception of exporting as high risk, and a low expectation of profitability (Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016; Kahiya ***et al.***, 2014; Kahiya, 2013).

The lack of time to engage with exports has also been identified as a barrier to export development, status, and performance (Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Kahiya, 2013, 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Morini *et al*., 2021; Revindo *et al.,* 2019; Roy *et al*., 2016; Shooshtari *et al*., 2017). In New Zealand, the export status of manufacturing SMEs was affected by whether they had sufficient management time to deliver projects (Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020; Kahiya, 2013). Shaw & Darroch (2004) identified that a lack of time to dedicate to exporting affected New Zealand SMEs and their ability to engage with export activities. A further study by Kahiya & Dean (2014) found that the export performance of manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand suffered due to managerial time constraints.

Revindo *et al*. (2019) found that Indonesian SMEs struggled to devote time to internationalisation, which affected their decision to export. SMEs beyond the Asia-Pacific face challenges in time constraints as well. SMEs in India, the USA, the Czech Republic, and Brazil all identified a lack of time, both for managers and other employees, to dedicate to internationalisation. This harmed the companies' ability to develop their exports and created barriers to their success (Kapralova, 2017; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Roy *et al*., 2016; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017).

Internal: Financial Barriers

Internal Financial Resources

Many studies of SMEs and exporting suggest that a lack of internal financial resources is associated with a lack of production capacity and a lack of investment in R&D, which in turn negatively affects firms' export engagement (Chandra ***et al.***, 2020; Gerscherwski ***et al.***, 2020; Haddoud ***et al.,*** 2018; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Majidli, 2020; Pellicano & De Luca, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Tan ***et al.***, 2018).

New Zealand manufacturing firms chose not to export due to a lack of productive capacity and an inability to finance export market expansion, specifically due to a lack of working capital (Gerscherwski ***et al.***, 2020; Kahiya, 2014, 2017). For SMEs who do export, limited internal financial resources reduced export performance and further internationalisation activities (Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Kahiya ***et al.*** (2014); Shaw & Darroch, 2004).

In a study of 290 Australian SMEs, Tan ***et al.*** (2018) discovered that non-exporters did not export because all of their resources were already committed to domestic use. Studies of SMEs across the globe widely identify limited investment funds and working capital as significant barriers to internationalisation. These results have been validated in many countries including Algeria (Haddoud ***et al.***, 2018), Brazil (Morini ***et al.,*** 2021), Cameroon (Njinyah, 2018), Czech Republic (Kapralova, 2017; Pavlak, 2018), Ethiopia (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015), Guyana (Glasgow & Hosein, 2018), India (Mukherjee & Chandra, 2021; Roy ***et al.,*** 2016), Indonesia (Revindo ***et al.,*** 2019), Italy (Pellicano & De Luca, 2016; Rubino ***et al.,*** 2017), Malaysia (Ayob ***et al.***, 2015; Hashim, 2015), Montenegro (Jovovic ***et al.***, 2017), Pakistan (Mubarik ***et al.***, 2020), Romania (Boscor, 2017), Slovenia (Celec & Globocnik, 2017), the USA (Shooshtair ***et al.***, 2017), Vietnam (Nguyen ***et al.***, 2008), and Zimbabwe (Karedza & Governdar, 2017).

A lack of production capacity is a significant challenge to SMEs' export engagement and performance. SMEs in New Zealand, Malaysia, Brazil, Slovenia, Peru, Ethiopia, and Algeria faced the issue of insufficient production capacity for continued export supplies (Ahmed ***et al.***, 2008; Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Haddoud ***et al.,*** 2018; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Lakew & Chioane-Tsoka, 2015; Malca ***et al.***, 2020; Morini ***et al.***, 2021; Pellicano & De Luca, 2016).

Furthermore, a lack of investment in research and development (R&D) has been demonstrated to have a negative effect on SMEs' ability to successfully export and internationalise further (Casey & Hamilton, 2014; Majidli, 2020). In a study of 249 small exporters in New Zealand, an investment in R&D was identified by Casey & Hamilton (2014) as impacting the overseas success of firms. Malca ***et al.*** (2020) identified the possession of modern production technology and equipment for exporting as a barrier to Peruvian SME export engagement. Additionally, a lack of proprietary technical knowledge for exporting was also a hindrance to their internationalisation.

Access to External Financing

Sufficient and accessible external financing is widely recognised to have an impact on SMEs' export engagement (Ayob ***et al.***, 2015; Cheng ***et al.,*** 2021; Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Shooshtari ***et al.,*** 2017; Sibiya & Kele, 2019). For Malaysian SMEs, the accessibility of external financing affected firms' decision to export. Specifically, the limit of external credit that was available to SMEs influenced their export status (Ayob ***et al.,*** 2015).

Looking at export performance, Ismail & Kuivalainen (2015) found that limited access to external financial resources impacted the success of SMEs in the Malaysian halal food industry. In a study of over 14,000 SMEs in the Zhejiang province of China, access to credit was specifically identified as a challenge to SME performance in foreign markets (Cheng ***et al.***, 2021).

Chandra *et al.* (2020) specifically highlighted the lack of access to finance as a contributing factor to financial difficulties, which generally affects SMEs' export engagement. For New Zealand manufacturing SMEs, Shaw & Darroch (2004) found the ability to obtain export finance was a financial barrier to internationalisation. In Northwestern USA, Shooshtari *et al.* (2017) recognised that availability and costs associated with external financing, specifically from banks, were an additional barrier to increased export engagement for SMEs. Manufacturing SMEs in Croatia also identified high costs for bank loans as a barrier towards exporting (Martinovic & Matana, 2017). Sibiya & Kele (2019), in a study of South African SMEs, found that access to external funding influenced export engagement.

Export Engagement Costs

As well as external financing being inaccessible for SMEs, exporting is also generally expensive, which is a barrier to internationalisation for many firms (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Kahiya, 2014, 2017; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Kljucnikov *et al.,* 2022; Lakew & Chioane-Tsoka, 2015; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Roy *et al.,* 2016; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017; Verglerova *et al.,* 2021). Manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand have identified high costs of overseas travel, high costs of labour, and expensive market development as hindrances to their export status and performance (Kahiya, 2014; Kahiya & Dean, 2014). In Ethiopian SMEs, managers were discouraged from breaking into export markets due to the high cost of establishing an office overseas (Lakew & Chioane-Tsoka, 2015).

Kahiya (2017) recognised that for SMEs across the globe, the cost of market development disincentivised an increased engagement with exporting. Kahiya & Dean (2015, 2016) found that high transportation costs were an additional barrier to firms' internationalisation. Transport costs were uniquely identified as a barrier for New Zealand SMEs. Nguyen *et al.* (2008) found that the high costs of selling abroad acted as a barrier to exporting for Vietnamese SMEs. SMEs in both India (Roy *et al.,* 2016) and Turkey (Agan & Erdogan, 2016) said high investment requirements were a barrier for SMEs to break into new markets. SMEs in Northwestern USA (Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017) and Croatia (Martinovic & Matana, 2017) highlighted costly bank loans as part of an inaccessible finance system, which acted as a barrier towards further internationalisation. In a study of SMEs in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Slovakia, Verglerova *et al.* (2021) identified export costs as the main barrier to export activities for firms. This is supported by Kljucnikov *et al.* (2022), who found that export costs were also one of two identifiable barriers for SMEs in Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

International Payments, Exchange Rates, and Interest Rates

SMEs in some countries face general barriers to exporting such as foreign financial logistics, exchange rates, and interest rates. For example, in India SMEs found it difficult to give credit to customers in international markets (Roy *et al.*, 2016). In the Czech Republic, Kapralova (2017) recognised that the difficult and slow collection of payments from foreign markets acted as a barrier to internationalisation. In Brazil, Morini *et al.* (2020) identified the long liquidity period of overseas payments as a challenge for SMEs in the region.

Ramaseshan & Soutar (1995, 1996) identified that exchange rates played a role in the decision to export by Australian horticultural product producers. Additionally, Ramaseshan & Soutar (1995, 1996) found that interest rates affected Australian SMEs' decision to export. These barriers were unique to the sector and period.

Internal: Marketing Barriers

Supply Chain Management

Supply chain management issues have been identified as major marketing barriers for SMEs when exporting, affecting their decision to export, their performance, and overall engagement with internationalisation (Agan & Erdogan, 2017; Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Haddoud ***et al***., 2018; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Jovovic ***et al***., 2017; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016; Kahiya ***et al.,*** 2014; Kahiya, 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Lakew and Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Morini ***et al.,*** 2021; Pellicano & De Luca, 2016; Revindo ***et al***., 2019; Roy ***et al.,*** 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Shooshtari et al., 2017).

Supplying inventory abroad and establishing and using foreign distribution channels was complex, difficult and costly for SMEs in Indonesia (Revindo ***et al***., 2019), Ethiopia (Lakew and Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015), and Algeria (Haddoud ***et al***., 2018). For some Australian SMEs, Julian & Ahmed (2005) recognised that a lack of foreign distribution made export even more inaccessible, on top of high transportation costs, which subsequently affected SMEs' export performance. The export success of New Zealand manufacturing SMEs was affected by these same barriers of access to and control of foreign distribution channels, supply of inventory abroad, and high transport costs (Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kahiya, 2017).

Distribution accessibility and product delivery time and costs have been found to affect SME internationalisation across the globe. This is reported in studies of SMEs in New Zealand (Kahiya ***et al.***, 2014; Kahiya & Dean, 2015, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004), Brazil (Morini ***et al***., 2021), Croatia (Martinovic & Matana, 2017), Czech Republic (Kapralova, 2017), Slovenia (Celec & Globocnik, 2017), Romania (Isac & Badshah, 2019), India (Roy ***et al***., 2016), Italy (Pellicano & De Luca, 2016), Turkey (Agan & Erdogan, 2017), Montenegro (Jovovic ***et al.,*** 2017), and the USA (Shooshtari ***et al***., 2017).

Product Innovation and Management

For many SMEs, their products are unique to the domestic markets and home countries in which they were produced (Isac & Badshah, 2019). They are not exportable without adaptation to different product usages overseas. The ability to sufficiently adapt existing products to other markets and to innovate new products is widely identified as a significant barrier towards SMEs' export status, export performance, and international development (Ayob ***et al.,*** 2015; Chandra ***et al.,*** 2020; Hashim, 2015; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Kahiya ***et al.,*** 2014; Kahiya, 2013; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Morini ***et al.,*** 2021; Nguyen ***et al***., 2008; Revindo ***et al.,*** 2019; Roy ***et al.,*** 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Shooshtari ***et al.,*** 2017; Silva ***et al.,*** 2022).

For New Zealand manufacturing SMEs, studies by Kahiya ***et al.*** (2014) and Kahiya & Dean (2015, 2016) found that variation in product usage, and therefore product suitability for overseas markets posed a challenge to exporting. Shaw & Darroch (2004) identified that products were simply not suitable for foreign markets and consumers. Ayob ***et al.*** (2015) and Hashim (2015) found that product modification affected Malaysian SMEs' export status. In Indonesia, Revindo ***et al.*** (2019) recognised that adapting, specifically, product design and style to new markets posed a challenge to SMEs and thus influenced their decision to export. SMEs in Montenegro lacked any type of product that could be sold overseas (Jovovic ***et al***., 2017). SMEs in both India and Ethiopia (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Puthusserry ***et al.,*** 2021) found that narrow product lines and product limitations influenced firms' decision not to export their products.

Regarding export performance, Julien & Ahmed (2005) found that for Australian SMEs, the necessity of product adaption when entering a new market impeded their success when they did export. In Vietnam and Malaysia, Nguyen ***et al.*** (2008) and Ahmed ***at al.*** (2008) recognised that product innovation, process innovation, and modifications influenced SMEs' export success. Similarly, Silva ***et al.*** (2022) found the need for innovation in overseas markets was a barrier to export success for Portuguese SMEs. Northwestern USA and Brazilian SMEs struggled to adapt practices and products in general

(Shooshtari *et al.*, 2017; Morini *et al.,* 2021), and in India, this disincentivised SMEs from exporting further (Pellicano & De Luca, 2016). SMEs in the Czech Republic lacked access to foreign partners and distributors (Kapralova, 2017), and Sibiya & Kele (2019) found that SMEs in South Africa were hindered by their access to private procurement contracts.

Regarding export performance, Julian & Ahmed (2005) identified a similar issue for Australian SMEs: it was difficult to pick a reliable foreign distributor, which affected their success. Thai SMEs struggled to choose intermediaries with sufficient experience and knowledge of the export market, which impacted their performance overseas (Theingi & Purchase, 2011). Charoensukmongkol (2015) found that for Thai firms, the lack of sufficient relationships with foreign suppliers, customers, distributors and competitors all impeded Thai SMEs' success in foreign markets. In Malaysia, Basah *et al.* (2020) found that similarities in the cultural backgrounds of exporters and intermediaries built trust and improved export profitability. In the UK, Eid *et al.* (2020) identified that a lack of international business contacts impeded firms' success overseas, and Haddoud *et al.* (2017) found that relationships with foreign businesses, distributors and buyers further affected their profitability.

An inability to obtain reliable representation overseas leads to a lack of control over foreign sales and markets (Roy *et al.,* 2016; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017). Roy *et al.* (2016) found that Indian SMEs lacked control of middlemen when exporting, which acted as a barrier to internationalisation. For SMEs in Northwestern USA, Shooshtari *et al.* (2017) identified a lack of control over foreign sales as a hindrance to export engagement.

Marketing Capabilities and Strategy

Generally, a lack of marketing knowledge and marketing strategy adaptation impeded SMEs' export engagement and success (Faruk & Subudhi, 2019; Kahiya, 2013; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kahiya et al., 2014; Majidli, 2020; Narayanan, 2015; Njinyah, 2018; Theingi & Purchase, 2011). For New Zealand SMEs, empirical studies found that firms lacked international marketing experience and sufficient knowledge of how to market overseas, which affected their export status and profitability (Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kahiya *et al.*, 2014; Kahiya, 2013).

The inability to adapt pricing and promotional strategies in foreign markets was also identified as a strong, multifaceted barrier to export engagement for SMEs across multiple regions (Chandra *et al.,* 2020; Gerschewski *et al.*, 2020; Julien & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya, 2013, 2017; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Shooshtari *et al.,* 2017). Offering competitive pricing and adapting promotional materials to international markets was difficult for SMEs in New Zealand (Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Kahiya, 2013; Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020) and Indonesia (Revindo *et al.*, 2019), which influenced their decision to remain in domestic markets. Vietnamese SMEs struggled to adapt their pricing to foreign customer bases (Nguyen *et al.*, 2008). SMEs in the USA also lacked the ability to price their products competitively, which acted as a disincentive to engaging strongly in exporting (Shooshtari *et al.*, 2017). Ethiopian SMEs also found that the need to adapt promotion to foreign markets influenced their decision to export (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015).

Regarding internationalisation and export performance, Narayanan (2015) observed that SMEs had marketing mix issues such as products and promotion are not aligned, while Faruk & Subudhi (2019) found that SMEs lacked an export marketing strategy, which impeded their performance. The export performance of SMEs in Thailand suffered due to their lack of marketing capabilities (Theingi & Purchase, 2011). In Cameroon, Njinyah (2018) identified that having the 'right marketing mix' affected export success for cocoa-producing SMEs. The performance of Australian SMEs in foreign markets was affected by problems in adapting promotional policy and price quotes (due to fluctuating exchange rates) for foreign consumers (Julien & Ahmed, 2005).

Brand and Country of Origin Images

Brand reputation and image have been identified as a barrier across multiple regions and facets of export engagement (Agan & Ergodan, 2016; Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Richardson, 2011). For example, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found that Ethiopian firms lacked their own internationally recognised brand, which influenced their decision to remain in domestic markets.

Regarding export profitability, Ismail & Kuivalainen (2015) recognised that for Malaysian halal food industry SMEs, the 'country-of-origin effect', and specifically the halal reputation, impeded their ability to be successful overseas. In a study of Slovenian SMEs, export success was also found to be limited by low brand awareness (Celec & Globocnik, 2017).

For Malaysian SMEs, internationalisation in general was found to be hampered by country-of-origin perception (Richardson, 2011). Wineries in Italy faced challenges in their internationalisation due to weak brand image, and Turkish SMEs found that their brand and home country images overpowered their individual product images (Agan & Ergodan, 2016).

After-Sales Service

Firms' inability to provide effective after-sales services in foreign markets has been identified as a widespread barrier to exporting for SMEs (Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Revindo *et al.,* 2019; Roy et al., 2016). For example, Revindo *et al.* (2019) identified that a lack of effective after-sales service influenced Indonesian SMEs' decision to export their products. In Ethiopia, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found this same issue for SMEs.

SMEs in Australia and New Zealand experienced difficulties in providing after-sales services, which impacted their profitability in export markets (Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya & Dean, 2014). Celec & Globocnik (2017) also found this issue for Slovenian SMEs. In Vietnam, Nguyen *et al.* (2008) found that SMEs had challenges providing after-sales services, which limited their exporting. In India and Brazil, Roy *et al.* (2016) and Morini *et al.* (2021) respectively found the lack of after-sales service to be a general barrier to SMEs' internationalisation.

External: Procedural Barriers

Foreign Regulations

Foreign regulations were widely found to have important effects on exporting for SMEs in many facets and across many regions (Chandra *et al.*, 2020; Civelek *et al.*, 2022; Glasgow & Hosein; 2018; Kahiya, 2014; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015, 2016; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Patterson, 2004; Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996; Revindo *et al.* 2019; Roy *et al.,* 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004).

Studies by Ramaseshan & Soutar (1995, 1996) found that trade and import regulations strongly affected Australian horticultural product producers' decision to export. Amongst Australian service SMEs, Patterson (2004) and Cicic *et al.* (2002) recognised that restrictions in target markets acted as a barrier to entering the foreign market. Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that for Indonesian SMEs, the overseas protection of intellectual property rights affected their decision to export. Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found that for Ethiopian SMEs, strict foreign rules and regulations affected their decision to export their products. Kahiya & Dean (2014) identified foreign government regulations and restrictions as a hindrance to New Zealand manufacturing SMEs' success in foreign markets.

