



Progressive Recovery, Inc. – Illinois SBDC ITC at SIU-Edwardsville



For three decades, Progressive Recovery, Inc. in Dupon has been designing and manufacturing equipment to help customers recycle and/or process hazardous waste. In support of their global expansion strategy, the firm chose to pursue ISO certification – a seal of approval that serves as proof of a firm’s commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

PRI Director of Engineering Tim Giddens said the company turned to the International Trade Center at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville for assistance.

“PRI is the North American leader in solvent recovery equipment and cleaning chemistries for the printing industry,” Giddens said. “In order to expand our ability to serve international printing clients, we knew that ISO certification would be very helpful.”

Upon contacting the ITC for assistance, Director Silvia Torres Bowman introduced PRI to the Illinois’ State Trade and Export Promotion program. The ISTEP program provides small and medium-sized businesses in Illinois with financial and technical assistance to increase their exports. ISTEP includes four options for Illinois companies to grow their export sales: group trade missions, individual foreign market sales missions, assistance to achieve product compliance certifications and international marketing support.

“To supplement our internal efforts, the ITC provided us with technical and financial support necessary to achieve ISO certification,” said Giddens. “The ITC was also extremely valuable in helping our sales team plug into trade missions and international trade shows. Participation in these events helped us gain exposure to new clients and potential business partners.”

PRI also benefited from the ITC’s expertise in finding new agents in difficult-to-reach markets. “South Korea is the most recent market example of this,” Giddens said. “When we needed a new agent in this region, staff from the Illinois Office in Hong Kong, partners of the ITC, helped identify and pre-screen potential candidates. Finally, the ITC connected our finance people with several classes to help ensure that we were up to date on the laws associated with financing international jobs.”

SIUE ITC Director Silvia Torres Bowman said PRI is an ideal client.



"The mission of the ITC Network is to help and support the Illinois business community to prosper in markets around the world," Torres Bowman said. "I have the privilege of working with Tim and the PRI team in support of their exporting endeavors. I have been constantly impressed by their thorough preparation and their ability to develop and implement effective strategies for international expansion. Success in global markets requires commitment, careful planning and much patience. PRI is certainly meeting all three of these requirements, and the ITC will always be ready to support them as they continue moving forward with their exporting goals."

Regionally, Giddens is a member of the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois. Within this organization, he serves as vice-chairman of its manufacturing subcommittee and is a staunch advocate of strengthening Illinois' manufacturing sector.

The [International Trade Center](#) at [SIUE](#) serves entrepreneurs and small businesses in southern Illinois by providing individualized, export consultation; identification of foreign buyers, agents and/or distributors through trade leads, international market analysis and more. The ITC is funded through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and SIUE as a service to the region's entrepreneurial and business community.

As a key member of the Illinois SBDC Network, the International Trade Center delivers these important services to its clients while supporting the goals and objectives of both the [SIUE School of Business](#) and the University at large.

For more information on why your company should consider doing business globally – and how to get started exporting – contact the ITC at International-Trade-Center@siue.edu or (618) 650-3851.

For complete details regarding the ISTEP program, visit siue.edu/business/itc