

Italian Export Forum: 'A Home for Made in Italy in the World'

Letizia Airos Soria (January 21, 2020)



We met with Lorenzo Zurino, the Founder and President of Italian Export Forum (IEF) and CEO of "The ONE Company." Zurino will be one of the panelists of IEF's first New York edition, which will open with a panel titled "Italy: Exporting Beauty" on January 27, 2020.

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You are the founder of the Italian Export Forum. What is the purpose of this organization and how important is it for Italian business?

The Italian Export Forum was born with the objective to offer a 'home,' a place for encounters and exchanges, to exporters in order to promote the Made in Italy brand throughout the world, starting with a defined strategy that will allow for the quality jump towards a more structured export model for Italian products. The IEF has identified the need for a coordinated system of businesses and



institutions and it proposes itself as an effective tool for supporting those businesses seeking a content-driven internationalization rather than one made up of slogans.

Italy's success is largely due to the creativity and entrepreneurship of small and medium businesses. How can they be helped to enter the American market and how can their presence here be managed?

In this current phase, our country has the duty to stand by its own agents of production, which express not only excellence but also history and tradition, encompassing a value which is today already largely recognized abroad. However, this is not enough because if on the one hand institutions are called to do their part, we also have to create a structure. The Forum will accompany businesses towards securing a longer and more sustainable presence on the international market. In order to get there, they will need to prepare and acquire the right skills: that is why the Forum is promoting the first Master class in "Export, Made in Italy and international markets," created by John Cabot University. Today, there is no more space for superficial and unstructured activities and we help businesses to enter the market thanks to a consolidated plan, which is already showing great results.

In your experience, what are the most common mistakes that businesses trying to enter the American market can make?

The most common mistakes I've encountered can be traced back to an approximative approach to the world of export. Improvisations or easy enrichment schemes don't help growth, we have to build gradual but solid paths in order to secure solid positions on foreign markets. Another mistake is one made especially by small businesses which, not knowing how to get over their individualist approach, refuse to work together - by forming consortiums for example - and thus miss important opportunities on foreign markets.

What did the first edition of the Forum, which took place last year in Sorrento, represent?

The first edition of the IEF was an occasion to analyze the problems in the export field together with its entrepreneurial and institutional actors. About 300 businesses and numerous exponents of the Italian economic and institutional world had the opportunity to participate in an interesting exchange on the difficulties faced and the opportunities to grasp. It revealed a series of critical points, which represent an initial input on the work carried out by the Forum and those who participated in it. We understood the need to favor a calculated allocation of resources to promotion and internationalization, avoiding wastes and dispersions. What really emerged was how the theme of export should be a point of confluence between public and private and not one of contention tied to issues of delegation and split competency among ministries and other bodies.

Why did you open this window onto America? What is the goal?

Opening a window onto the US market means addressing a range of consumers who adore Italian



products. There is a remarkable demand which at the moment is only marginally being satisfied and not meeting demand means not only favoring imitations of our products - a phenomenon which we are currently unable to contrast effectively - but also translates to forgoing extraordinary opportunities of growth. The goal is for Made in Italy to affirm itself on the American market with high quality for the right price. It's a significant challenge, which - also thanks to the Forum - can be successfully grasped.

Attendance to the "Italian Export Forum" is free-of-charge

January 27th 2020
from 4.00 pm to 6.15 pm

Please RSVP team@youritalianhub [3]

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