Generally, as a barrier to internationalisation, Chandra *et al.* (2020) observed that export documentation is a barrier for SMEs. Studies by Kahiya *et al.* (2014), Kahiya & Dean (2015, 2016), and Shaw & Darroch (2004) all identified foreign restrictions were a more general barrier towards export engagement and activities for New Zealand manufacturing firms. Roy *et al.* (2016) observed a similar issue amongst Indian SMEs; strict and complex foreign rules affected export activities. Glasgow & Hosein (2018) found that for food and agriculture firms in Guyana, inspection and processing times were very long and costly, which was a barrier towards internationalisation. In a study of SMEs in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, Civelek *et al.* (2022) found that legislative differences impacted the perception of export obstacles and the ability of SMEs to develop internationally.

Product and Service Standards in Target Country

Meeting product and service standards in foreign markets impedes the decision of some SMEs to enter the export market as well as their general international development (Boscor, 2017; Kahiya, 2017; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Richardson, 2011; Revindo *et al.,* 2019). Indonesian SMEs had a particular issue with the health, safety, and technical standards in target markets (Revindo *et al.,* 2019), which impacted their decision to enter the export market.

Kahiya (2017) found that different product standards overseas were a liability to varying SMEs and their internationalisation. Malaysian SMEs in the ICT industry experienced general barriers to internationalisation due to 'product specifications' in foreign markets (Richardson, 2011). In Croatia, Martinovic & Matana (2017) found 'special quality standards' as a challenge to exporting for manufacturing SMEs. Boscor (2017) also identified that the different quality and technical requirements in overseas markets were barriers for Romanian exporters.

Administrative and Bureaucratic Issues

Administrative issues were observed as barriers for Malaysian, Italian, and New Zealand SMEs (Aoyb *et al.*, 2015; Rubino *et al.*, 2017; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). In Malaysia, Ayob *et al.* (2015) found that SMEs' export status was affected specifically by licensing and paperwork issues within the administration. Rubino *et al.* (2017) found that Italian SMEs' success was impacted by administrative barriers, and specifically the paperwork necessary for exporting. Shaw & Darroch (2004) found that for manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand, export paperwork and dealing with import regulations were barriers, which affected their export activities.

Various studies have identified bureaucracy as a barrier to SMEs' export activities (Boscor, 2017; Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Majidli, 2020; Ngo-Thi-Ngoc & Nguyen-Viet, 2021). Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found that for Ethiopian SMEs, complex government bureaucracy related to exporting impacted SMEs' export status. Ngo-Thi-Ngoc & Nguyen-Viet (2021) found that for some rice and coffee exporting firms in Vietnam, the amount of export bureaucracy affected their ability to succeed overseas. As a general barrier to internationalisation, Majidli (2020) found bureaucratic obstacles hindered export activities for SMEs. Boscor (2017) identified that for Romanian exporting firms, the bureaucracy of export procedures acted as a main barrier towards export activities. For SMEs in Montenegro, Jovovic *et al.* (2017) identified bureaucratic procedures as a challenge to internationalisation. Kapralova (2017) observed that for Czech exporters to Latin America, the bureaucracy – both at home and overseas – was a barrier to exporting.

Another related issue affecting SMEs' export activities is corruption (Isac & Badshah, 2019; Kahiya, 2017; Kapralova; 2017; Mubarik *et al.,* 2020). In Pakistan, Mubarik *et al.* (2020) found that the existence of corruption, such as kickbacks and bribes, impacted manufacturing SMEs' export profitability. Kahiya (2017) and Isac & Badshah (2019) both identified the level of corruption in foreign markets as a barrier to the internationalisation of SMEs generally. For Czech exporters to Latin America, Kapralova (2017) found that levels of corruption posed a challenge to export activities.

Complexity and Clarity of Export/Import Procedures

The complexity of export/import procedures was identified as a multi-faceted barrier across many SMEs from varying regions. It affects export status, profitability, and general internationalisation (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Chandra *et al.*, 2020; Haddoud *et al.*, 2018; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Mendy *et al.,* 2021; Morini *et al.*, 2021; Roy *et al.,* 2016). For Ethiopian and Algerian SMEs, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) and Haddoud *et al.* (2018) identified that the complexity of export documentation impacted firms' export status. Likewise, the export profitability of Australian SMEs was affected by these export procedures. Julian & Ahmed (2005) found that SMEs were confused by foreign import regulations and procedures, leading to difficulties with their exporting success.

Isac & Badshah (2019) found that complex administrative procedures and foreign taxation obstructed SMEs' ability to internationalise. Chandra *et al.* (2020) found that delays in duty and customs paperwork impacted the international development of SMEs across the board. For Vietnamese SMEs, Nguyen *et al.* (2008) found that foreign import regulations were confusing, which limited exporting. For Indian SMEs, Roy *et al.* (2016) observed that the complexity of requirements in export documentation caused challenges for SMEs, as well as a general lack of clarity regarding domestic regulations in foreign markets. For SMEs in Montenegro, Jovovic *et al.* (2017) also found that complex procedures acted as a barrier to exporting. In Brazil, Morini *et al.* (2021) found that the complexity of export documentation requirements inhibited SME internationalisation. In a study of rural Nigerian SMEs, Mendy *et al.* (2021) identified complex customs regulations as a barrier to SME development overseas. For Turkish manufacturing exporters, Agan & Erdogan (2016) identified that inconsistent regulations posed a challenge to their internationalisation. These SMEs faced difficulties in adapting to these frequent regulation changes, impeding their exporting engagement.

Another important issue, familiarity with export procedures, was identified in studies across a variety of regions as a major perceived export barrier (Boscor, 2017; Glasgow & Hosein, 2018; Kahiya, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Narayanan, 2015; Njinyah, 2018; Revindo *et al.*, 2019). Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that, for Indonesian SMEs, a familiarity with exporting procedures and paperwork influenced their decision to export or stay in domestic markets. For Ethiopian SMEs, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) similarly found that unfamiliar export procedures/paperwork posed a challenge to exporting and influenced their decision to remain in domestic markets. Njinyah (2018) found that the export success of cocoa exporters in Cameroon was impacted by an unfamiliarity with foreign laws and procedures.

Narayanan (2015) identified that generally for SMEs, their internationalisation is obstructed by unfamiliar techniques and procedures. A study by Kahiya (2017) supports this, finding that unfamiliarity with foreign rules and regulations impeded SME internationalisation. Kahiya (2017) identifies that for SMEs, a lack of knowledge about export procedures in general impedes export engagement. Boscor (2017) found that Romanian exporters were impacted by unfamiliar procedures. The same barrier was identified by Martinovic & Matana (2017) in their study of Croatian manufacturers. For food and agricultural firms in Guyana, Glasgow & Hosein (2018) observed that SMEs faced challenges in their familiarity with an internationally recognised quality certification and management system.

Cross-Border Disputes and Legal Support

The ability to resolve disputes and to obtain sufficient legal support were identified as barriers for SMEs generally but were only highlighted as the main barriers for SMEs in Indonesia and in Nigeria (Isac & Badshah, 2019; Mendy *et al.,* 2021; Revindo *et al.*, 2019). For Indonesian SMEs, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that their ability to enforce contracts and resolve disputes in target markets affected their decision to export. Isac & Badshah (2019) observed that for many SMEs, resolving cross-border disputes and complaints is too expensive, which affects their ability to internationalise. Mendy *et al.* (2021) found that Nigerian SMEs lacked adequate legal support, which inhibited their further international development.

Payments Abroad

Multiple sources have found overseas payments are a barrier to SMEs' export engagement (Haddoud *et al.,* 2018; Jovovic *et al.*, 2017; Julian & Ahmed (2005); Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). In Indonesia, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that the slow collection of payments abroad impacted SMEs' export status. Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) and Haddoud *et al.* (2018) respectively identified issues with the collection of payments abroad as a determining factor in both Ethiopian and Algerian SMEs' export decisions. Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) foumd that the issues with payments from overseas markets were especially slow.

Concerning general barriers to export activity engagement, Narayanan (2015) found that the slow collection of payments abroad impeded SMEs' export activities. Kahiya (2017) observes that the complexity of foreign payment methods is a barrier to internationalisation for SMEs. Chandra *et al.* (2020) found that procedures for receiving and paying for exports generally impacted the development of SMEs overseas.

Shaw & Darroch (2004) identified that manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand were concerned about getting paid by overseas customers. This lack of trust acted as a barrier to further internationalisation. Nguyen *et al.* (2008) found that for Vietnamese SMEs, difficulty in collecting overseas payments was a barrier to exporting. Roy *et al.* (2016) recognised that for Indian SMEs, collecting payments from abroad is logistically challenging. For firms in Montenegro, Jovovic *et al.* (2017) found that the risk related to collecting receivables overseas impacted their involvement in export activities.

Costs and Risks of Doing Business Overseas

The costs associated with exporting have been observed as a barrier to the internationalisation of some SMEs (Glasgow & Hosein, 2018; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Jovovoci *et al.*, 2017; Mendy *et al.*, 2021; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). In Indonesia, Revindo *et al.* (2019) identified that the cost of customs administration in target markets affected SMEs' export status. Isac & Badshah (2019) found that barriers to general SME development included the costs of resolving cross-border disputes. For Australian manufacturing firms, Cicic *et al.* (2002) found that foreign exchange control in target markets acted as a barrier to exporting. For New Zealand manufacturing SMEs, internationalisation was impacted by the tangible cost of compliance with overseas regulations (Shaw & Darroch, 2004). In Montenegro, Jovovic *et al.* (2017) observed the cost of export procedures was a barrier to internationalisation. Glasgow & Hosin (2018) identified that costs associated with inspections and processes were a barrier to further export activities for food and agricultural firms in Guyana. For rural Nigerian SMEs, Mendy *et al.* (2021) found that the costs of complying with foreign regulations inhibited their growth and internationalisation.

The risk of exporting was identified as a procedural barrier for SMEs in Australia and Montenegro (Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Julian & Ahmed, 2005). Julian & Ahmed (2005) found that the uncontrollable risks of selling abroad impeded Australian SMEs' profitability internationally. Generally, internationalisation was obstructed for SMEs in Montenegro due to the risks in collecting receivables (Jovovic *et al.,* 2017).

Taxes and Rates

Studies of New Zealand, Brazilian, and European SMEs have identified taxes and rates as a barrier to SME exporting (Civelek & Krajcnik, 2022; Civelek *et al.,* 2022; Kljucnikov, 2022; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Virglerova *et al.,* 2021). Shaw & Darroch (2004) recognised that interest rate volatility was a barrier to internationalisation for manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand. In Brazil, Morini *et al.* (2021) identified challenges in collecting taxes overseas as a barrier to SME overseas development and export activities. Differences in tax policy were perceived to be significant barriers to internationalisation for European SMEs in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia (Civelek & Krajcnik, 2022; Civelek *et al.*, 2022; Kljucnikov, 2022; Virglerova *et al.,* 2021).

External: Tariff and Non-Tariff

Tariff Barriers

Multiple sources found that foreign tariffs impacted on SMEs' decision to export, their overseas performance, and internationalisation (Boscor, 2017; Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020; Haddoud *et al.,* 2018; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015; Kahiya *et al.,* 2014; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Nguyen *et al.,* 2008; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). For manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand, Gerschewski *et al.* (2020) found that the absence of tariffs in foreign markets positively impacted SMEs' decision to export.

Revindo *et al.* (2019) identified that exporters from other countries received preferential tariffs in foreign markets, so Indonesian SMEs were more highly impacted by tariffs, which affected their export status. Revindo *et al.* (2019) also recognised tariff classification and reclassification in overseas markets as barriers to exporting for Indonesian SMEs. For Algerian SMEs, Haddoud *et al.* (2018) identified that restrictive foreign tariffs are impact their decision to export. Tariff barriers were found to negatively impact Ethiopian SMEs' decision to export (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015).

Regarding export performance, Kahiya & Dean (2014) found that, for manufacturing exporters in New Zealand, the existence of foreign tariffs inhibited their profitability in overseas markets. Nguyen *et al.* (2008) also found that for Vietnamese SMEs, high foreign tariffs were a barrier to export activities. Boscor (2017) identified tariffs as a barrier for Romanian exporters in their export activities as well.

Kahiya (2017) identified the existence of foreign tariffs as a general barrier to internationalisation activities for SMEs. Shaw & Darroch (2004), Kahiya *et al.* (2014), and Kahiya & Dean (2015) found that for New Zealand manufacturing firms, foreign tariff barriers posed a challenge to their internationalisation. In India, Roy *et al.* (2016) recognised that high tariff and non-tariff barriers restricted export activities and hindered further internationalisation.

Non-Tariff Barriers

Various sources recognised the existence of general non-tariff barriers have a major influence on export status, performance, and involvement in internationalisation for SMEs (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Boscor, 2017; Gerschewski *et al.,* 2020; Glasgow & Hosein, 2018; Kahiya & Dean, 2014, 2015; Kahiya *et al.,* 2014; Kahiya, 2017; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Sithamparam *et al.,* 2017). Gerschewski *et al.* (2020) found that an absence of non-tariff barriers in overseas markets incentivised manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand to export and subsequently affected their export status. For Indonesian SMEs, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that import quotas or trade embargoes imposed by foreign markets disincentivised SMEs' engagement in exporting and thus affected their export status.

Kahiya & Dean (2014) identified foreign non-tariff barriers as impacting the export success of manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand. For Malaysian exporters, non-tariff measures impacted exporters' overseas success (Sithamparam *et al.,* 2017).

Kahiya (2017) found that for SMEs generally, the existence of non-tariff barriers hindered export engagement. Studies by Kahiya *et al.* (2014) and Kahiya & Dean (2015) indicated that for manufacturing firms in New Zealand, non-tariff barriers inhibited international development. Agan & Erdogan (2016) also found non-tariff restrictions (i.e., import quotas and limited ownership rights in target countries) were a general hindrance to export engagement for Turkish manufacturers and exporters. Non-tariff restrictions were also a limitation on the internationalisation of Romanian and Croatian exporters (Boscor, 2017; Martinovic & Matana 2017). Glasgow & Hosein (2018) found that, for food and agriculture exporters in Guyana, non-tariff barriers were more prevalent as a restriction to internationalisation than any other tariff-related barrier.

Government Policy and Regulation

Studies across Eastern European countries (Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland) observed that the legal environment impacted the internationalisation of SMEs (Civelek & Krajcnik, 2022; Kljucnikov, 2022; Virglerova ***et al.***, 2021). Virglerova ***et al.*** (2021) indicated that in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland, a difference in the legal environment impeded export development for SMEs. Kljucnikov (2022) found that across the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, legislative barriers were perceived as a barrier to exporting. Similarly, a study by Civelek & Krajcnik (2022) indicated that legislative differences were consistently perceived as a barrier by all sizes of SMEs.

More specifically, government policy and foreign regulation were identified as a barrier by various studies across multiple regions (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Menzies & Orr, 2010; Puthusserry ***et al.,*** 2021; Sibiya & Kele, 2019). Menzies & Orr (2010) found that for Australian businesses operating in China, government policies on trade and regulations on foreign direct investment affected firms' entry to foreign markets. For Indian Fintech SMEs, Puthusserry ***et al.*** (2021) identified that regulatory compliance impacted their decision to export.

Agan & Erdogan (2016) found that for Turkish manufacturers and exporters, price controls in target markets and export license requirements impeded export activities. For South African SMEs, Sibiya & Kele (2019) found that unfavourable regulatory frameworks were a significant barrier towards their internationalisation.

Protectionism

Studies of Czech and Nigeran exporters identified protectionism as a hindrance to export activities (Kapralova, 2017; Mendy ***et al.,*** 2021). Likewise, Czech firms exporting to Latin America highlighted protectionism and subsequent policies as a barrier to exporting for SMEs (Kapralova, 2017). Mendy ***et al.*** (2021) also identified protectionist policies as a barrier for Nigerian SMEs in their international market expansion.

External: Governmental Barriers

Unfavourable Home Government Policy

Unfavourable government regulations at home were identified as a barrier to export status, as well as internationalisation for SMEs (Haddoud *et al.*., 2018; Karedza & Govendar, 2017; Narayanan, 2015; Revindo *et al.*, 2019). For Indonesian SMEs, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that unfavourable export regulations at home impacted export status. Similarly, for Algerian SMEs, home government regulations were an impediment to export status (Haddoud *et al.*, 2018). Karedza & Govendar (2017) observed that rigid labour laws affected the export success of SMEs in Zimbabwe. Narayanan (2015) identified that restrictive regulatory frameworks impeded SMEs' internationalisation and export engagement generally.

Studies in New Zealand and Romania indicated that home government policy inhibited SMEs' engagement in exporting (Boscor, 2017; Kahiya & Dean, 2015; Kahiya *et al.,* 2014). For New Zealand manufacturing firms, both Kahiya *et al.* (2014) and Kahiya & Dean (2015) found that inconsistent government policy hindered their export activities. Boscor (2017) found that for Romanian firms, a lack of a national export branding policy was a barrier to internationalisation.

Government Assistance and Export Promotion Programmes

Many studies have demonstrated that insufficient government assistance and poor government export promotion programmes are major barriers to SME export status, performance, and internationalisation as a whole (Agan & Erdogan, 2016; Ahimbisibwe *et al.,* 2020; Chandra *et al.,* 2020; Gerschewski *et al.*, 2020; Glasgow & Hosein, 2018; Haddoud *et al.,* 2018; Hashim, 2015; Jovovic *et al.,* 2017; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya & Dean, 2015; Kahiya *et al.,* 2014; Kahiya, 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Majidli, 2020; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Menzies & Orr, 2010; Morini *et al.,* 2021; Narayanan, 2015; Nguyen *et al.,* 2008; Njinyah, 2018; Revindo *et al.*, 2019; Richardson, 2011; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Shooshtari *et al.*, 2017).

Menzies & Orr (2010) found that for Australian firms operating in China, the amount of home country government assistance impacted their decision to export. Revindo *et al.* (2019) also found that a lack of government assistance disincentivised Indonesian SMEs' entry to the export market. In New Zealand, Gerschewski *et al.* (2020) found that, for manufacturing SMEs, governmental assistance and incentives were the main governmental barriers to their decision to export. Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found that a lack of government support schemes, financial assistance, and incentives influenced Ethiopian SMEs' decisions to export. Algerian SMEs also said inadequate government assistance impacted their export status (Haddoud *et al.,* 2018).

