

# Help in the Middle East

International medical equipment manufacturer, Viamed Ltd, exhibited at the Arab Health Exhibition 2010, to promote its new product, the VM-2500, with help from UK Trade & Investment



## FAST FACTS

**Company:** Viamed Ltd

**Country:** UK

**Industry:** Medical Equipment  
& Consumables

**website:** [www.viamed.co.uk](http://www.viamed.co.uk)

Founded in West Yorkshire in 1976, Viamed started out as a distributor of medical oxygen sensors and oxygen monitoring equipment for the UK. Having worked with Teledyne Analytical Industries, a US manufacturer of medical equipment in the early 1980s, the company secured the rights to become Teledyne's master international distributor for its medical products in 1992.

This was a significant turning point for Viamed, signalling an opportunity to expand into international markets. Today, the company has over 20 different products in its range, which it exports to Europe, Japan, China, the Middle East, Africa and South America.

"All of our overseas markets are looked after by local distributors," says Ryan Swaine, International Sales Manager at Viamed. "Local people will always understand their market better than we ever could. So, we find reliable partners who have first hand knowledge from the

end user about our products, which they feed back to us."

## Changing the proposition

Over the years, Viamed's products have been sold either as completed items, or, as in places such as the Middle East, as component parts. For a number of years this worked well, as the company built a strong reputation for manufacturing and supplying high quality products at competitive prices. However, over the last few years the influx of cheap Chinese products has made it increasingly difficult to compete in this market.

In 2006, Viamed decided to change course and reduce its reliance on the component parts market. The company began to concentrate its efforts on researching and developing a product that could only be sold as a complete unit. Three years later in 2009, Viamed launched the VM-2500, a new capnography instrument that monitors the levels of CO2 in respiratory gases, and O2 in the blood.

"Our new VM-2500 is unique," says Ryan. "It takes less than 10 seconds to warm up, compared to other equipment on the market which can take two to three minutes. In an emergency situation, you cannot afford to lose any time. We knew the VM-2500 was such a strong product that we could use it as a way of establishing ourselves as a brand in the Middle East."

## Finding a way

Viamed knew that the high quality specification and functionality of the VM-2500 would be best presented to the end user through live demonstrations and face-to-face interaction. The best way to do this would be to infiltrate the market themselves, so the company turned to UK Trade & Investment for help.

UK Trade & Investment, who had known Viamed for a number of years through the company's local Chamber of Commerce, offered financial help to the company to exhibit at the Arab Health Exhibition and Conference in Dubai in January 2010.

"UK Trade & Investment was very generous," says Ryan. "We had exhibited at the Arab Health Exhibition in the past but we weren't sure we could afford to do it again. When UK Trade & Investment said it would meet nearly 50 per cent of our costs to exhibit at the exhibition it was a great help. Exhibiting at the conference really was a must, especially as we knew it would be an excellent platform to showcase our new VM-2500 and meet with key potential Middle Eastern clients."

## The Future

UK Trade & Investment's help didn't end there. At the exhibition UK Trade & Investment had its own stand at which it displayed the VM-2500, which attracted positive enquiries from potential customers

who were then encouraged to visit the Viamed stand.

Viamed received daily visits from UK Trade & Investment, to pass on any enquiries it had and to see how it could assist the company further, such as help setting up meetings with potential clients and distributors.

As a result of UK Trade & Investment's assistance, and the Arab Health exhibition, Viamed has secured second presentations of VM-2500 and market trials to a number of key healthcare providers, but final contracts can take up to 12 months to secure. It aims to continue to promote itself in the region, concentrating on specific countries in the Middle East individually, of which, the UAE and Saudi Arabia are the first on its list.

"If we get rolling in the Middle East we aim to increase our sales by up to 50 per cent," says Ryan. "This would not be possible if it wasn't for the financial support and continued attention we have received from UK Trade & Investment. We would definitely not be where we are today without their help."

## Helping you to do business abroad

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

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

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

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

For further information please visit [www.ukti.gov.uk](http://www.ukti.gov.uk)

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## The UK and the United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the UK's largest market in the Middle East and 14th largest export market in the world, with total exports worth £3.7 billion. 70 per cent of exports go to Dubai, 18 per cent to the Northern Emirates and 12 per cent to Abu Dhabi.

Dubai has a vibrant tourist industry, a thriving free trade zone, and is embracing new technology

through ventures such as Dubai Internet City and Media City.

The UK's main sectors for export to the UAE are manufactured goods, telecommunications equipment, industrial machinery, vehicles and power generation equipment.

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



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