

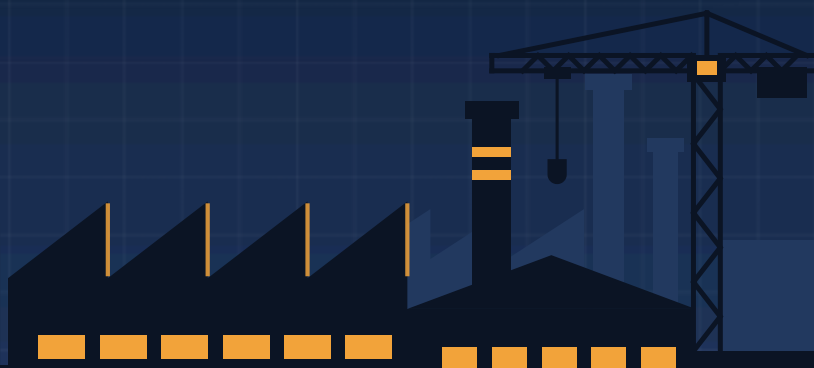
A WEBSITE GUIDE FOR INDIAN EXPORTERS

Chosen

WORLD WIDE

*How Indian exporters get discovered online, earn
the overseas buyer's trust and win the enquiry*

 Jute bag manufacturers in India |



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Rules, standards and platform features are as found in the sources cited, as read on 8 October 2026. Several of them are changing. Updates are kept at ebizindia.com/books/exporter-website.

The people and companies in the examples are invented, and any resemblance to real people or companies is coincidental. Scenes that show buyers at work are imagined and are not reports of interviews. The rug maker in Chapter 11 is a worked example, not a real company. The 30 websites in the check reported in this book are not named.

This book offers general information, not legal, tax, customs, financial or compliance advice. Which rules apply to your goods is for you to settle with your buyer, your testing laboratory and your advisers.

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Why I Wrote This Book

I have worked in information technology since 1986, and in search since 2001. My company, EbizIndia, builds software and websites, and exporters and manufacturers are among its clients. I have spoken on how businesses are found online at many industry events, hosted among others by NASSCOM, TiE, CII, the Indian Chamber of Commerce, the ICAI, MCCI, the Direct Taxes Professionals' Association and the Entrepreneurship Cell of IIT Kharagpur. This is my fourth book on the subject.

In that work I keep meeting the same exporter. He has a factory he is proud of, buyers in a dozen countries who reorder every season, and a stand at the fairs that matter in his trade. His website says “We export worldwide”. It shows a slider of product photographs, a row of certificate logos with no names under them, and a contact form that asks for a name, an email and a message.

For a long time that cost little. Orders came through fairs, agents, buying houses and buyers who had known him for years. They still do. What has changed is the step before the first email. A sourcing manager in Hamburg or Ohio who picks up your name now looks you up before she writes, and so does her compliance officer, and so does the new buyer who took over your account last month. A buyer with no name in hand searches Google, or asks ChatGPT or Gemini for a few Indian makers, and those tools can only repeat what is written about you.

What I checked before writing

For this book I had the websites of 30 Indian exporters read for the facts an overseas buyer looks for: bags and home textiles, carpets and rugs, metalware, handicrafts and furniture, leather goods, and

engineering goods. A certificate was named with the body that issued it on 6 of the 30, and a certificate number appeared on 1. Carton or container packing was given on none, an HS code on none, an Incoterm on 1. Six of the sites still showed placeholder or unfinished text, such as a testimonial signed “John Doe”. The full count is at the back.

What I know, and what I do not

I am an engineer, but I am not an exporter. You know your product, your buyers, your forwarder, your Export Promotion Council and your testing laboratory far better than I do. This book does not tell you how to price, ship, get paid or pass an audit, and it does not tell you which certificates your goods need. That is between you, your buyer and your laboratory.

What I know is the other side of the screen: what a sourcing manager abroad can find about you in ten minutes, and what Google and the AI assistants can and cannot read. A fact that sits only in a PDF catalogue, a logo or a photograph often reaches neither of them. That comes from forty years of building software for businesses, twenty-five of them working in search, and from reviewing how companies appear there today.