Julian & Ahmed (2005) identified, specifically, a lack of tax incentives from the home government as an impediment to exporters' foreign market performance. In general, Julian & Ahmed (2005) recognised that a lack of governmental assistance in overcoming export barriers was a large influence on export profitability. Njinyah (2018) found that government policies for export promotion aided the export success of cocoa exporters in Cameroon. For Ugandan SME exporters, Ahimbisibwe *et al.* (2020) found that continuous support for their exporting helped their export profitability.

Narayanan (2015) claimed that generally, government assistance for exporters was very limited, which impeded SMEs' engagement in export activities. This lack of home government support for SMEs was also identified by Kahiya (2017). Shaw & Darroch (2004) also identified a lack of support, specifically foreign market support, from the government as a barrier for manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand. The same findings were confirmed in studies by Kahiya *et al.* (2014) and Kahiya & Dean (2015). Roy *et al.* (2016) recognised a lack of government assistance schemes as a major governmental barrier for Indian SMEs in their exporting endeavours as well. For SMEs in North-western USA, Shooshtari *et al.* (2017) found that a lack of government assistance impeded their internationalisation. They specifically identified that trade leads, market research, and locating distribution partners were the most important elements of government assistance that were missing for SMEs.

In Croatia, Martinovic & Matana (2017) identified that manufacturing firms suffered in their internationalisation process due to a lack of home government assistance. This same barrier was experienced by Brazilian SMEs (Morini *et al.*, 2021). The food and agriculture subsectors in Guyana lacked export subsidies at home, which was identified as a specific barrier to their internationalisation (Glasgow & Hosein, 2018). Nguyen *et al.* (2008) found that a lack of assistance was a barrier to overcoming export barriers for Vietnamese SMEs.

Chandra *et al.* (2020) and Majidli (2020) identified inadequate export incentives and regulations as barriers to SME export activities. For Malaysian ICT SMEs, Richardson (2011) found that although government support existed, it was insufficient or inadequate, which impacted firms' internationalisation. Malaysian SMEs, according to Hashim (2015), found that the government had poor implementation of assistance schemes and poorly managed infrastructure for SME zones. Agan & Erdogan (2016) identified that Turkish manufacturing firms suffered in their exporting due to insufficient government support, specifically for high technology investment. For SMEs in Montenegro, Jovovic *et al.* (2017) found that government support was inadequate, which subsequently challenged their ability to further internationalise. In a study by Kapralova (2017), Czech firms exporting to Latin America uniquely said that unqualified or inadequate staff in embassies and government agencies hindered SMEs' ability to engage well in export activities. These firms also said that available government support was not optimal and had financing and insurance issues. For Brazilian SMEs, Morini *et al.* (2021) found a lack of seriousness in government promotion actions.

As a specific angle of governmental assistance, Government Export Promotion Programmes (GEPPs) were identified as beneficial for both firms' export success and general export activities (Haddoud *et al.,* 2017; Malca *et al.,* 2020; Narayanan, 2015; Silva *et al.*, 2022). SMEs in the UK, for instance, identified GEPPs as a significant benefit for export success. Both informational and experiential GEPPs were found to be beneficial, specifically through activities such as 'how to export' workshops, language support, training programmes, trade shows, overseas trade support, and identification of foreign agents and distributors (Haddoud *et al.,* 2017).

For SMEs in Peru, Malca *et al.* (2020) identified multiple specific instances of government support that benefited firms in their export profitability. The organisation of export seminars, training programmes on exporting and relevant documentation, exporting advice, trade shows, trade missions, and overseas office support were all recognised as impactful aspects of government export promotion for SMEs. Silva *et al.* (2022) found that for Portuguese SMEs, involvement in trade fairs was a significant factor in positive export profitability. Narayanan (2015) found that, for SMEs across the board, a lack of GEPPs affected SMEs' export engagement and internationalisation.

Political Instability

Political instability has been identified by a variety of studies across multiple regions as impactful on both SMEs' export status and their internationalisation (Kahiya, 2017; Kapralova, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Revindo *et al.,* 2019; Roy *et al.,* 2016). Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that in Indonesia, SMEs' export status was shaped partially by political instability in target markets. In Ethiopia, Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found that SMEs' decision to export was influenced by political instability in foreign markets. Haddoud *et al.* (2018) found that instability overseas also affected Algerian SMEs' export status.

As a barrier towards export activities and internationalisation generally, Kahiya (2017) found that political instability overseas limits SMEs export engagement. For Czech firms exporting to Latin America and Indian SMEs, Kapralova (2017) and Roy *et al.* (2016) respectively identified socio-economic and political instability as a barrier to export engagement. For Brazilian SMEs, Morini *et al.* (2021) found corruption within customs control bodies was a specific barrier to exporting, as well as general political instability in foreign markets.

Host Country Government Policy

The actions of a host country government have been identified as a barrier to export status and profitability for Australian and Malaysian SMEs (Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015; Menzies & Orr, 2010). In Australia, Menzies & Orr (2010) found that for firms engaged in business with China, host country government intervention influenced their export status. Menzies & Orr (2010) also found that for these firms, cooperation between exporters and host country governments impacted their decision to export. Ismail & Kuivalainen (2015) found that halal food firms in Malaysia benefited from favourable local institutional factors generally.

The export status of Indonesian and Ethiopian SMEs both were impacted by restrictions in foreign markets (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Revindo *et al.,* 2019). Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) recognised that, for Ethiopian SMEs, foreign government restrictions negatively affected their decision to export. For Indonesian SMEs, Revindo *et al.* (2019) found that overseas restrictions on asset ownership impacted their export status. They also found that the unequal treatment in tax/affiliation eligibility in target markets influenced the export status of Indonesian firms. The study also found that unequal treatment in business competition overseas impacted their decision to export or remain in domestic markets.

Institutional Networks

Studies showed that the existence of institutional networks and international business associations positively impacted SMEs' export status and international engagement (Boscor, 2017; Costa *et al.,* 2017). Costa *et al*. (2017) found that institutional network support from associations influenced a Portuguese SMEs' export status. Promotional activities, technical and legal support, information sharing, and cooperation were found to be particularly useful for these SMEs. In the context of Romania, Boscor (2017) identified the non-existence of an exporter association as a barrier towards further internationalisation.

External: Market Condition Barriers

Foreign Market Characteristics

Differing customer habits and attitudes were identified across many regions as a barrier to export status and further internationalisation (Kapralova, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Revindo ***et al.***, 2019; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). For Indonesian firms, Revindo ***et al.*** (2019) found that different foreign customer habits and attitudes impacted their decision to engage in foreign markets. Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) observed that the presence of special customer requirements and a difference in foreign customer attitudes created barriers to export status for Ethiopian SMEs.

A difference in overseas customer habits was highlighted as a challenge for manufacturing SMEs in New Zealand (Shaw & Darroch, 2004) and Czech exporters to Latin America (Kapralova, 2017). Martinovic & Matana (2017) found that, for Croatian manufacturers, customer culture was a specific difference and barrier that impeded their further internationalisation efforts.

Chandra ***et al.*** (2020) identified that market conditions generally impeded SMEs from further internationalising. Ramaseshan & Soutar (1995, 1996), for instance, observed that market demand factors influenced the export status of Australian horticultural product producers. The ability to meet quality and quantity requirements, as well as continuity and commitment to exporting, were specific barriers identified for these firms.

Competition

Competition across domestic and foreign markets was identified by many studies across many regions as a barrier towards firms' export status, export success, and further internationalisation (Boscor, 2017; Eid ***et al.***, 2020; Haddoud ***et al.,*** 2018; Hashim, 2015; Ismail & Isa, 2021; Kahiya, 2013, 2017; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kapralova, 2017; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Majidli, 2020; Martinovic & Matana, 2017; Morini ***et al.,*** 2021; Mueller-Using ***et al.,*** 2020; Narayanan, 2015; Ngo-Thi-Ngoc & Nguyen-Viet, 2021; Patterson, 2004; Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996; Revindo ***et al.***, 2019; Roy ***et al.***, 2016; Singh ***et al.,*** 2023).

Ramaseshan & Soutar (1995, 1996) found that competition from both domestic producers in foreign markets and foreign market producers in potential markets impacted Australian horticultural product producers' decision to export. For Australian service firms, Patterson (2004) identified competitive intensity in foreign markets as a barrier to export status. Kahiya (2013) found that foreign competition overseas influenced New Zealand manufacturing firms' decision to export their goods. Similarly, Revindo ***et al.*** (2019) found for Indonesian SMEs, competition was tough in target markets, and firms had difficulty in matching competitor prices to foreign customers. These factors impacted these firms' export status. Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka (2015) found that, for Ethiopian SMEs, the ability to price goods competitively against competitors and familiarity with foreign business practices impacted their export status. Haddoud ***et al.*** (2018) found that Algerian SMEs identified strong overseas competition as a reason to remain in domestic markets. Singh ***et al.*** (2023) identified unfair foreign trading practices, price competition, and industry concentration in foreign markets impacted Indian e-commerce SMEs' export status.

In terms of export success, Kahiya & Dean (2014) found that, for New Zealand manufacturing firms, competing with other New Zealand firms overseas, as well as other forms of foreign competition, impacted export profitability. In Vietnam, Ngo-Thi-Ngoc & Nguyen-Viet (2021) found that pressures in the competitive overseas markets inhibited exporters' success overseas. In Vietnam, Nguyen ***et al.*** (2008) found that SMEs faced competition from Malaysian firms, which impacted their export activities. Amongst UK SMEs, Eid ***et al.*** (2020) identified a lack of understanding of competition as a major barrier to success in foreign markets, and for Malaysian SME exporters, competition in both host and home countries impacted export profitability (Ismail & Isa, 2021).

Both Narayanan (2015) and Kahiya (2017) observed that competition overseas was keen, and this posed a major market condition barrier for SMEs in their export engagement and further internationalisation. Majidli (2020) identified that market competition was often unfair, which further challenged SMEs in their internationalisation. Hashim (2015) found that the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement created a competitive foreign market environment. This competition influenced firms' export activities. For Indian SMEs, Roy *et al.* (2016) found that overseas, there was high competition and SMEs lacked the ability to compete on price, which challenged firms' internationalisation.

Eastern European nations also widely identified this as an issue. Boscor (2017) Kapralova (2017), and Martinovic & Matana (2017) identified this issue for Romanian, Czech, and Croatian exporters respectively. Competition overseas was tough, and SMEs lacked price competitiveness. Mueller-Using *et al.* (2020) found that, across seven Baltic Sea Region countries, strong competition in foreign markets reduced export activities for SMEs.

Morini *et al.* (2021) found that Brazilian SMEs identified competition as uniquely acute in export markets, which limited their international development. Nguyen *et al.* (2008) also found that Vietnamese SMEs faced challenges in foreign markets due to competition.

Infrastructure Issues

Studies in Australia and New Zealand identified infrastructure issues such as transport barriers as an impediment towards export status and internationalisation (Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995, 1996; Shaw & Darroch, 2004). The export status of Australian horticultural product producers was affected by the availability of suitable transport, the cost, and the deterioration of produce during transportation (Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1995; Ramaseshan & Soutar, 1996). Shaw & Darroch (2004) identified a lack of suitable transport facilities as a challenge for New Zealand manufacturing SMEs.

Barriers involving the use of modern technology were identified as an impact on export status and profitability, and as a general barrier to internationalisation (Celec & Globocnik, 2017; Hashim, 2015; Mendy *et al.*, 2021; Revindo *et al.,* 2019), in both Asia and Europe. In Indonesia, Revindo *et al.* (2019) recognised that the lack of e-commerce infrastructure overseas deterred firms from deciding to export. Similarly, for SMEs in Slovenia, Celec & Globocnik (2017) found that the use of modern technologies and equipment affected firms' success overseas. SMEs in the United Kingdom said that a use of social media positively impacted their export profitability (Eid *et al.,* 2019).

Hashim (2015) found that Malaysian SMEs faced challenges with limited ICT involvement, which hindered their export activities. In a study by Mendy *et al.* (2021), Nigerian SMEs were found to suffer from underdeveloped ICT and infrastructure, which affected their export engagement.

Liability of Newness and Smallness

The liability of newness and smallness was identified as a barrier to general SME export success (Battisti *et al.*, 2014; Kahiya, 2017; Singh *et al.* (2023). Kahiya (2017) found that SMEs generally suffer liabilities of smallness and newness as a substitute for export barriers, and their lack of resources or experience challenges their ability to engage well in foreign markets. In the context of New Zealand, Battisti *et al.* (2014) surveyed 51 SME exporters and acknowledged that the size of firms acted as a barrier to their internationalisation. A similar finding was reported by Shaw & Darroch (2004), who found the size of New Zealand SMEs was a strongly perceived barrier for non-exporters. Additionally, not being known overseas presented a further barrier for SMEs when engaging with exporting (Shaw & Darroch, 2004). For Indian e-commerce SMEs, Singh *et al.* (2023) found that firm size was an impediment to firms' decision to export.

Studies have demonstrated that language and cultural differences pose additional challenges to SMEs' abilities to market overseas and their ability and willingness to engage in export activities (Basah *et al.*, 2020; Chandra *et al.*, 2020; Charoensukmongkol, 2015; Civelek *et al.*, 2022; Civelek & Krajcik, 2022; Haddoud *et al.,* 2018; Isac & Badshah, 2019; Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015; Jovovic *et al.*, 2017; Julian & Ahmed, 2005; Kahiya & Dean, 2014; Kljucnikov *et al.*, 2022; Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015; Morini *et al.*, 2021; Nguyen *et al.*, 2008; Roy *et al.*, 2016; Shaw & Darroch, 2004; Virglerova *et al.,* 2021). In Ethiopia (Lakew & Chiloane-Tsoka, 2015), Algeria (Haddoud *et al.,* 2018), Vietnam (Nguyen *et al.*, 2008), and Brazil (Morini *et al.*, 2021), differences in language, culture and socio-cultural aspects (e.g., religion, values and attitudes) influenced SMEs' decision to export.

Isac & Badshah (2019) demonstrated that SMEs across the globe suffer due to a lack of foreign language skills. Shaw & Darroch (2004) and Kahiya & Dean (2014) found that language and culture barriers generally affected New Zealand SMEs' export engagement and success. Jovovic *et al.* (2017) claimed that, in Montenegro, a lack of foreign languages acted as a barrier to SME exportation and success in general. Chandra *et al.* (2020) found that socio-cultural barriers impeded further internationalisation for SMEs, specifically due to a lack of knowledge of foreign languages, target market knowledge, and cultural differences. Similar results were found in India (Roy *et al.*, 2016) and across the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary (Civelek *et al.*, 2022; Civelek & Krajcik, 2022; Kljucnikov *et al.*, 2022; Virglerova *et al.,* 2021).

Julian & Ahmed (2005) found that the adaptation of products to fit overseas cultural and linguistic requirements affected Australian SMEs' performance and profitability. For Thai SMEs, the cultural intelligence of entrepreneurs was positively associated with their ability to develop relationships with foreign customers and networks, and thus their export performance (Charoensukmongkol, 2015). Basah *et al.* (2020) recognised that for Malaysian SMEs, a similarity in the cultural backgrounds of exporters and partners benefited export success. For SMEs in the Malaysian halal food industry, the reputation of the country's halal brand can affect the export success of SMEs (Ismail & Kuivalainen, 2015).

Case Studies

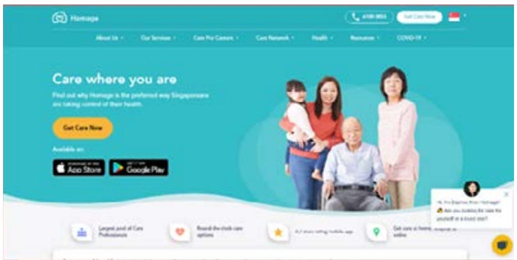
Having established some patterns across the globe, and more specifically in New Zealand, Australia and ASEAN, we further identified six case studies to help verify some of our findings and to further tease out the nuances in barriers to exporting and internationalising.

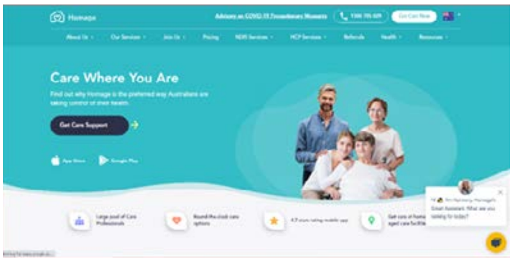
We went through an extensive process to identify these cases, with the following criteria:

- The cases must be SMEs.
- The cases must have some export and internationalisation barriers to share.
- The cases must be spread across the region (we have three cases from New Zealand, two from ASEAN and one from Australia; and most of these companies are engaged in at least two of the three regional contexts).
- The cases must cover different industries (our cases cover healthcare services, food, alternative food, digital services, animation and creative design).
- The cases should include Māori (two of our cases are Māori).
- The cases must involve a mix of export and internationalisation strategy.

Our six cases, presented in the next sub-sections, are Homage, NTKMADE, Fable Food, CodeHQ, Irvins Salted Egg and NNMD.

Homage: Matchmaking for Healthcare Services





Introduction

Singapore, like many modern societies, is experiencing a rapidly ageing population. By 2030, the city-state will become a “super-aged” society with more than 21% of its population age 65 and older (AARP International, 2019). Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong acknowledged this in a speech on population ageing at the book launch of ‘Singapore Ageing: Issues and Challenges Ahead’ on 11 April 2023. With one of the world’s lowest fertility rates (1.05 in 2022) and one of the world’s longest life expectancies (83.5 years in 2021), Singapore needs a “whole-of-society effort” to tackle the issue. This includes raising the retirement and re-employment age, ensuring retirement fund adequacy, and strengthening the healthcare system, including expanding the range of social and long-term care services in the community.

This demographic movement has led to an increased demand for healthcare and caregiving services. Homage (https://www.homage.sg/), a leading technology-driven care and health services provider in Singapore, is an exemplar of how a Singapore business combines trained care professionals with innovative technology to provide on-demand, holistic non-medical and medical services to seniors and adults.

Homage

The co-founder and its current CEO, Gillian Tee, was 10 when her elderly nanny, who helped raise her, passed away from cancer. That experience, and a close bond with her grandmother, made Tee aware of the daily help that many seniors need, and the struggle families face in finding qualified care. Over two decades later, in 2016, she co-founded Singapore-based Homage with Lily Phang. They wanted to provide a feasible solution to the challenges associated with an ageing population and a shortage of caregivers in the city-state.

Homage recognised the need to provide personalised care for seniors in their homes, as many seniors prefer to age in their homes rather than move to nursing homes or other assisted living facilities. Before starting Homage, Tee was involved in another start-up called Rocketrip, which helped people save on business travel expenses. However, she was more driven to create a business that improves livelihoods and enhances people’s quality of life, leading her to establish Homage.

The mission of Homage is “to enable wellness and recovery through holistic personal care”. It aims to achieve this by providing a technology-enabled platform that connects seniors (as well as some young people and children with muscular and skeletal issues) with trained and experienced caregivers, nurses, therapists, and doctors. Homage enables families to hire part- time and full-time caregivers for periods ranging from one hour to flexible prepaid packages of up to 200 hours.

Tee explains,

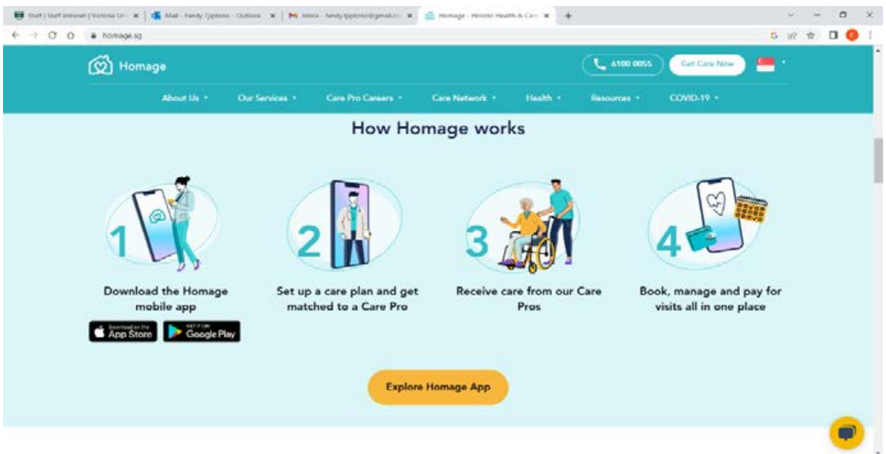
“What’s unique about Homage is we combine the power of on-demand technology with a deep emphasis on the professionalisation and training of our care pros.”

Platform Business Model

As a provider of professional healthcare services, Homage manages the challenges of unique service characteristics (i.e., intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability, and perishability) by implementing rigorous recruitment, selection, and training processes. Every care professional must go through a background/reference check, in-person interviews, CPR certification, tuberculosis screening, certified caregiver training (for the non-nursing trained staff), and onboarding sessions. The care professionals are treated like ‘micro-entrepreneurs’ who can set their own terms (e.g., working schedules and specific care services to offer) while earning a good income.

Homage leverages technology to streamline its operations and improve the user experience. The company’s app allows users to schedule appointments, track their caregivers, and communicate with them in real-time. Homage also uses data analytics to monitor and improve the quality of its services. Its core care services include disability and care assessments, Activities of Daily Living (ADL) assistance, nursing procedures, and rehabilitation services, including physiotherapy, speech therapy, and occupational therapy. Additionally, Homage provides health screening, mobile medicine, telemedicine, ambulance, and medication delivery services. The company’s commitment to innovation and quality has positioned it as a leader in the healthcare and caregiving industry, and it is poised for continued growth and success in the future.

Homage’s business model is subscription-based, with users signing up for various plans depending on their needs (see screenshot below). By February 2023, the app had over 15,000 downloads on the Google Play store and the company claims to have offered more than a million hours of service to customers. Homage says it can arrange virtual appointments with a doctor within 30 minutes, plus house calls within a day. Caregivers can be sent within two days.



When asked about the challenges Homage faces, Tee told FedEx Business Insights that, “Despite considerable attention given to the shortage of eldercare, getting people to commit to being part of the ecosystem will remain a challenge, as there are other jobs and industries that offer better stability” (FedEx, 2023). In dealing with these challenges, Homage continues to recruit and expand its pool of caregivers, nurses, therapists, and doctors, and provide them with more trainings and incentives. In March 2020, for instance, Homage collaborated with Gigacover, a Singapore-based insurance technology company, to provide healthcare benefits to all its care professionals and their dependents. During the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Homage also provided financial support to them.

Tee says,

“Our care professionals are our main clients—they are our care recipients. We should take care of them. Why? So that they can take care of other people.”

Expansion to Malaysia and Australia

Homage first expanded overseas in 2018 to Malaysia. Malaysia is a neighbouring country that shares similar demographics to Singapore – seniors are primarily cared for by their family members, live-in domestic helpers, professionals in nursing homes, or carers contracted from brick-and-mortar agencies (Kang, 2022). In Malaysia, Homage collaborates with local companies and health institutions to provide customers access to high-quality care in the safety and comfort of their homes (FedEx, 2023). The expansion helped increase revenue by 170% to S$1.8 million in 2020 (Kang, 2022).

Homage then entered the Australian market in 2021 with the support of the Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade). Homage appointed a country manager to lead its expansion there and to drive its mission of providing accessible home-based or in-facility services for ADL assistance. It is estimated that over one million senior Australians are receiving home care or residential respite services, and that number is expected to grow as population growth slows and life expectancy increases (Hospital Health, 2022). While various home care programs are available for Australians who need home-based care, they often have to wait for months to access them. The shortage of caregivers is acute in Australia, where it is predicted that the shortage could reach at least 110,000 workers in the next ten years (FedEx, 2023).

Homage’s international market selection was based on cost, growth, and demand. In an interview with CNBC (Goh, 2022), Tee revealed that, “We looked at caregiver shortage, the nature of the aging population and chronic illnesses – which interestingly, is not just caused by age, but highly correlated with urbanization.” Homage’s digital platform can help alleviate the staff shortages by allowing its pool of certified care professionals to reach and treat patients more efficiently. The company’s sales increased by more than 200% in 2021 and international revenues grew eightfold between 2021 and 2022, following their expansion to Australia.

Homage’s success in Singapore, Malaysia, and Australia can be attributed to its focus on providing personalised care and leveraging technology to improve the user experience. The company’s mission to empower seniors to age with grace and dignity in their homes has resonated with many people. The company has also invested in building a solid team of healthcare professionals and caregivers, who are trained to provide high-quality care to seniors.

Homage’s use of technology, such as its mobile app, has made it easier for seniors and their families to book and manage care services. Additionally, Homage has partnered with healthcare providers and insurers to expand access to its services and improve its affordability. As a result of these efforts, Homage has become a trusted provider of home care services in Singapore and the region. The company has also been recognised for its impressive vision and scalable business ideas by being awarded as one of four winners of the FedEx Small Business Grant Contest 2022.

Homage’s success can also be attributed to its strategic partnerships with hospitals and care providers. For example, in 2020, Homage collaborated with NTUC Health to offer home-based care services to seniors in Singapore. Through this partnership, Homage has expanded its reach and provided its clients with a more comprehensive range of services.

The Future Ahead

Since launching in 2016, Homage has grown to 15,000 part-time and full-time caregivers, and expanded to Malaysia and Australia. The company has been successful in raising capital from several different investors. In 2018, Homage raised a US$4.15 million series A funding co-led by Golden Gate Ventures and HealthXCapital. In 2020, they received an undisclosed "double-digit" series B funding led by EV Growth. Then in September 2021, a US$30 million series C round led by Sheares Healthcare Group (owned by Temasek) was completed. In total, Homage has raised more than US$45 million. The new funding has been used for Homage's technology development, infrastructure integration (between care providers, care payers, care recipients, and the company), and business expansion (including partnerships with care providers and hospitals).

Homage's commitment to innovation and quality has also helped it stand out in a crowded marketplace. The company has invested heavily in its technology infrastructure and has developed a proprietary platform that enables seamless communication among caregivers, clients, and healthcare providers. This technology has been a critical differentiator for Homage, allowing it to provide customised high-quality care to each client's individual needs.

Looking to the future, Homage is well-positioned to continue its growth trajectory and expand its regional footprint. The company's focus on delivering personalised care that is enabled by technology has resonated with consumers, and its partnerships with hospitals and other care providers have helped it establish a strong foothold in the healthcare and caregiving industry. Homage plans to scale its capabilities by providing caregivers with more trainings to equip them with the required knowledge and skills to handle different patient needs and situations.

As the populations of many countries in the world continue to age, the demand for high-quality home-based care services is likely to grow, and Homage is well-equipped to capitalise on this demand.

NTKMADE: Cultural Identity, Fashion, and Internationalisation

Introduction

In recent years, New Zealand's fashion industry has gained worldwide recognition for its exceptional blend of indigenous art, fashion, and innovative designs. Māori culture has played a significant role in inspiring designers, contributing to the industry's growth. The infusion of Aotearoa flavours and Māori symbology and storytelling has showcased the country's distinct cultural identity, creating opportunities for internationalisation, and generating substantial trade revenue for New Zealand.

NTKMADE

NTKMADE Limited is a company established by Nichola Te Kiri, specialising in Māori design innovation and creation. Based in Hamilton, the company offers various products and creative design services that are uniquely contemporary, innovative, and Māori, setting them apart from other fashion brands. The brand's commitment to creativity and innovation in fashion makes it a notable player in the fashion world.

In 2011, the business was initially founded as a sole trader with the brand name NTKmade. In 2016, the company rebranded and changed its name to nichola.co.nz, to make it easier for customers to remember and create brand awareness. However, growth eventually pushed Te Kiri to formally establish NTKMADE as a limited liability company in 2019.

NTKMADE Ltd has three brands:

Nichola – Designs from Aotearoa,

Top Tēpu, and KaistorSt. Nichola (https://www.nichola.co.nz/) focuses on ready-to-wear clothing and accessories for the local and national market. The brand offers unique designs that combine "old world charm with a modern edge" and incorporate storytelling. The brand's skilled team creates these distinctive designs in-house, catering to the fashion and accessories market.

Top Tēpu

(https://toptepu.co.nz/)
is an exclusive subscription service that offers delivery of limited edition, first-to-receive, locally made taonga from the Nichola brand and other pakihi (businesses) in Aotearoa. A subscription model was created, because customers used to have to travel to events to access the products, and some of them missed out due to limited stock.

KaistorSt

(https://www.kaistorst.com)

is NTKMADE's latest brand (launched in February 2023), specialising in bespoke and commissioned taonga (clothing and accessories) for high-end domestic and international customers. These products are sold through specific events such as fashion shows.

NTKMADE has achieved several milestones, including winning the Employment & Growth Award from Māori Women's Development Inc (MWDI). During 2022-2023, NTKMADE was commissioned to design various works, including the Player of the Match Sonic Trophy for the 2021 Women's Rugby World Cup (WRWC) for Mastercard, the Matariki Business Awards for Whakaata Māori, the Hue designed Business awards for MWDI, the Business awards for Ka Hao i Te Ao, and the Leadership awards for Māori ki Waikato (University of Waikato). The company was also featured on Seven Sharp, which showcased the WRWC Player of the Match Sonic Trophy.

For distribution, NTKMADE has collaborated with various companies and retailers, including Arrow Uniforms, Fashion Uniforms, the Parisian Neckwear Company, Bloom 'n loco, Creative & Brave, Poutama, Tikitibu, and The Cool Store Gallery. Distribution networks are generally created through networks and referrals, some of which are related to commissioned work.

The Founder

Nichola Te Kiri (Ngāi Tūhoe) is the founder and designer of Nichola - Contemporary Māori Designs from Aotearoa. Her fashion, jewellery, and homeware designs are bold, contemporary, and inspired by Te Ao Māori with elements of Aotearoa flavours. Nichola has studied whakairo (carving), contemporary Māori arts, and raranga (weaving). She holds a Bachelor of Spatial Design, a Bachelor of Contemporary Māori design, and a Diploma in Event Management from the Auckland University of Technology.

Growing up with dual Māori and Pākehā heritage in Kirikiriroa (Hamilton), Te Kiri's upbringing in two worlds has influenced her bold and courageous design aesthetic. She draws inspiration from the natural environment around her, as well as her heritage and upbringing, resulting in beautifully contemporary Māori designs that incorporate Māori symbology and storytelling.

During Matariki, she designed a star, based on Hiwa-i-te-rangi, which represents hope and dreams for the new year. She also created designs based on other stars such as Tupuārangi, associated with food gathered from trees, and Hineraumati, the summer maiden. Nichola uses traditional narratives and interprets them in her own stories for her designs. She sees each item she creates as having a journey from inspiration to creation, and she values sharing the stories behind her designs, making them come alive as taonga (treasures). Te Kiri says, "I use a lot of my culture and the stories that we tell. I use those traditional passed-down narratives, but I interpret them into my own kōrero."

Te Kiri's talent and designs have gained recognition on various platforms. In 2018, an avant-garde collection called M+H (Mahuika + Hinepukohurangi) was showcased at New Zealand Fashion Week (NZFW) Miromoda show, where it placed first equal in the Avant-Garde section. This collection drew inspiration from Matariki (Pleiades star cluster) and celebrated wahine (women). In 2019, she was one of six Māori and Pacific fashion designers and artists who travelled to Hong Kong for Fashion Week, showcasing their collections and exploring business opportunities. Her works have been featured in Te Ao Māori News, Fashionz, RNZ, and Authority Magazine.

Te Kiri's designs go beyond fashion and jewellery. In collaboration with Mastercard, she designed the world's first sonic trophy for the Women's Rugby World Cup 2021. The trophy captures live-action audio from each game, match commentary, and fan reactions, celebrating the courageous female leaders of the indigenous Māori people. She was also selected to design the new uniforms for staff of the Auckland War Memorial Museum, incorporating shapes, patterns, and colours inspired by Māori and Pacific collections.

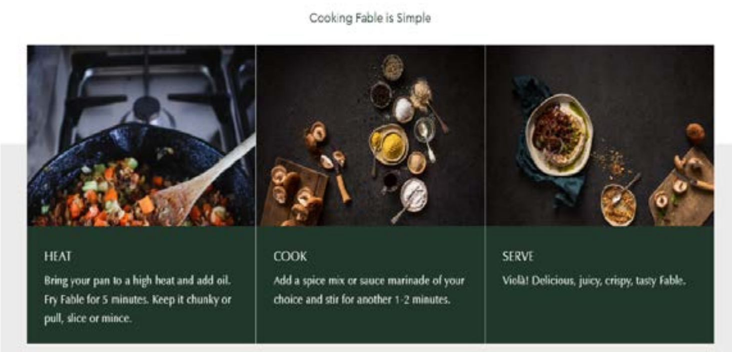
Exploring International Markets

Te Kiri has been involved in business mentoring programs run by MWDI, Waikato Innovation Park, and Te Puni Kōkiri. She is determined to expand her brand overseas, particularly in Asia. She is a member of the Kāhui Māori Fashion Collective, which had a group visit in 2018 to major cities in China to meet with manufacturers and retail giants, including Lane Crawford. As she was establishing connections with manufacturers and testing samples, the COVID-19 pandemic struck and stopped her progress on these collaborations. She had also considered South Korea and Thailand as other markets for suppliers, but those did not eventuate. Currently, some of NTKMADE's manufacturing is done in Cambodia.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, 60% of NTKMADE's sales were made at events (see https://www.nichola.co.nz/blogs/news/tagged/pop-up-shops) and in its Casabella Lane retail store. However, since the pandemic, almost 90% of the company's sales are made online, with some sales from overseas. The online store experienced significant growth after implementing the Ka Hao e-commerce system, and the company's digital presence has been enhanced.

With her unwavering energy and enthusiasm, Te Kiri aims to take her unique designs to the world, as demonstrated by her participation in New Zealand Fashion Week (2018) and Hong Kong Fashion Week (2019). Nonetheless, NTKMADE faces challenges and potential risks that could potentially impact its business operations, including disruptions in supply chains and sustaining demand, particularly if the company imports fabrics and materials and/or manufactures clothing and jewellery overseas. Therefore, the company needs to have a solid understanding of the different cultures, regulations, and business practices in international market to expand overseas successfully, which can be a daunting task. The economic environment is also a significant concern, which could affect consumer behaviour and spending habits. Additionally, NTKMADE must navigate legal challenges such as patents and copyrights to protect its unique products from being copied. The company must remain vigilant and adaptable to overcome these challenges and capitalise on opportunities to grow.

Fable Food: Internationalisation of Australian Mushroom-Based Meat



"We know being vegetarian is healthy, but it's boring! We've found the solution and it's called 'Flexitarianism'."
[**News.com.au**]

Introduction

Fable Food is a rapidly growing Australian food start-up that has captured the attention of health-conscious consumers and investors alike. Based in the Sunshine Coast (Queensland), it was founded in 2019 by Michael Fox (co-founder of an online customer-designed footwear start-up, Shoes of Prey), Jim Fuller (a mycologist, chef, and biotech entrepreneur), and Chris McLoghlin (co-founder of Australia's largest certified organic mushroom farming company and winner of awards such as Young and Organic Farmer of the Year).

Fox's experience working as a chef in a high-end restaurant inspired Fable Food. He saw first-hand the negative impact that the meat industry was having on the environment and animal welfare. This led Fox to search for a meat substitution that looked and tasted the same.

Australia is the third largest vegetarian market in the world, and one of the key drivers of people eating less meat is the development of alternative meat (York, 2021). Fox recognised that the biggest challenge for meat alternatives is that meat tastes great, so for consumers to accept an alternative, it must have a close-enough texture and taste to meat.

Fox also observed that many available products in the market at that time contained artificial or unrecognisable ingredients, which contradict the health motivations behind reduced meat consumption and plant-based alternatives. He thus decided to reach out to chefs to find meat alternative ingredients, and their most frequent recommendation was mushrooms.

Fox explains, "Mushrooms are obviously very healthy – they've been used in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years, and there's a lot of Western science and academic literature on all the health benefits of mushrooms."

With this in mind, Fox subsequently joined forces with Fuller and McLoghlin to develop a unique process that uses shiitake mushrooms to create a meat-like texture and flavour. The result is a product that tastes delicious and is healthier and more environmentally sustainable. Unlike other plant-based meat products, Fable Food uses only a handful of ingredients in its products (±65% are shiitake mushrooms) and minimal processing. The product's neutral taste allows it to be used in a variety of dishes, such as chilli con carne, slow braises, curries, and Peking duck pancakes.

“Our mission is to create the most delicious plant-based meat products while maximising the use of whole food base ingredients and minimising processing,” Fox says.