The book is short, and it promises no ranking and no order. The next two pages say who I am. After that, Chapter 1 shows how a buyer abroad looks you up, and Chapter 2 takes ten minutes and tells you where your own website stands.

Arun Agrawal

October 2026

About the Author



Arun Agrawal

AI SEARCH VISIBILITY EXPERT

FOUNDER AND CEO, EBIZINDIA CONSULTING PVT. LTD.

Forty years in information technology, all of them running his own companies. He works on how a business appears when a buyer looks it up on Google or asks an AI assistant.

IN TECHNOLOGY Since 1986, building software for businesses. He has run his own companies throughout, and has worked in search since 2001.

COMPANY Founded EbizIndia Consulting Pvt. Ltd. in 2007. It builds software and websites for companies in India, the United Kingdom and the United States, exporters and manufacturers among them. Nine out of ten of its clients stay year after year, and several have been with the company for nineteen years.

IN THE PRESS Quoted in The Times of India, Kolkata, September 2026 (“AI on Factory Floor”).

EDUCATION Master of Engineering (M.E.), Jadavpur University, with the Gold Medal.

SPEAKER At events hosted by NASSCOM, TiE, CII, the Indian Chamber of Commerce, the ICAI, MCCI, the Direct Taxes Professionals’ Association and the Entrepreneurship Cell of IIT Kharagpur.

INDUSTRY BODIES Charter Member of TiE (The Indus Entrepreneurs). Served on NASSCOM’s Eastern Region SME Council and Product Council from 2014 to 2016.

His work today

His present work is reviewing how companies appear across Google, AI Overviews and AI Mode, ChatGPT, Gemini, Perplexity, Claude and Copilot, and rebuilding their websites so that a buyer and these systems can read what the company makes, whether it can deliver, and who has trusted it. He writes on search and AI visibility at seotop10.com and arunagrawal.com.

For this book he had the websites of 30 Indian exporters checked for the facts an overseas buyer looks for. The count is at the back.

What his company builds

EbizIndia builds custom software and websites for its clients, and runs products of its own. One of them, CTRACKER, tracks statutory compliance for companies and their advisers, and the Eastern India Regional Council of the ICAI has a memorandum of understanding with EbizIndia for it.

His books

Invisible to Prominent covers online visibility for any business. *Before the Buyer Calls* is for manufacturers who sell to industry and projects in India. *Grow Through Dealers* is for manufacturers who sell through dealers. *Chosen Worldwide* is this book. All four are free at ebizindia.com/books.

Before You Start

This book is for the owner or director of an Indian company that makes goods and sells them to businesses abroad: importers, brands, retail chains, distributors and manufacturers. You may make jute, cotton or canvas bags, home textiles, carpets and rugs, brass and iron decor, wooden handicrafts, furniture or leather goods. You may cast, forge or machine parts for buyers in Europe, the Gulf or the United States. You may run your own factory, or work as a merchant exporter with a set of partner units.

Before a buyer abroad writes to you, asks for samples, sends an auditor or puts you forward to her manager, she looks you up. She cannot see your factory first. Your website is the part of that look you control, and you are rarely told how it went.

The book does not cover food and agricultural goods, pharmaceuticals or chemicals, whose rules would need a book of their own, or selling to shoppers through Amazon, Etsy and the like.

How to use this book

Start with Chapter 2. Its ten statements take ten minutes and show which chapters matter most for you.

Chapter 3 is the centre of the book. It sets out the five questions an overseas buyer is answering when she looks you up, and what settles each one. Chapters 4 to 8 take the questions in turn. Chapter 9 is about buyers who find you through Google or an AI assistant, and Chapter 10 about the route from a visit to an enquiry. Chapter 11 works through one exporter's website before and after, and Chapter 12 puts a value on one new buyer.

Chapters 1 to 10 each end with three things you can do that week without a web team. At the back are a brief you may copy for your web team and an account of the check of 30 websites made for this book on 8 October 2026. Nothing beyond those 30 sites is claimed.

The Buyer Who Cannot Visit

Between the moment an overseas buyer hears your name and the moment she writes, she usually looks you up. She cannot drive to your factory first, so your website stands in for the visit. This chapter is about who does the looking and what she finds.