Fable Food wants to continue investing further to reduce meat consumption and increase mushroom consumption among Australians. On average people consume 120 kg of land animals per year, compared with just 3.5 kg of mushrooms (Yun, 2022).

Company Strategy

Fable Food is a plant-based meat alternative company that has disrupted the traditional meat industry with its innovative use of mushrooms as a meat replacement. It is one of eight Australian start-ups recognised in the international Foodbytes! Pitch for 2021. It has also been included in The Forbes ‘Asia 100 to Watch’ list. Fable Food has roughly doubled its revenue each year since inception. By early 2023, the company had 7 employees in Australia, 3 in China, 4 in Malaysia, 4 in the UK and 4 in the US.

Fable Food has developed its business strategy based on three key components: innovation, sustainability, and taste. Its unique process for using shiitake mushrooms to create a meat-like texture and flavour has been patented and is the foundation of its product line. The company constantly innovates and expands its product offerings by introducing new products (e.g., plant-based meatballs and sausages) and is exploring the use of other mushroom varieties.

Its commitment to sustainability is reflected in its use of plant-based ingredients, which have a much lower environmental impact than meat. The company is also dedicated to reducing waste and using renewable energy sources in its production facilities.

Taste is another crucial component of Fable Food’s business strategy. Its products have been developed with a focus on replicating the texture and taste of meat without the negative environmental and health impacts. This has been achieved through an integration of culinary expertise and scientific research.

The company has also secured significant investment from several venture capital firms, including $1.5 million from Grok Ventures, $6.5 million from Blackbird Ventures, and $8.5 million in Series A funding led by K3 Ventures. This funding has been used to grow the business by accelerating new product development (i.e., new mushroom products) and supporting its international expansion, particularly in the UK, North America, and Singapore. Fable Food’s collaboration with Food Futures Company through the Mars Seeds of Change Accelerator program in 2019 has been instrumental in driving significant improvements in the company’s product, distribution, and supply chain. The accelerator helped Fable Food’s team fine-tune its product, design, and packaging.

Through a series of customer interviews, the company identified how to position their products in the ‘flexitarian’ market. They used customer insights to focus on developing products that can appeal to plant-based eaters as well as meat eaters “who might want to cut back a little bit on meat consumption”.

Fox believes that clean plant-based proteins can be as delicious as real meat. He explains that, “Consumers don’t necessarily want to go full vegan or vegetarian, but reducing meat consumption is now becoming a much easier thing to do.” Food Frontier estimated that one in three Australians choose to reduce their meat consumption and this contributes to the increased demand for plant-based meat in the country (Skantzos, 2020).

Fable Food strongly focuses on distribution, with products available in both retail and food service channels, as well as at its own direct-to-consumer online store. Within its first year, Fable Food was able to secure distribution deals with Coles and Woolworths, two giant supermarkets that have made major expansions into the plant-based food market (York, 2021). Fable Food’s products are also available in Harris Farm Markets, independent retailers, major food chains (such as Grill’d and Guzman y Gomez), and Marley Spoon and Dinnerly meal delivery kits. The company’s growth potential and commitment to sustainability have attracted attention from investors, retailers, and consumers, positioning it as a leader in the Australian plant-based meat alternative market.

Collaborating to Internationalise

Fable Food has expanded to the UK, the US, Canada, Singapore, and Malaysia. Fox suggests that, "International expansion is definitely one of the main plans we have for the investment." Chef celebrity endorsement plays a crucial role in facilitating Fable Food's international expansion. Fox collaborated with celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal, who owns The Fat Duck in London (a Michelin 3-Star restaurant), during the product launch in December 2019. Fable's plant-based braised beef is also endorsed by Blumenthal, who has featured it on the menus of his restaurants in the UK and the Hilton Hotel restaurants in London. "Heston has been interested in mushrooms as a culinary ingredient and wanted to experiment with it," Fox says.

In Singapore, Fable Food collaborated with Country Food, one of the largest food manufacturers and distributors in the country, with networks in many other Asian markets. "Singapore is our first target in Asia because it's a good mix of East and West, and one of the most advanced in terms of alternative meat consumption per capita, plus we have investors there, and it is also close to our co-manufacturing partners in Malaysia," Fox explains.

The company is well aware that it will need to tailor its products and formats to better suit various Asian markets before it scales up expansion in the region. The company supplies to Hell Pizza in New Zealand. They have also established collaboration with New York-based meal delivery service CookUnity, plant-based restaurant chain The Butcher's Daughter, and Canadian meal delivery service Ethey.

In an interview with Food Navigator Asia, Fox revealed that the company explored the business-to-business (B2B) markets first before they expanded to business-to-consumer (B2C) segments (Neo, 2021). Fox says, "Retail in Australia is working well, but based on sales volume, logistics, margins, operations and marketing complexity, our experience tells us that retail is so much more challenging than food service, and that the latter is the area to target first." He also adds, "It is so important to make a big impactful statement where the products are nicely presented to consumers and give them a good first experience [so that they return], and this is much easier to manage via food service."

In their international expansion strategy, Fable Food tries to keep their retail presence and work with premium partners to create added value (e.g., co-branding with curry manufacturers or dumpling manufacturers making Ready-to-Eat products).

Opportunities from Disruption and Challenges Moving Forward

Fable Food navigated COVID-19 disruptions with high flexibility and adaptability. For example, the company supported restaurants that had carried their products to find ways to shift from dining-in to takeaway. One of the initiatives that offered an at-home 'date-night' hamper through the Fable Food website was so successful that Fable Food had to expand beyond the Sunshine Coast to include Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne. Another example is Fable Food's partnership with Marley Spoon (a global meal kit delivery service provider), which benefited from the food delivery boom.

The alternative meat industry still faces some challenges. Although many plant-based meat alternatives taste good, they are not rated as highly as meat in most blind taste tests. Prices are also still more expensive than meat. Some meat alternatives tend to have processing that leads some consumers to be sceptical about their health benefits. However, Fox is not worried about these challenges. He believes that Fable Food's products have advantages, such as they are predominantly from shiitake mushrooms (with lower cost of production) and are crafted using simple processes and all natural ingredients.

"In a culinary context, shiitake mushrooms are very flavourful with their natural umami flavours. They are a slow growing mushroom so they naturally have the fleshy fibres that give meaty bite you typically get from animal proteins, and have the right chemical composition that when cooked allow us to taste flavours that are found in animal products," Fox explains.

The trend towards healthier consumption and sustainably sourced food across Australia and the world has benefited the Fable Food business. Going forward, Fable Food aims to continue expanding its product line and distribution channels, while also working to reduce its environmental footprint and improve animal welfare. The company is poised to make a significant impact on the food industry and beyond.

CodeHQ: One Team Across Two Markets

Introduction

CodeHQ is one of the more successful New Zealand-owned software service providers, and it has thrived by leveraging local expertise and implementing it on an international scale. With 30 years of experience, the last 18 of which utilised teams in both New Zealand and Vietnam, the company is well-positioned to offer customised technology solutions to its clients.

New Zealand is home to thousands of world-class tech companies making significant contributions to the global tech industry. In 2020, the software products and services industry in New Zealand included more than 12,000 companies, employing about 35,000 employees, exporting over $1.2 billion, and producing total revenue of $10 billion (Lewis et al., 2021). The country's tech sector remains largely unknown to many consumers and businesses in Southeast Asia, which is a huge opportunity.

About CodeHQ

Augen Software Group, now known as CodeHQ, was founded in Auckland in August 1993 by current owners Mitchell Pham and Peter Vile, along with three friends and fellow students from the University of Auckland. Since then, CodeHQ has been delivering technology innovation, software development, and resource capacity to their customers. They have a growing resource base of developers, business analysts, testers, consultants, and project managers in their New Zealand and Vietnam offices.

CodeHQ has been a Microsoft Certified Partner for over 20 years. Many of their staff are Microsoft Certified Solution Develop (MCPD) certified. The company provides a complete range of software services such as consultancy, needs analysis, estimation and planning, development, implementation, testing, ongoing support, second-level helpdesk, and lifecycle management. They work across a wide range of sectors including banking, finance, insurance, wealth management, construction, IT infrastructure, manufacturing, professional services, software innovation, transport, and logistics. CodeHQ has also been involved in innovation and informatics across a wide spectrum of healthcare, disability, and social services.

CodeHQ's extensive portfolio of services includes developing, implementing, and integrating solutions such as customer relationship management systems, client facing web portals, mobile applications, database integration, information dashboards, business intelligence, enterprise service bus, strategy and roadmap consultancy, and many others. The company helps organisations improve efficiencies, operate in an increasingly connected world, and respond to more complex reporting, transparency and outcome measures. It puts the client journey and experience at the forefront of engagement and innovation.

The key driver for CodeHQ has always been transformations that positively affect customer outcomes through smart innovative use of technology. A believer of the partnership model to greater success, CodeHQ has been actively involved in the NZ Health IT Cluster, the NZ Technology Industry Association, the NZ Software Association, the NZ Financial Innovation & Technology Association, as well as the NZ Artificial Intelligence (AI) Forum.

Internationalisation

The software industry in New Zealand has been dominated by companies that start small (Stephenson, 2019). Even by 2020, software companies here employed an average of three personnel, and only 500 out of 12,000 software firms had more than ten staff (Lewis et al., 2021). Driven by talent shortages in New Zealand, CodeHQ started exploring alternative offshore operational locations in Southeast Asia in 2003. Singapore and Malaysia, where the legal systems are similar, were initially shortlisted as viable options. However, the associated costs were relatively high for a small company. This led to their final decision to base their Southeast Asia operations in Vietnam in 2005.

According to Pham, Vietnam was attractive due to its location, economic growth, population size, relatively high education level, and its government's technology development strategy (Hamilton-Hart, 2019). More importantly, Pham is Vietnamese-born, speaks Vietnamese, understands the culture very well, and has an extensive network in the country.

The market entry process for CodeHQ into Vietnam was by no means a smooth journey. The bureaucratic Vietnamese system was relatively challenging to manoeuvre. For instance, CodeHQ's business license application took 11 months to be approved. It was particularly frustrating compared with the ease of doing business in New Zealand. The Vietnamese regulatory environment is also more fluid. Regular law changes have been and continue to be the norm. Further, businesses are required to re-register roughly every five years. Pham says, "The changes in law force re-registration, because the new laws require new types of information and processes, and when you last registered that didn't apply so now you have to re-register again because they now have different systems and requirements."

Language and cultural differences are also challenging for companies like CodeHQ that provide people-based services in two or more different countries. Business culture in Vietnam is very different to business culture here in many respects, including organisational hierarchy and individuals' status. In the early days of establishing their Vietnamese operation in Ho Chi Minh City, the directors found that the company's Vietnamese staff were reluctant to speak up and express their opinions. Also, Pham notes that when Vietnamese say 'yes', it could mean 'yes, I have heard you' or 'yes, I acknowledge that you have just said that (which I may not understand or agree with at all)'.

To navigate these cross-border challenges and to not delay its internationalisation process while waiting for approval of the business license, CodeHQ collaborated with a local Vietnamese partner firm for almost a year before it was officially registered. The owner of this business was a family friend of Pham's, and the trustworthy local partner not only provided important advice, it also took actions on CodeHQ's behalf legally (including recruiting employees). In addition, CodeHQ used two locally based international legal firms to help them comply with Vietnam's regulatory environment. KPMG Vietnam managed tax-related matters and Frasers Law Company looked after their corporate structure and contract law. The country managers of these firms in Vietnam were Kiwis, who Pham knew personally.

CodeHQ is strongly committed to developing and utilising its cultural sensitivity. For instance, the company uses its brand image as a successful international firm from New Zealand to attract talent in Vietnam. They spent two years of trial and error to come up with the optimum employment package, which includes good remuneration and benefits and a conducive working environment in Vietnam.

Efforts were put into building a sense of pride and belonging among their Vietnamese employees. For instance, Pham says,

"In New Zealand, most of our Kiwi staff don't want the uniform and we have to force them into wearing it whenever we need to take a company photo. But in Vietnam our staff wear it every day because they needed to feel a part of something. It says to them that Augen [CodeHQ] is a successful New Zealand company and they are now here in Vietnam. And we, the Vietnamese team, joined them because we want to be a part of that. They need people to see them wearing the Augen [CodeHQ] logo and being proud of it."

What CodeHQ has initiated and implemented has built up its brand credibility in Vietnam, one of the largest and most dynamic digital economies in the Southeast Asian region. In 2015, it became the first foreign company from New Zealand to win the prestigious Vietnam IT Excellence Award in the Emerging Enterprise category.

Rebranding as CodeHQ

Augen Software Group announced in July 2021 that it would rebrand to CodeHQ to better reflect its growth, evolved services, and new vision. According to Ben Rose, then CRO of CodeHQ, business articulation, uniqueness, and pronunciation issues were among the reasons Augen needed a rebranding that was more than updating its logo or visual image. Augen realised that its brand did not articulate its total service offering well, its brand did not stand out from its competitors, and many people found it difficult to pronounce or spell 'Augen'.

Rebranding is always a challenging undertaking, let alone for a company that has been operating under the same name for close to 30 years. After going through a systematic brand development process involving stakeholders, 'CodeHQ' was chosen over 150 other potential names as the new brand name. The selection was based on these criteria: (1) it clearly communicates that the company builds software, (2) it reflects the brand disposition, (3) it has no IP (Intellectual Property) conflict, (4) it has an available URL, and (5) it is easy to pronounce.

CodeHQ is a modern and comprehensive representation of Augen, reflecting its values and services. This rebranding demonstrates the company's commitment to stay up-to-date with technology and to provide the best software development solutions for domestic and international customers. Ben Rose says that the rebranding was a collaborative effort among CodeHQ staff, customers, and partners to create a brand that clearly communicates what they offer. CEO Peter Vile adds that the rebranding was part of a larger growth strategy to ensure New Zealand businesses should no longer settle for less.

The rebranding of Augen to CodeHQ was a significant milestone in the company's growth. As one of the first Kiwi companies to invest in offshore outsourcing in 2005, CodeHQ now has over 80 developers, QA specialists, and engineers on-demand, enabling it to provide a wide range of professional services at any level.

COVID-19 and Beyond

In 2004, CodeHQ developed a unique business model, which combines expertise in New Zealand with the scale for growth that Vietnam provides. Offshore software developers offer their unique skillsets and experiences in using different coding languages and platforms. CodeHQ runs a 'one team across two markets' model across New Zealand and Vietnam. With this approach, CodeHQ can not only offer resources but also specific expertise and experience running successful software development projects.

Pham explains that, "Having some of the CodeHQ team based in Vietnam provides us with more exposure to different thinking, encouraging us to constantly be thinking of new ways to improve both our services and the way we operate. With Vietnam having a larger pool of qualified developers, this means that unlike other New Zealand businesses, we can hire skilled workers with a minimum of five years' experience in the industry and stand full squads up in a matter of weeks."

When the COVID-19 outbreak hit in 2020, businesses and consumers moved online. The demand for technology and software development increased drastically and exceeded the supply capacity. For many organisations in the IT industry in New Zealand, the shortages of experienced and skilled tech workers have been devastating. Some were forced to close their businesses, as capacity was not able to cope with demand. However, things were different at CodeHQ.

Pham says, "At CodeHQ, our 'one team across two markets' approach has enabled us to connect businesses with experienced developers while the local labour market is stretched. Our presence in Vietnam and ability to outsource has enabled us to remove the traditional constraints that often limit a business' growth in a timely and cost-effective manner."

CodeHQ sees a big opportunity for Kiwi exporters to engage digitally with consumers in Asia in general and Southeast Asia in particular. With over 30 years of experience, CodeHQ has worked with some of New Zealand's most innovative companies and has built its success on a commitment to creating a culture where people can thrive and deliver. As the November 2021 edition of the NZ Business magazine reported, "CodeHQ is a great example of a business that has continued to evolve and adapt through the pandemic, not allowing border restrictions to hinder growth or opportunity."

IRVINS Salted Egg: The International Journey of an Iconic Singaporean Snack Brand

Introduction

IRVINS is an award-winning Singaporean salted egg snack brand. Managed by Cocoba Pte Ltd, it specialises in chef-crafted gourmet chips and crispy upcycled salmon skin snacks. They are made in small batches, using real whole food ingredients commonly found in Southeast Asian culinary dishes.

Irvin Gunawan, founder and CEO of IRVINS, has been involved in the food business for a long time. He opened his first IRVINS seafood restaurant in Singapore in 2009 (see figure below for the company's milestones). The idea of a salted egg snack business happened by both chance and necessity. In 2014, Gunawan's restaurants were struggling due to the significant increase in rental fees in its older location and less customer traffic in its new location. The company tried to keep afloat by experimenting with their most popular item: a salted egg crab dish. This ultimately led to the creation of salted egg potato chips.

The product, which has a "dangerously addictive" label on its packaging, was well received by Singaporean consumers. In response to the increased demand, IRVINS opened its first physical retail store in VivoCity. They also made the hard decision to close the IRVINS restaurants to focus on the IRVINS snack brand. Within four years, IRVINS has grown from one tiny kitchen with three employees to 300 people spread across 21 outlets in six countries. The brand has become a household name synonymous with salted egg, not just in Singapore but also in other Asian markets.

2009	The first restaurant was opened in Singapore; famously known for its salted egg crab dish
2014	The salted egg snacks (a combination of salted egg sauce, potato chips and fish skin) were launched.
2016	Due to high demand for the salted egg snacks, IRVINS opened its first physical retail store in VivoCity.
2017	Rapid international expansion into Australia, Canada, China, the U.S., and other countries.
2020	The snacks were launched in popular supermarkets and convenience stores in many countries.
2021	Innovation efforts continue, including the Nissan salted egg instant noodle collaboration.

IRVINS is family-owned and managed by the Gunawan brothers. The company is fully funded from personal savings, as the owners prefer to grow organically. Irvin Gunawan is the Chief Executive Officer and oversees product and business development, while his brothers Ivan Gunawan and Irchan Gunawan have the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating Officer roles respectively.

Establishing A Foothold in International Markets

IRVINS started its internationalisation by selling its products at the Singapore Airport, targeting travellers who wanted to bring something home that was affordable and made in Singapore. After establishing its presence at the airport, IRVINS started its international product launch in the Philippines in 2017. The company expanded to other countries quickly, and they now have 5 offices and 26 markets worldwide in North America (Canada and the US); Europe (Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK); the Middle East (UAE); and Asia Pacific (Brunei, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Macau, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam).

When they officially launched their products in the US in 2020, salted egg snacks were already popular in Asian American communities. After selling out at various markets within days, they realized they had to work with a distributor to grow faster and bigger. They hired two distributors to sell their products through ethnic Asian markets (such as Ranch 99 and H Mart). They also built a strategic partnership with a network of Asian influencers in Los Angeles to increase awareness of salted egg and salmon skin chips.

Based on his research on the US market, Irvin Gunawan observed, “The Asian snack aisles are one of the highest-growing segments, and it’s really huge now.” The distribution partnership with Costco in 2021 subsequently helped them to expand from the Asian American market to other communities. In 2023, IRVINS focused on strengthening its business internationally, particularly expanding its distribution in Europe, using the same strategy that has been implemented in the US.

Until 2019, IRVINS’ products could only be purchased via its stores or website. Irvin Gunawan says, “So, when COVID-19 hit, our customers were finding it hard to buy our products.” The company subsequently expanded its collaboration with local retailers internationally. IRVINS now sells its snacks at 7-Eleven stores in Taiwan and Hong Kong, at Costco in Canada and the US., and at Don Quixote (Don Don Donki) in Japan.

IRVINS aims to balance its retail strategy (using pop-ups) and direct-to-consumer strategy. The company believes, “Almost nothing beats in-person sampling and real-time feedback. Retail wins the distribution game but offers much fewer customer connection opportunities. Therefore, the two are complementary and should be pursued together at all costs.”

Overcoming Internationalisation Challenges

IRVINS’ growth story resembles a small-to-medium enterprise fairy tale. But the reputation of the brand has taken a hit following an incident in 2018, when a Bangkok customer found a dead lizard coated with salted egg in one of its snacks. Instead of avoiding the problem or trying to cover up any issues related to the unfortunate incident, IRVINS chose to take full responsibility (Huiwen, 2019). The company immediately took crisis management actions by recalling the batches and offering refunds, reporting to the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) and cooperating fully in its investigations, and promising to make necessary changes in their production system to ensure the incident will never happen again. The IRVINS founder also posted an apology on his Facebook and Instagram accounts. These prompt responses have helped the company survive the crisis.

IRVINS has also experienced specific challenges in different international markets. For instance, their salted egg dory skin was extremely popular in Asia. However, when they decided to enter the US market, they learned that dory was not allowed to be sold there. The IRVINS team did intensive research to find alternatives and found that salmon skin chips were the most feasible option, because they have a rich flavour and many health benefits. More importantly, no competitors produced and sold salmon skin chips at that time. The team also managed to find reliable salmon suppliers who were keen to work with IRVINS. By supplying an otherwise discarded part of salmon, the fishermen can get an additional income. The salted egg salmon skin snacks are now sold in Costco in the US.

Challenges remain, because for instance, crispy salmon skin is a hard sell for less adventurous customers. Some countries, like New Zealand, have a strict biosecurity policy and do not allow fish skin to enter the country. New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries clearly states that "fish skin covered in egg powder is not allowed to be brought to New Zealand" on their website. As a result, IRVINS has developed more universal offerings, such as salted egg potato chips, and expanded the flavours (e.g., sour cream & onion and truffle potato chips). The company also works on new product variants without certain ingredients (e.g., MSG) to gain access to popular natural retail networks.

Counterfeit is another challenge when a brand becomes popular in the global market. The IRVINS overseas flagship store in Tmall Global (China) was closed on 26 April 2022 after they found that some operators were selling counterfeit IRVINS products on various e-commerce platforms.

Innovation for Future Growth

IRVINS maintains its production facilities in Singapore for three reasons. First, being in Singapore allows it to be close to the ingredient sources (e.g., salted eggs, salmon skins, fresh chilis, and curry leaves from the neighbouring Southeast Asian countries) and to maintain product freshness, while minimising cost and smoothly managing logistics. Second, the company is very comfortable with the quality management and control process in Singapore, including how they access skilled personnel, a capable management team, and the best ingredients.

The IRVINS factory in Singapore has a British Retail Consortium Global Standards (BRCGS) certification – one of the highest global food safety standards. Therefore, its customers can be assured of the quality of IRVINS' products. Also, some snacks are halal certified by Majlis Ugama Islam Singapore. Third, IRVINS consistently uses a handmade, time-intensive production process that differentiates their product quality from competitors. They believe that it is challenging to find collaborators (including co-packers) who have comparable capabilities outside Singapore.

In terms of suppliers, Irvin Gunawan says, "Finding good suppliers who want to grow and be your partner long term, whose focus is on quality, not short-term money-making (is a challenge). Singapore has good importers and suppliers of food stuff from all over Asia, that makes it easier for us. We still need to quality-audit each individual factory, however."

With a commitment to innovation, IRVINS plans to introduce new products in the coming years. These new offerings may include customisable options, fresh food infused with IRVINS' salted egg flavouring, and improved store concepts. In 2020, they teamed with Pokémon to release the limited edition IRVINS salted Egg Zig Zag Potato Chips. In 2021, Nissin salted egg instant noodles were launched. IRVINS also partnered with Australia's largest retailer, Cotton On, to create a fashion line of IRVINS branded clothing.

Aside from retailers, IRVINS has also collaborated with restaurants to "push the needle in creating new, innovative products" for its customers. Its first collaboration was with local pizza chain, Pezzo, with whom they concocted a one-of-a-kind salted egg pizza. Although the pizza was available for a limited time, Irvin said that it was well-received by Singaporeans.

On why salted egg yolk is a timeless trend, Irvin explains,

"If it's done right, then it will never die out. The trend survives through the amazing taste and innovations around real salted egg yolk."

Nikora Ngaropo Motion and Design (NNMD): Future of Aotearoa through Creativity, Culture and Commerce

Introduction

The contribution of the digital technology and innovation sector to New Zealand's economy has been increasing and is now worth $16 billion, or 9% of the country's gross domestic product. The sector encompasses diverse industries, including software development, telecommunications, digital media, and e-commerce. The continuous growth has been sustained by a supportive ecosystem of investors, accelerators, and incubators, all of which facilitate the growth of a dynamic tech start-up scene.

The trend of increased digitalisation and the geographic isolation of Aotearoa have also encouraged Māori entrepreneurs and educators to develop businesses that align with their cultural values, while using technological innovations. A leading innovator in this space is Nikora Ngaropo Motion and Design (NNMD).

NNMD

After years of working with ground-breaking computer generated graphics company WETA Digital on blockbuster movies (e.g., Avatar, Tintin, the BFG, and the Hobbit), Nikora Ngaropo founded NNMD in 2016. The vision of the company is "influencing the future of Aotearoa through creativity, education, culture and commerce". NNMD provides motion and design services, digital consultation, and product design that caters to commercial and educational markets. It fuses intuition, experience, and communication with motion graphics, 3D animation, and design skills to create design-driven solutions. As Ngaropo says, "The WETA Digital experience has exposed me to various emerging technologies, ideas and best practices. These have been instrumental for the setup of NNMD."

As a young and growing small to medium-sized enterprise, NNMD has amassed an impressive portfolio of initiatives, contributing to the growth and development of motion and design technology-based ventures in Aotearoa. NNMD's projects and programmes include the Young Animators (YA) programme, the Kia Takatu a-Matihiko programme, the Raukawa Project, Te Tira Toi Whakangao (T3W), and the TORO project.

The Young Animators (YA) programme is a mobile, Māori-led animation initiative that introduces school-aged children to 2D and 3D animations. It aims to improve their digital literacy while encouraging them to pursue careers in animation, motion, design, and technology. The programme consists of three levels (101, 102, and a Leadership programme), which progressively build on digital competency and leadership skills, while providing interactive, creative, and technology-based workshops.

The Kia Takatu a-Matihiko (the National Digital Readiness) programme and the Raukawa Project bring bilingual stories to life through animation. They aim to inspire youth to pursue learning in the visual arts and to become creators and innovators of digital technologies in New Zealand and beyond.

Te Tira Toi Whakangao (T3W) is a group of global Māori tech companies and Māori sector investors working together to create a virtually connected Māori business support ecosystem. The TORO project is a Post-Covid Recovery priority project in Tairāwhiti (Gisborne) to establish a national centre of excellence for animation and technology. This project aims to provide an end-to-end solution from education to production, to create technology IP, and to support technology capability for local industry and small businesses.

NNMD received the Te Puni Kokiri-Ka Hao funding for Māori Development in both 2017 and 2018. Through its initiatives, NNMD has impacted over a thousand rangatahi across 18 regions in Aotearoa, establishing profitable partnerships within the industry and a productive network in the wider community. NNMD's commitment to excellence has been recognised through numerous awards and nominations. In 2018, it was one of the finalists for the Callaghan Innovation Best Hi-Tech Māori Innovation at the NZ Hi-Tech Awards. It was also nominated for the Callaghan Innovation Hi-Tech Kamupene Māori o te Tau – Māori Company of the Year Award at the NZ Hi-Tech Awards in 2020. The same year, NNMD was nominated for various awards including the Westpac Northland Business Champion 2020—Creative Northland Creative Industries Champion, the Northland Inc Innovation Champion, the Top Energy Not for Profit Champion, and the More FM Customer Choice Champion awards.

From Aotearoa to the World

NNMD's founder and CEO, Nikora Ngaropo, brings more than 25 years of experience in high-end graphics and animation in the film industry. He has accumulated an impressive portfolio of highly reputable projects such as Furious 7, Ironman 3, Avatar, The Hobbit, Dawn of the Planet of the Apes, The Adventures of Tintin, and The A-Team. Ngaropo's invaluable knowledge and expertise have enabled NNMD to cultivate relationships with international partners, while establishing an international footprint. In 2019, he was selected for the Asian Society's Asian 21 cohort, a testament to his leadership qualities in Māori-driven creativity in international business. He was also contracted to provide Young Animators and other commercial projects from New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and Nepal to the United States and Canada.

Ngaropo has actively advocated for the use of communication technology to empower indigenous communities, while combating misinformation about its impact. In 2020, he partnered with Vodafone to debunk the dangerous misconception regarding the implementation of 5G, while simultaneously highlighting its potential advantages for New Zealand.

Ngaropo was also invited to participate in the world's first indigenous festival, Te Aratini, to showcase indigenous and tribal economies at Dubai's Expo 2020. This further demonstrates the company's commitment to international collaborations and promoting indigenous culture.

Ngaropo was first exposed to overseas markets through the T3W in 2018. After visiting tech companies in Ireland and Vietnam, Ngaropo knew that Asia would be the right place for NNMD to expand. Ireland was tempting because of its similarities to New Zealand and its location as a gateway to the European Union. However, the strength of the Vietnamese tech sector and its location in Asia made the country more enticing.

Ngaropo says, "The contrast is huge as an emerging nation presents plenty of opportunities. Every store has WIFI access. Further, Southeast Asia has a better price point fit than Europe, and Europe has already got many players."

He predicts that the Vietnamese digital workforce will significantly impact the global tech economy, with an increasing number of businesses outsourcing work to the region. Ngaropo sees shared cultural values and identities as pivotal to building relationships and Māori business success in the region. Focusing on building relationships with Vietnamese entrepreneurs and outsourcing work to the region could help expand NNMD's market reach, and more broadly Māori businesses in Southeast Asia. "In Southeast Asia, there are more opportunities, systems are in place, and the programme and people will naturally grow into these spaces," he says.

Ngaropo also believes understanding a country's culture is pivotal to engage with the market, especially in business. His business integrates creativity, culture and commerce – and culture is the first aspect that sets the scene for creativity and commerce. He believes understanding his own value proposition and how it relates to the local culture is essential for market entry to work.

Nonetheless, setting up foreign operations is by no means easy, starting with setting up a company and a bank account. It requires the assistance of networks and partners. Ngaropo is a firm believer in building networks, and he has found collaboration partners for the most part through introductions. These collaboration partners form the basis of some of the markets that are in NNMD's portfolio. NNMD also actively searches for partners once a market is identified. Face-to-face engagement is important and that is where alignment with collaboration partners is critical.

As NNMD continues to build its brand and leverage its strengths, it can attract a diverse range of clients and expand its market presence. Providing high-quality services can help develop long-term relationships with new and existing clients, while demonstrating NNMD's commitment to cultural inclusivity, respect, and bringing Māori culture to the international stage. NNMD's solid foundation and reputation present great opportunities to expand its operations. Looking forward, the company seeks to enter more markets with offices and academies.

Summaries and Analysis

What Does the Literature Review Tell Us?

The systematic literature review of empirical studies on SME internationalisation during the 2015-2023 period reveals a series of internal and external barriers that SMEs face when engaging with foreign markets. This includes the initial decision to go abroad as well as decisions around expansion to new markets. These factors can be broadly classified into internal barriers (informational, human resource, financial, and marketing) and external barriers (procedural, tariff and non-tariff, governmental, and market conditions).

The most common internal barriers experienced by SMEs globally relate to:

- a lack of – or lack of access to – international market knowledge
- a lack of – or lack of access to – skilled personnel who possess 'know-how' of export operations and cross-cultural understanding
- a lack of – or lack of access to – financing for market expansion
- product adaptation challenges in foreign markets
- price competitiveness
- supply chain issues such as logistics and high delivery costs
- the inability to locate reliable foreign collaborators and distributors

As for external barriers, SMEs around the globe were reported to face similar negative effects of restrictive tariffs and non-tariff barriers on exporting and internationalisation. Other external barriers include:

- strong competition in foreign markets
- high costs and risks of doing business overseas relating to customs administration
- cross-border dispute resolution
- compliance with overseas regulation
- inspections, inadequate government assistance, and concerns over collecting payments overseas

More specifically, many SMEs in the ASEAN region have an inability to contact potential customers, difficulty building overseas network relationships, limited information and communication technology (ICT), and an inferior country-of-origin image. Specific external barriers that impede export engagement of SMEs in ASEAN countries include the inability to meet product and service standards in foreign markets (e.g., health, safety, and technical requirements), challenges in resolving cross-border disputes, unequal treatment in foreign markets, and political instability in target markets.

For Australian SMEs, geographic location was identified as a barrier affecting access to sources of supply, human resources, and business networks. Australian SMEs find it challenging to adapt their promotional materials to foreign markets. Building foreign connections is another specific internal export barrier faced by Australian SMEs. In a specific case of Australian businesses operating in China, government policies on trade and regulations on foreign direct investment were identified as an external export barrier. However, the export assistance programme in Australia has also been raised as an exemplary model of government assistance programmes.

Compared with SMEs in ASEAN and Australia, New Zealand SMEs face specific internal export barriers including:

- a lack of – or lack of access to – knowledge and familiarity with foreign laws and export procedures
- the liability of newness (low profiles and reputation levels due to being not known in the target countries)
- the liability of smallness (small size with correspondingly few resources)
- a lack of R&D investment
- a lack of time for attention on international markets
- the ‘tyranny of distance’ (i.e., the effect of physical location on sourcing and shipping products)
- interest rate volatility and infrastructure issues (e.g., suitable transport facilities)

What Do the Case Studies Say?

The six case studies also provide a good mix of learnings.

Quality growth, astute market assessment and the value of local partnerships

Homage's inception in Singapore was driven by the market needs of the ageing population by providing matched healthcare services from caregivers and healthcare professionals. Its business model is basically a subscription-based platform for pairing. The subscription model allows the company to monitor the integrity of the service providers and its customers, as well as to provide the best services possible. Similar demographics in Malaysia have led Homage to enter that market. It further entered the Australian market with the help of Austrade due to a shortage of healthcare service providers there. The company uses partnerships with hospitals and healthcare providers in these markets. Homage's international market selection was based on cost, growth, and demand. In its growth journey, the company also finds itself providing training to caregivers and healthcare professionals to maintain quality supply so that it can continue providing quality services to clients. Due to the basic-needs nature of the business, Homage has been able to raise substantial funding from various sources for further investments.

Customised approach to sales and distribution channels

NTKMADE houses three brands that offer products and creative design services that are based on Māori culture. Its primary focus is on clothing and accessories. The three brands use different models to engage with customers. One of the brands is subscription-based, allowing priority services and access for customers. The second is promoted through fashion shows for high-end customers, while the third is largely online. The founder has relied on manufacturing expos and fashion shows as ways to create more brand awareness. She extracts information from her own research and other insights available. Referrals are a major part of getting access to the required knowledge and potential partners. NTKMADE has been actively looking for engagements internationally and has faced challenges in some Asian markets such as China, South Korea and Thailand. Its plan to establish in Australia has also been deemed not viable.

Carve a product niche, and utilising (co-)branding partnerships

Fable Food's mushroom-based alternative meat is pitched to consumers who are looking for a reduction in meat consumption but not leaning toward becoming vegetarian or vegan. A key emphasis of the offering is to ensure that consumers do not lose the taste of meat while consuming its products. Since its inception, international expansion has been on the mind of its founder. Due to its focus on innovation, sustainability and taste, Fable Food has been able to attract funding for its new product development and international expansion. The company has been using customer insights and research that it can access to understand consumer needs. On the marketing side, it relies on celebrity chefs to promote the concept of using mushrooms as an alternative, and it establishes partnerships with restaurants to promote its products. On top of these, multiple channels and distribution partnerships have been used to maximise outreach. Market choices are largely dependent on the extent to which awareness of alternative meat exists or is able to be generated.

Set up operations overseas to access (human) resources

CodeHQ runs a cross-border operation between New Zealand and Vietnam that focuses on providing digital solutions. Internationalisation was always needed, as New Zealand could not provide enough affordable talent to service demands. Singapore and Malaysia were also considered before CodeHQ decided to establish a base in Vietnam. While the similarity in legal systems would have placed Singapore and Malaysia as primary options, the cost was pivotal in the decision to locate in Vietnam. While setting up its base in Vietnam, the founder found having a network fundamental to address issues such as regulation, legal advice and cultural challenges. Frequent and rapid changes in the Vietnam market mean CodeHQ has to constantly evolve with changes in local market conditions and regulations, and having a presence there helps in that regard.