Picture a sourcing manager at a homewares importer in Hamburg. Call her Katrin. Her chain wants 40,000 printed jute shopping bags for a spring promotion, and her regular supplier cannot take the volume this season. She has three Indian names: two from the catalogue of a fair she walked last year, one from a buying agent's email. It is nine in the morning in Hamburg, half past one in the afternoon in India, and she has an hour before her next meeting.

She opens the three websites one after another. She wants to know whether they print on jute in her size, with a laminated inside; what the minimum order is; whether 40,000 pieces can be at Hamburg by the end of February; whether the factory has a social audit her chain accepts; and whether anyone in Europe already buys from them. If a site tells her those things, she writes to that company before lunch. If it does not, she moves to the next name. Nobody at the factory will ever know she looked.

Where your export orders come from

Your orders today come mostly through people and places: a buyer who has reordered every season for ten years, a stand at a fair, an

agent or buying house that brings buyers to your factory, sometimes a marketplace enquiry. A website replaces none of them. But each of those routes now passes through a look at your website, often before the first email, sometimes before the agent will even bring the buyer to see you.

At home, a buyer who is unsure of a supplier can ring a friend in the trade or drive over one afternoon. A buyer in Hamburg, Dallas or Dubai can do neither easily. The website is not one check among many for her. Often it is the only one she can make before she commits time to you.

Who looks you up

- **The sourcing manager or buyer.** She has a range to fill and three or four names to compare. She reads for product, price level, minimum order and delivery.
- **The compliance officer.** At a brand or a retail chain, nobody can place an order with a new factory until he has seen its social audit and its product test reports. He reads for audits, certificates and anything that suggests risk.
- **The buying agent's merchandiser.** She sits in Delhi, Mumbai or Jaipur and works for a buyer abroad. Before she brings that buyer to your factory, she checks that you will not embarrass her.
- **The supplier quality engineer.** At a pump or valve maker in Italy or the United States, he is approving a second source for a casting or a forging. He reads for processes, sizes, standards and quality systems.
- **The new buyer on an old account.** Your relationship was with her predecessor. She has never heard of you, and before she renews the order, she looks.

The first ten minutes, from another time zone

The look follows much the same path whoever does it. The buyer reads the first screen of your home page. If that tells her what you make, she goes to the product she needs, then to whether you can make her quantity in time, then to your audits and certificates, then to who else buys from you, and last to a way of reaching someone who can answer her.

Two things make her look different from a buyer at home. The first is the clock. She often reads your site while your office is closed, so she cannot ring and ask. Whatever the site does not say waits until tomorrow, and by tomorrow she may have written to someone else. The second is risk. She cannot see your factory, she has heard stories of suppliers who were not what they claimed, and in her own country she is answerable for what you ship. She reads with that in mind.

I would like to give you figures on how many buyers abroad look a supplier up before writing, and how many decide against one because of what they find. I have found no reliable figures on this for Indian exporters, and this book will not pretend otherwise. What follows rests on how sourcing works and on what websites say, which you can test against your own experience and your own buyers.

The buyer with no name in hand

Some buyers start without a name at all. This case is smaller, and it is growing.

- **A buyer moving supply.** A chain wants to buy less from one country and more from another, and needs Indian makers it has never met.

- **A new product line.** An importer of cotton bags wants to add jute, or a rug importer wants cushions, and has no contacts in that trade.
- **An urgent second source.** A regular supplier has failed a test or missed a shipment, and the buyer needs a name this week.

This buyer types the product and “India” into Google, and some now ask ChatGPT, Gemini or a similar assistant to suggest a few makers. Both work from what is written, in text, about you, on your own site and elsewhere. If your certificates sit in logos and your buyers in a strip of pictures, neither can be relied on to read them. Chapter 9 covers this buyer in full. Nothing in this book promises a ranking, a place in an AI answer or a number of enquiries.

What 30 websites showed

To see what a buyer finds, I had the websites of 30 Indian exporters that appear mid-sized checked for this book. The home page and up to four inner pages of each were read as text, roughly as a search engine or an AI assistant reads them. It counts only what was found on those pages, so the true figures may be higher.¹

- **Countries.** At least one export country or region was named on 21 of the 30. The rest said “worldwide”, or gave a count of countries without naming one.
- **Certificates.** A certificate was named with the body that issued it on 6 of the 30. A certificate number appeared on 1.
- **Trade terms.** A minimum order was stated on 8, a capacity figure on 6, a lead time on 7. Carton or container packing was given on none, and an HS code on none.
- **Buyers.** At least three buyers were named, or described by country and type, on 5 of the 30.