Localised innovation for regulatory compliance and alignment with consumer preferences

IRVINS Salted Egg has a strong base in Singapore, moving from a brick-and-mortar restaurant to the current business model of selling online and in supermarkets and convenience stores. Its expansion is drastic and within a span of 8 years, it has grown to do business in 26 markets. The company recognises the importance of having the right capabilities for its R&D and manufacturing processes, and hence its key operations remain in Singapore, despite being a relatively more expensive location. IRVINS has faced significant challenges in entering markets due to ingredients, most notably in the US. This led to new product innovations that allowed subsequent entrance into the market. Localised innovation is sometimes needed just to enter a market, be it for regulatory requirements or cultural alignment. Counterfeiting has also led the company to leave the Tmall Global platform. The need for SMEs to build a brand could mean that a company needs to pay attention to the risks associated with counterfeits.

Cultural alignment of products and services

NNMD prides its products and services on cultural elements, which lead to creativity and commerce. Its first exposure to international markets was in the aftermath of trade trips to Ireland and Vietnam, which gave the founder the opportunity to consider Europe or Asia as potential markets for his products and services. Given the extent of digitalisation and the younger population, Vietnam was selected to be the company's first engagement abroad. In Asia, the company has had exposure to various projects in Singapore, Thailand and Nepal. As with many SMEs, networks, referrals and partnerships are at the centre of NNMD's strategy. The founder believes that setting up a foreign operation requires significant help from local networks. It is also important for the company to articulate its unique value propositions and to be able to understand the local culture in order to engage.

Findings from a Trade Survey in 2022

In August 2022, a trade survey was conducted by New Zealand's Chambers of Commerce in the ASEAN region, working as part of the NZ ASEAN Business Alliance hub, and in conjunction with the ASEAN NZ Business Council, supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Southeast Asia Centre of Asia-Pacific Excellence.

The survey had 71 responses, with the majority coming from New Zealand (21) and Malaysia (21), followed by Singapore (9) and Thailand (9). Respondents were largely SMEs, and half were New Zealand wholly-owned, while 27% did not have New Zealand ownership.

Fifty-two percent of the respondents highlighted that access to skilled labour is a major challenge in local markets. This issue is prevalent in Singapore and New Zealand. Bureaucracy was also raised by 48% of respondents, with Indonesia and Thailand highlighted as challenging markets. Of the potential markets for expansion, Vietnam (44% of respondents), Singapore (39%), Indonesia (34%) and Thailand (30%) were the major targets.

When respondents were asked whether they had used the AANZFTA, 56% responded 'no'. Of these responders, 14% were not aware of the agreement, and a further 27% suggested that their companies did not need to use the AANZFTA. Forty-eight of the 71 companies used other FTAs such as the CPTPP, RCEP, NZ-Malaysia FTA, NZ-Thailand FTA and NZ-Singapore CEP.

The survey also asked respondents what changes to New Zealand's FTAs with ASEAN trading partners would help greater FTA usage by Kiwi businesses. A primary suggestion was building awareness, including better visibility of business facilitation services available for New Zealand companies wishing to expand into ASEAN and education on how to use FTAs. Networking opportunities and extending to local market connections were also suggested. Any help with custom regulations will be useful as well, including improving supply chain efficiency through process simplifications. Removal or minimisation of NTBs such as harmonisation of standards, and labour and services flow, would be great. Finally, there are calls for expanding FTAs to include more liberalisation of services and the reduction of application of de facto local-preference policies.

Validation

Various mechanisms were set up to validate the above observations from the literature review, case studies and trade survey. The following stakeholders (not exhaustive) were involved as part of the conversations around barriers to export and internationalisation:

1. Business Central NZ (to which the lead investigator is also a board member)
2. Wellington Chamber of Commerce (to which the lead investigator is also a board member)
3. ExportNZ Hawke's Bay
4. Manawatu Chamber of Commerce and Manawatu Young Chamber
5. New Zealand Trade and Enterprise
6. Malaysia NZ Chamber of Commerce (based in Malaysia)
7. NZ Thai Chamber of Commerce (based in Thailand)
8. NZ ASEAN Business Alliance (a group consisting of six Chambers of Commerce in the ASEAN region)
9. ASEAN NZ Business Council (to which the lead investigator is also an executive board member)
10. Businesses participating in Southeast Asia Centre of Asia-Pacific Excellence (SEA CAPE) workshops and events
11. Stakeholders of SEA CAPE and Chair in Business in Asia (a Professorial Chair role to which the lead investigator currently holds) who are engaged in international business and trade
12. Foreign missions in New Zealand, such as Singapore, Japan and Australia

Recommendations

This section provides recommendations for actions to help SMEs based on the outcomes from this research investigation. The recommendations are classified into two categories: (1) actions that can be undertaken in New Zealand; and (2) actions that need facilitation in a host market. Within these categories, the actions are further segregated into (A) short-term actions that can be taken immediately; and (B) actions that can only be taken in the medium- to long-term. Note that we did not propose actions that can only be taken in the medium- to long-term in the host markets as we expect these markets to evolve quickly for us to consider a plan of action now for the longer-term.

Actions in New Zealand

Short-term, Immediate Actions

1. Through public-private partnerships, the New Zealand government can reach out to businesses with more information about both FTAs and international (including ASEAN and Australia) markets. While this has been done on an ad hoc basis by various councils, chambers and other entities, some support can be better serviced with the help of New Zealand government agencies. It also allows a feedback loop, e.g. through regular dialogues, back to the New Zealand government for its negotiations with foreign countries.

2. More collateral could be considered for wider distribution. The lack of time and attention span of SMEs, plus the complexity of navigating websites, can mean that SMEs are not really accessing existing collateral and informational materials that are made available by the New Zealand government. More outreach can be done via social media.

3. More education could focus on the markets that New Zealand has prioritised. Most of the SMEs that we interact with tend to come from the supply-side perspective (i.e., ‘we have a good product (service)’), while very little is considered around the demand-side. Many are not exposed to adequate overseas markets to make an informed decision to export or internationalise. This can be done via collateral – NZTE has some but more and deeper-content are also needed. New Zealand businesses also need to be exposed to various modes of market entry. As can be seen from our case studies, there are innovative ways to engage rather than only through direct export.

4. New Zealand is one of the signatories to the Anti Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA). The agreement was signed in 2011, but still not yet in force. Nonetheless, some of our findings suggest the need for intellectual property protection of New Zealand SME products and services. Generating awareness of the intellectual property rights in host markets should be part and parcel of collateral relating to foreign markets.

Medium- to Long-term Actions

5. Many SMEs suffer from the liability of smallness. Critical mass, for even small things like filling a container load for shipping, is not there. Coalitions of non-traditional sectors should be considered and facilitated to allow a critical mass to enhance the ability of SMEs to engage with foreign markets.

6. Access to skilled personnel for international market engagement is a major barrier identified by SMEs globally. The COVID-19 pandemic has only made this worse. The fundamental knowledge of international markets is not normally included in the curriculum of New Zealand's education system. Cultural and language training are also limited in supply in New Zealand. Greater exposure to culture is needed for businesses, and this should include the training of individuals that businesses can employ. To enhance SME growth, it is imperative to make sure the New Zealand government provides support to cultural and language training at the 'survival' level to allow foreign engagements to happen.
7. Consideration should be given to widen the New Zealand Inc. brand name to include non-traditional sectors that are not part the largest trading sectors for New Zealand. Our findings suggest that there are lots of SMEs within New Zealand that do export and internationalise, but some of them are not being helped by the fact that the New Zealand Inc. brand does not really speak to those sectors.
8. By and large, New Zealand SMEs do not know where and how to source external financing and grants. Many of them have become foreign-owned in order to achieve that exposure to external funding opportunities. Banks are the key suppliers in this area. There is room for platforms that New Zealand SMEs can use to access external funding.

Actions in Host Markets, Especially ASEAN and Australia

Short-term, Immediate Actions

9. While we are not recommending any government assistance programme like Australia offers, it would be worthwhile to consider more trade mission opportunities for SMEs. Some New Zealand agencies provide assistance to businesses going abroad, and this support could be enhanced. Some of our case studies have also alerted us to the importance of trade visits and how it presents opportunities for SMEs.
10. A wider net should be considered for assistance in looking for local distributors and collaborators. These are a major challenge for SMEs globally. SMEs tend to rely on their own networks for such access. The government should consider assistance in creating pools of companies for building networks, all of which have been assessed for quality. This could be a platform, similar to the one that Homage, one of our case studies, has utilised.
11. Our findings have clearly alerted to ways to which New Zealand SMEs can engage in foreign markets through establishing a foothold, such as an office or partnership. In fact, in our conversations, certain presence is becoming sine qua non, as expectations of foreign customers and consumers have risen in recent years. There is also a trend of more countries expecting local content requirements that deemed it necessary for New Zealand SMEs to have a presence in the host market. More facilitation will be needed from the New Zealand government agencies to allow a smoother transition to this. Many of New Zealand's SMEs find setting up a foreign presence a major challenge.
12. Customs paperwork and other export/import procedures are a major barrier to trade. Even when there is an FTA, other administrative and bureaucratic hurdles need to be overcome before an FTA can be effective. This might be related to the World Bank's Doing Business Index, which was discontinued in 2020. While the World Bank is working on its new index, we can reflect that in the last ranking of the old index, New Zealand was ranked number 1, Australia (14), Singapore (2), Malaysia (12) and Thailand (21). But other major ASEAN economies such as Vietnam (70), Indonesia (73) and the Philippines (95) ranked much lower. The New Zealand government needs to continue to work with these various ASEAN governments to reduce the challenges for SMEs in navigating their import systems.

Reference List

AARP International (2019). Singapore. https://www.aarpinternational.org/initiatives/aging-readiness-competitiveness-arc/singapore

Agan, Y., & Erdogan, E. (2016). The Perception of Export Barriers by Turkish Manufacturing Firms/ Imalat Firmalarinin Ihracat Engelleri Algisi Üzerine Bir Çalisma. Finans Politik & Ekonomik Yorumlar, 53(614), 69–.

Ahimbisibwe, G. M., Ntayi, J. M., Ngoma, M., Bakunda, G., & Kabagambe, L. B. (2020). The internationalization of small to medium-sized enterprises: do all levels in international networking matter? Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 27(5), 817–837. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-09-2019-0313

Ahmed, Z. U., Julian, C. C., & Jumaat Mahajar, A. (2008). Export Barriers and Firm Internationalisation from an Emerging Market Perspective. Journal of Asia Business Studies, 3(1), 33–41. https://doi.org/10.1108/15587890880000489

Ashby-Coventry, E., Sommerville, T., & Fotheringham, C. (2020). "Māori businesses innovating to meet the challenges of Covid". The Stuff. https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/prosper/122629694/mori-businesses-innovating-to-meet-the-challenges-of-covid

Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (n.d.) https://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/about-ftas/about-free-trade-agreements#:~:text=Australia%20has%2017%20FTAs%20with,new%20bilateral%20and%20regional%20FTAs.

Ayob, A. H., Ramlee, S., & Abdul Rahman, A. (2015). Financial factors and export behavior of small and medium-sized enterprises in an emerging economy. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 13(1), 49–66. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-014-0141-5

Basah, N. H., Ng, S.-I., Ho, J.-A., & Yusof, R. N. R. (2021). Cultural Similarity Effect on the Relationship Quality between Exporters and Intermediaries and Export Performance of SMEs. International Journal of Business and Society, 21(1), 399–418. https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.3260.2020

Battisti, M., Jurado, T., & Perry, M. (2014). Understanding small-firm reactions to free trade agreements: Qualitative evidence from New Zealand. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 21(2), 327–344. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-10-2013-0151

Bierneza, A. (2017). "Homage is Singapore's 'Uber for in-home care'". Singapore Business Review. https://sbr.com.sg/media-marketing/exclusive/homage-singapores-uber-in-home-care

Boscor, D. (2017). Barriers faced by Romanian SMEs in exporting. Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brașov. Series V, Economic Science, 10(59), 203–208.

Calia (2021). "The story of Irvins salted egg snacks". Calia. https://calia.co/blogs/news/the-story-of-irvins-salted-egg-snacks

Casey, S. R., & Hamilton, R. T. (2014). Export performance of small firms from small countries: The case of New Zealand. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 12(3), 254–269. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-014-0126-4

Celec, R., & Globocnik, D. (2017). Benchmarking Firm-level Resources, Capabilities, and Postures Driving Export Performance of SMEs. Nase Gospodarstvo (English)., 63(1), 47–58. https://doi.org/10.1515/ngoe-2017-0005

Chandra, A., Paul, J., & Chavan, M. (2020). Internationalization barriers of SMEs from developing countries: a review and research agenda. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour & Research, 26(6), 1281–1310. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-03-2020-0167

Charoensukmongkol, P. (2015). Cultural intelligence of entrepreneurs and international network ties: The case of small and medium manufacturing firms in Thailand. Management Research Review, 38(4), 421–436. https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-09-2013-0214

Cheng, D., Tan, Y., & Yu, J. (2021). Credit rationing and firm exports: Microeconomic evidence from small and medium-sized enterprises in China. World Economy, 44(1), 286–311. https://doi.org/10.1111/twec.12913

Civelek, M., & Krajčík, V. (2022). How do SMEs from different countries perceive export impediments depending on their firm-level characteristics? System approach. Oeconomia Copernicana, 13(1), 55–78. https://doi.org/10.24136/oc.2022.002

Civelek, M., Polách, J., Švihlíková, I., & Paták, M. (2022). International Differences in the Perceptions of Export Obstacles By SMEs in the Same Firm-Level Characteristics: Evidence from European Countries. Folia Oeconomica Stetinensia, 22(1), 18–45. https://doi.org/10.2478/foli-2022-0002

Costa, E., Lucas Soares, A., & Pinho de Sousa, J. (2017). Institutional networks for supporting the internationalisation of SMEs: the case of industrial business associations. The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 32(8), 1182–1202. https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-03-2017-0067

Day, S. (2022). “Home screen: Managing the power and pressure of personal tech”. The Spinoff. https://thespinoff.co.nz/partner/16-02-2022/home-screen-managing-the-power-and-pressure-of-personal-tech

Eid, R., Abdelmoety, Z., & Agag, G. (2019). Antecedents and consequences of social media marketing use: an empirical study of the UK exporting B2B SMEs. The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 35(2), 284–305. https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-04-2018-0121

Entrepreneur (2022). “How these food entrepreneurs went from barely staying afloat to having hour-long lines”. Entrepreneur. https://www.entrepreneur.com/leadership/how-these-food-entrepreneurs-went-from-barely-staying/428972

Faruk, O., & Subudhi, R. N. (2019). Export Performance of SMEs:A Review of Firm-Level Controllable Determinants. Parikalpana : KIIT Journal of Management, 15(1&2), 112–126. https://doi.org/10.23862/kiit-parikalpana/2019/v15/i1-2/190177

FedEx (2023). “The Singaporean start-up transforming holistic homecare”. FedEx Business Insights. https://fedexbusinessinsights.com/the-singaporean-start-up-transforming-holistic-homecare/

Ferris, L. (2022). “How Irvins pivoted from a humble restaurant to a pioneering snack brand – Founder Q&A”. Foundr. https://foundr.com/articles/building-a-business/how-irvins-pivoted-from-a-humble-restaurant-to-a-pioneering-snack-brand-founder-qa

Fil, V. (2020). “Australia’s Fable Foods, a good news story”. Vegconomist. https://vegconomist.com/food-and-beverage/australias-fable-foods-a-good-news-story/

Freeman, J., & Styles, C. (2014). Does location matter to export performance? International Marketing Review, 31(2), 181–208. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-02-2013-0039

Freeman, J., Styles, C., & Lawley, M. (2012). Does firm location make a difference to the export performance of SMEs? International Marketing Review, 29(1), 88–113. https://doi.org/10.1108/02651331211201552

Future Food Systems (2021). "The rise and rise of Fable Food Co: Michael Fox talks business". Future Food Systems. https://www.futurefoodsystems.com.au/the-non-fiction-fable-of-fable-food-co/

Gerschewski, S., Scott-Kennel, J., & Rose, E. L. (2020). Ready to export? The role of export readiness for superior export performance of small and medium-sized enterprises. World Economy, 43(5), 1253–1276. https://doi.org/10.1111/twec.12928

Glasgow, D. D., & Hosein, R. (2018). Non-tariff Barriers to Trade: What Does the Experience of Guyanese Exporters of Food and Agriculture Products Reveal? The Estey Centre Journal of International Law and Trade Policy, 19(1), 55–74.

Goh, C.T. (2022). "CEO of Singapore's multi-million-dollar homecare start-up shares top tips for success". CNBC.com. https://www.cnbc.com/2022/10/17/ceo-of-singapore-healthcare-startup-homage-shares-top-tips-for-success.html

Haddoud, M. Y., Jones, P., & Newbery, R. (2017). Export promotion programmes and SMEs' performance: Exploring the network promotion role. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 24(1), 68–87. https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-07-2016-0116

Haddoud, M. Y., Onjewu, A.-K., Jones, P., & Newbery, R. (2018). Investigating the moderating role of Export Promotion Programmes using evidence from North-Africa. Critical Perspectives on International Business, 14(2/3), 282–308. https://doi.org/10.1108/cpoib-11-2016-0059

Haimona-Riki (2019). "First Māori inducted into prestigious international leadership programme". Te Ao Māori News. https://www.teaomaori.news/first-maori-inducted-prestigious-international-leadership-programme

Hamilton-Hart, N. (2019). "Augen Software Group: Building a kiwi tech company in Vietnam". Southeast Asia Centre of Asia-Pacific Excellence. https://cape.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/SEACAPE_AUGEN-SOFTWARE-BOOKLET_02.pdf

Hashim, F. (2015). SMEs' impediments and developments in the internationalization process: Malaysian experiences. World Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development, 11(2), 100–119. https://doi.org/10.1108/WJEMSD-11-2013-0055

Hilotin, J. (2019). "Irvins: The fast-rising rock star of salted egg chips". Gulf News. https://gulfnews.com/business/retail/irvins-the-fast-rising-rock-star-of-salted-egg-chips-1.1572296739228

Hospital Health (2022). "Homage appoints new country head to expand home-based care". Hospital Health. https://www.hospitalhealth.com.au/content/agedhealth/news/homage-appoints-new-country-head-to-expand-home-based-care-995717230

How, M. (2019). "How Irvins S'pore went from selling salted egg yolk crab to regional snack empire". Mothership. https://mothership.sg/2019/01/irvins-singapore-origins/

Huiwei, N. (2019). "Irvins Salted Egg apologises for dead lizard found in fish skin snack packet, offers refunds". The Straits Times. https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/irvins-salted-egg-apologises-for-dead-lizard-found-in-fish-skin-snack-packet-offers

InternetNZ (2020). "From NetHui: Digital Wings Rangatahi workshops". InternetNZ. https://internetnz.nz/news-and-articles/from-nethui-digital-wings-rangatahi-workshops/

Isac, N., & Badshah, W. (2020). Barriers and Ways to Achieve Business Growth of the Exports for SMEs. Romanian Economic and Business Review, 15(1), 7-15. https://go.openathens.net/redirector/wgtn.ac.nz?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/barriers-ways-achieve-business-growth-exports/docview/2430113727/se-2

Ismail, M. D., & Isa, M. A. M. (2021). Export Performance of SMEs in Emerging Markets: The Role of Market Orientation, Learning and Trust. The South East Asian Journal of Management, 15(1), 112–128. https://doi.org/10.21002/seam.v15i1.13072

Ismail, N. A., & Kuivalainen, O. (2015). The effect of internal capabilities and external environment on small- and medium-sized enterprises' international performance and the role of the foreign market scope: The case of the Malaysian halal food industry. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 13(4), 418–451. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-015-0160-x

Jovović, M., Femić-Radosavović, B., & Đurašković, J. (2017). Challenges of Internationalisation of Small and Medium Enterprises in Montenegro. Journal of Advanced Research in Management, 8(1), 51-60.

Julian, C. C., & Ahmed, Z. U. (2005). The Impact of Barriers to Export on Export Marketing Performance. Journal of Global Marketing, 19(1), 71–94. https://doi.org/10.1300/J042v19n01_05

Kahiya, E. T. (2013). Export barriers and path to internationalization: A comparison of conventional enterprises and international new ventures. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 11(1), 3–29. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-013-0102-4

Kahiya, E. T. (2017). Export barriers as liabilities: near perfect substitutes. European Business Review, 29(1), 61–102. https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-12-2015-0160

Kahiya, E. T., & Dean, D. L. (2015). Export barriers and business confidence: a quasi-longitudinal examination. Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 27(2), 294–323. https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-02-2014-0032

Kahiya, E. T., & Dean, D. L. (2016). Export Stages and Export Barriers: Revisiting Traditional Export Development. Thunderbird International Business Review, 58(1), 75–89. https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.21741

Kahiya, E. T., & L. Dean, D. (2014). Export performance: multiple predictors and multiple measures approach. Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 26(3), 378–407. https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-11-2012-0119

Kahiya, E. T., Dean, D. L., & Heyl, J. (2014). Export barriers in a changing institutional environment: A quasi-longitudinal study of New Zealand's manufacturing exporters. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 12(4), 331–364. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-014-0131-7

Kang, J. (2022). "New technology for old age: Singapore caregiving platform Homage hustles to keep up with demand for care as Asia ages". Forbes. https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnkang/2022/11/08/new-technology-for-old-age-singapore-caregiving-platform-homage-hustles-to-keep-up-with-demand-for-care-as-asia-ages/?sh=af24229ff29d

Kaprálová, B. (2017). Export barriers in Latin America according to Czech companies. Scientific Papers of the University of Pardubice. Series D. Faculty of Economics and Administration, 41.

Karedza, G., & Govender, K. K. (2017). Enhancing the Export Performance of the SMEs in the Manufacturing Sector in Zimbabwe. Academy of Marketing Studies Journal, 21(2), 1–19.

Kim, S. (2017). Factors Affecting the Internationalization of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises in South Korea: Entrepreneurial Orientation, Human Capital and Technological Capabilities. International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues, 7(5), 371–379.

Ključnikov, A., Civelek, M., Krajčík, V., Novák, P., & Červinka, M. (2022). Financial performance and bankruptcy concerns of SMEs in their export decision. Oeconomia Copernicana, 13(3), 867–890. https://doi.org/10.24136/oc.2022.025

Lee, D. (2019). "Irvins winning recipe for surviving a PR crisis". Medium. https://medium.com/@betterdanthis/irvins-winning-recipe-for-surviving-a-pr-crisis-f70be3148cbf

Lee, H.L. (2023). "PM Lee Hsien Loong at the 'Singapore ageing: issues and challenges ahead' book launch". Prime Minister's Office Singapore. https://www.pmo.gov.sg/Newsroom/PM-Lee-Hsien-Loong-at-the-Singapore-Ageing-Issues-and-Challenges-Ahead-Book-Launch

Lewis, G., Garden, S., Shafiee, H., Simmons, G., & Smith, J. (2021). "Frontier firm: Four industry case studies [Working paper No. 2021/02]". New Zealand Productivity Commission. https://www.productivity.govt.nz/inquiries/frontier-firms/

Majidli, F. (2020). Problems Encountered by SMEs in Export Activities. Economic and Social Development: Book of Proceedings, 4, 630–636.

Malca, O., Peña-Vinces, J., & Acedo, F. J. (2020). Export promotion programmes as export performance catalysts for SMEs: insights from an emerging economy. Small Business Economics, 55(3), 831–851. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-019-00185-2

Martinovic, M., & Matana, E. (2017). Influence of Perceived Export Barriers on the Export Intensity of the Croatian Manufacturers. Ekonomska Misao i Praksa, 26(1), 107–128.

Mastercard Newsroom (2022). "Mastercard presents sonic trophy to Rugby World Cup 2021 Player of the Match recipients". Mastercard. https://www.mastercard.com/news/press/2022/october/mastercard-presents-sonic-trophy-to-rugby-world-cup-2021-player-of-the-match-recipients/

Mendy, J., Odunukan, K., & Rahman, M. (2021). Place and policy barriers of rural Nigeria's small and medium enterprises' internationalization. Thunderbird International Business Review, 63(4), 421–436. https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.22198

Menzies, J. L., & Orr, S. (2010). The impact of political behaviours on internationalisation: The case of Australian companies internationalising to China. Journal of Chinese Economic and Foreign Trade Studies, 3(1), 24–42. https://doi.org/10.1108/17544401011016663

Morini, C., Polis, M. C. B., Silva, D. da, & Junior, E. I. (2021). Export Barriers for SMEs from Emerging Market: A Model of Analysis for Non-Tech Companies. BAR, Brazilian Administration Review, 18(4), 1–31. https://doi.org/10.1590/1807-7692bar2021200121

Mubarik, M. S., Devadason, E. S., & Govindaraju, C. (2020). Human capital and export performance of small and medium enterprises in Pakistan. International Journal of Social Economics, 47(5), 643–662. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSE-03-2019-0198

Mueller-Using, S., Urban, W., & Wedemeier, J. (2020). Internationalization of SMEs in the Baltic Sea Region: Barriers of cross-national collaboration considering regional innovation strategies for smart specialization. Growth and Change, 51(4), 1471–1490. https://doi.org/10.1111/grow.12439

Mukherjee, S., & Chanda, R. (2021). Financing constraints and exports: Evidence from manufacturing firms in India. Empirical Economics, 61(1), 309–337. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00181-020-01865-9

Namkung, V. (2022). "The rise of the salted egg yolk". NBC News. https://www.nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/savory-buttery-flavor-asian-salted-egg-piques-americans-appetites-rcna25238

Nanyang Business School (2019). "Irvins Salted Egg's prompt apology may help brand, say experts". NTU Singapore. https://www.ntu.edu.sg/business/news-events/news/story-detail/-irvins-salted-egg's-prompt-apology-may-help-brand-say-experts

Narayanan, V. (2015). Export Barriers for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises: A Literature Review based on Leonidou's Model. Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review, 3(2), 105–123. https://doi.org/10.15678/EBER.2015.030208

Neo, P. (2021). "Make some shroom: Australia's Fable Food planning international expansion and extensive plant-based NPD". Food Navigator Asia. https://www.foodnavigator-asia.com/Article/2021/09/15/Make-some-shroom-Australia-s-Fable-Food-planning-international-expansion-and-extensive-plant-based-NPD#

New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (n.d.) https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/trade/free-trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements-in-force/

New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries. https://www.mpi.govt.nz/bring-send-to-nz/bringing-and-posting-items-to-nz/check-if-you-can-bring-or-send-an-item-to-nz/bringing-food-to-nz/bringing-fish-seafood-and-honey-to-nz/#fish-skin

Ng, H. (2019). "Irvins Salted Egg apologises for dead lizard found in fish skin snack packet, offers refunds". The Straits Times. https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/irvins-salted-egg-apologises-for-dead-lizard-found-in-fish-skin-snack-packet-offers

Ngo-Thi-Ngoc, H., & Nguyen-Viet, B. (2021). Export performance: Evidence from agricultural product firms in Vietnam. Cogent Business & Management, 8(1). https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2020.1861729

Nguyen, A. N., Pham, N. Q., Nguyen, C. D., & Nguyen, N. D. (2008). Innovation and exports in Vietnam's SME sector. European Journal of Development Research, 20(2), 262–280. https://doi.org/10.1080/09578810802060801

Nikmah, F., Sukma, E. A., Suwarni, E., & Rahmawati, R. (2022). Networking capability as an effort for SMEs to internationalize. International Journal of Research In Business and Social Science, 11(5), 149–154. https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i5.1879

Njinyah, S. Z. (2018). The effectiveness of government policies for export promotion on the export performance of SMEs Cocoa exporters in Cameroon. International Marketing Review, 35(1), 164–185. https://doi.org/10.1108/IMR-05-2016-0103

NTKMADE (2023). NTKMADE Business Continuity Plan.

NTKMADE (2023). NTKMADE Business Plan 2023-2024.

NZ Business (2021). "One team, two markets". NZ Business. https://nzbusiness.co.nz/article/one-team-two-markets

Ogg, M. (2022). "How Fable Food Co-founder Michael Fox tricked himself back into business after failed venture". Business News Australia. https://www.businessnewsaustralia.com/articles/how-fable-food-co-founder-michael-fox-tricked-himself-back-into-business-after-failed-venture.html

Patterson, P. G. (2004). A Study of Perceptions Regarding Service Firms' Attitudes Towards Exporting. Australasian Marketing Journal, 12(2), 19–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1441-3582(04)70095-6

Pavlák, M. (2018). Barriers to the Internationalization of Czech SMEs. European Research Studies, XXI(Issue 2), 453–462. https://doi.org/10.35808/ersj/1014

Pellicanò, A., & De Luca, A. I. (2016). Dynamics, motivations and barriers in internationalisation processes of wineries in Calabria. Journal of Wine Research, 27(4), 257–283. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571264.2016.1204274

Pham, M., & Vile, P. (2023). "CodeHQ – Why innovation matters". Kea New Zealand. https://keanewzealand.com/codehq-a-case-study-in-innovation/

Puthusserry, P., Khan, Z., Nair, S. R., & King, T. (2021). Mitigating Psychic Distance and Enhancing Internationalization of Fintech SMEs from Emerging Markets: The Role of Board of Directors. British Journal of Management, 32(4), 1097–1120. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8551.12502

Ramaseshan, B., & Soutar, G. N. (1995). Export Barriers in the Western Australian Horticulture Industry. Journal of International Food & Agribusiness Marketing, 6(4), 53–70. https://doi.org/10.1300/J047v06n04_04

Ramaseshan, B., & Soutar, G. N. (1996). Combined effects of incentives and barriers on firms' export decisions. International Business Review, 5(1), 53–65. https://doi.org/10.1016/0969-5931(95)00032-1

Revindo, M. D., Gan, C., & Massie, N. W. G. (2019). Factors affecting propensity to export: The case of Indonesian SMEs. Gadjah Mada International Journal of Business, 21(3), 263–288. https://doi.org/10.22146/gamaijb.41022

Richardson, C. J. R. (2011). Perception of Export Barriers in a High-Tech Sector in a Less Developed Country: The Case of ICT SMEs in Malaysia. The South East Asian Journal of Management, 5(2), 91–105. https://doi.org/10.21002/seam.v5i2.1007

Rose, B. (2023). "How to rebrand: The story of Augen to CodeHQ", Marketing Association. https://marketing.org.nz/resource-hub/brand/how-to-rebrand-story-of-codehq

Roy, A., Sekhar, C., & Vyas, V. (2016). Barriers to internationalization: A study of small and medium enterprises in India. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 14(4), 513–538. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-016-0187-7

Rubino, M., Vitolla, F., & Garzoni, A. (2017). How network managers influence the export intensity: evidence from Italy. The Journal of Management Development, 36(10), 1317–1331. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-04-2017-0100

Scoop Media (2019). "Avatar and Tintin creator first Māori Asia Society Leader". Scoop.co.nz. https://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/CU1911/S00056/avatar-and-tintin-creator-first-maori-asia-society-leader.htm

Shaw, V., & Darroch, J. (2004). Barriers to Internationalisation: A Study of Entrepreneurial New Ventures in New Zealand. Journal of International Entrepreneurship, 2(4), 327–343. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10843-004-0146-6

Shooshtari, N. H., Manuel, T., & Reece, J. (2017). Continuing Challenges to Entry And Participation in International Markets by Northwestern U.S. Small and Midsized Enterprises. Journal of International Business Disciplines, 11(3), 38-57.

Shoup, M.E. (2022). "IRVINS salted egg chips gains steam in US: 'Asian snack aisles are one of the highest-growing segments'". Food Navigator USA. https://www.foodnavigator-usa.com/Article/2022/10/11/IRVINS-salted-egg-chips-gains-steam-in-US-Asian-snack-aisles-are-one-of-the-highest-growing-segments

Sibiya, V., & Kele, T. (2019). Barriers and Public Policies Impeding SMEs' International Market Expansion: A South African Perspective. International Journal of Entrepreneurship, 23(1), 1–19.

Silva, P. M., Moutinho, V. F., & Teixeira Vale, V. (2022). A new approach of innovation and network on export in trade fair context: evidence from Portuguese SMEs. The Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing, 37(3), 509–528. https://doi.org/10.1108/JBIM-07-2020-0351

Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry (n.d.) https://www.mti.gov.sg/Trade/Free-Trade-Agreements#:~:text=Over%20the%20years%2C%20Singapore%20has,network%20of%2027%20implemented%20agreements.

Singh, N., Munjal, S., Kundu, S., & Rangarajan, K. (2023). Platform-Based Internationalization of Smaller Firms: The Role of Government Policy. Management International Review, 63(1), 91–115. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11575-022-00492-z

Sithamparam, A., Devadason, E. S., & Chenayah, S. (2017). Stringency of Non-Tariff Measures in Partner Countries: Perceptions of Malaysian Exporters. Malaysian Journal of Economic Studies, 54(1), 1–22. https://doi.org/10.22452/MJES.vol54no1.1

Skantzos, K. (2020). "Aussie plant-based start-up Fable launches ready meals in Woolworths". News.com.au. https://www.news.com.au/finance/small-business/aussie-plantbased-startup-fable-launches-ready-meals-in-woolworths/news-story/e678fa23998af0b324726089f15b87fc

Starkey, E. (2019). "A new plant-based meat has hit the market and it's backed by Heston Blumenthal". Delicious.com.au. https://www.delicious.com.au/eat-out/latest-news/article/australian-start-up-fable-food-co-launch-plant-based-meat-made-mushrooms/9sv546ln

Stephenson, J. (2019). "Firm dynamics and job creation: Revisiting the perpetual motion machine [NZPC Research Note]". New Zealand Productivity Commission. https://www.productivity.govt.nz/assets/Research/e756f591db/Firm-dynamics-and-job-creation-Final-31-Jan-2019.pdf

Tan, A. (2017). "Paying Homage to the elderly in Singapore". The Business Times. https://www.businesstimes.com.sg/companies-markets/paying-homage-elderly-singapore

Tan, A., Brewer, P., & Liesch, P. (2018). Rigidity in SME export commencement decisions. International Business Review, 27(1), 46–55. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2017.05.002

Teng, A. (2023). "More help for aspiring parents as Singapore's total fertility rate hits record low". The Straits Times. https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/politics/s-pore-s-total-fertility-rate-hit-record-low-in-2022-govt-to-help-aspiring-parents-indranee-rajah

Theingi, & Purchase, S. (2011). How Exporters' and Intermediaries' Resources Influence Export Performance. Australasian Marketing Journal, 19(2), 100–107. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ausmj.2011.03.002

Thomsen, S. (2023). "Osher Gunsberg & ethicist Peter Singer back mushroom 'meat' startup Fable Food Co in $12.3 million Series A". StartupDaily. https://www.startupdaily.net/topic/funding/osher-gunsberg-ethicist-peter-singer-back-mushroom-meat-startup-fable-food-co-in-12-3-million-series-a/

Tyson, J. (2020). "Nichola Te Kiri chosen to design new staff wardrobe at Auckland Museum". Te Ao Māori News. https://www.teaomaori.news/nichola-te-kiri-chosen-design-new-staff-wardrobe-auckland-museum

Virglerova, Z., Ivanova, E., Dvorsky, J., Belas, J., & Krulický, T. (2021). Selected factors of internationalisation and their impact on the SME perception of the market risk. Oeconomia Copernicana, 12(4), 1011–1032. https://doi.org/10.24136/oc.2021.033

Williams, S. (2015). "Augen's NZ-Vietnam model recognised at Vietnam's IT Excellence Awards". ITBrief. https://itbrief.co.nz/story/augens-nz-vietnam-model-recognised-vietnams-it-excellence-awards

Yehualashet Demeke Lakew, & GE Chiloane-Tsoka. (2015). Internationalisation Barriers of Small and Medium-sized Manufacturing Enterprises in Ethiopia: Leather and Leather Products Industry in Focus. International Journal of Business & Economic Development, 3(3), 68–80.

York, W. (2021). "Fable Food Co comes to the table". AusBiz. https://ausbizmedia.com/fable-food-co/

Yun, J. (2022). "Money for mushrooms: Fable Food closes in on third fundraising round". Sydney Morning Herald. https://www.smh.com.au/business/entrepreneurship/money-for-mushrooms-fable-food-closes-in-on-third-fundraising-round-20220517-p5am43.html

Yun, J. (2023). "Osher Gunsberg tips cash into mushroom start-up". Sydney Morning Herald. https://www.smh.com.au/business/entrepreneurship/osher-gunsberg-tips-cash-into-mushroom-start-up-20230208-p5cive.html

Zain, M., & Ng, S. I. (2006). The impacts of network relationships on SMEs' internationalization process. Thunderbird International Business Review, 48(2), 183–205. https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.20092

MFAT

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TRADE

MANATŪ AORERE