None of this means those companies are weak. Several of them clearly ship large volumes to well-known buyers. The facts exist, in their offices and their buyers' files, but not where a buyer abroad is reading in those ten minutes. The work this book describes is collecting what is already true about your company and writing it where it can be read.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 **Do the ten-minute look yourself.** Open your own website on your phone as a buyer abroad would, with a timer set for ten minutes. Write down what you could and could not find about your products, your minimum order, your delivery, your audits and your buyers.
- 2 **Ask how your last new buyers found you.** Ask whoever handles exports about the last three buyers who were new to you: where they first heard your name, and whether they mentioned your website before or after the first email.
- 3 **Note when enquiries arrive.** Look at the times of the last twenty enquiry emails. Count how many came while your office was closed. That is how often a buyer read your site with nobody to ask.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See "About the 30-Site Check".

Ten Questions About Your Export Website

Before you read further, score your own website. Ten plain statements, each drawn from a later chapter, take about ten minutes to check.

Do it on your phone as well as at your desk. Some buyers will read your site at a desk with a comparison sheet open beside it; others will read it on a train or between two meetings at a fair. The site has to work for both, and a page that reads well on a large screen can hide half its facts on a phone.

Open your own website and read each statement below. Tick it only if you can point to the fact on the site, written in words. A fact that appears only inside a picture or a logo, only in a catalogue someone has to download, or only in your head does not count. If you are unsure, leave the box empty. A generous tick hides a gap you would otherwise fix.

No.	Statement	Tick
1	Our legal name, full factory address, GSTIN and an email on our own domain are on the site as text. (Chapter 4)	☐
2	The first heading on our home page says what we make. (Chapter 5)	☐
3	Each main product has a page of its own with sizes, materials and a minimum order written as figures. (Chapter 5)	☐
4	Carton or container packing is given for our main products. (Chapter 5)	☐

No.	Statement	Tick
5	Our monthly capacity, and a usual lead time from approved sample to shipment, are stated as numbers. (Chapter 6)	☐
6	Each certificate and social audit is named with the body that issued it, its number or platform ID, and its validity. (Chapter 7)	☐
7	The countries we ship to are named, and at least three buyers are named or described by country and type. (Chapter 8)	☐
8	Our product pages use the words buyers abroad search with, such as “rugs” as well as “carpets”, or “burlap” as well as “jute”. (Chapter 9)	☐
9	One page sets out how we work: minimum order, samples, payment terms, inspection and the Incoterms we quote. (Chapter 10)	☐
10	A buyer can send an enquiry with a file attached, on a page separate from Contact Us, and our reply time is stated beside it. (Chapter 10)	☐

Count your ticks. Each tick is one point. A website that is kept up with care can score 8 or more.

What your score means

- **8 to 10.** A buyer doing the look from Chapter 1 will find most of her answers. Read Chapter 3 to see whether your answers are as strong as they could be, then work on any empty box.
- **5 to 7.** The buyer will find some answers and may leave at the first gap. Read Chapter 3, then the chapter behind your lowest-numbered empty box. The early statements matter most, because a buyer who fails to find them does not read on.
- **0 to 4.** The site shows that you exist and says little more. Chapters 3 to 7 come first.

A low score says nothing about your factory, your products or your buyers. It measures only how much of what is true can be read by someone who has never visited, and who probably never will before the first order.

Two ways to use the score

Ask someone else to score the site as well, separately: your export manager, or a merchandiser who joined recently. Where your answers differ, the fact is probably on the site but hard to find, which is a gap of its own. If you have a buyer abroad you know well, ask her to score it too. She reads it as the others do.

Keep the sheet. When pages change, score again with the same ten statements, and you will see what moved.

If you would rather have the same ground assessed in writing by someone outside the company, EbizIndia's AI Search Visibility Blueprint is a written assessment of it, for Rs 10,000 plus GST, delivered in 24 hours.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 **Score your website.** Use the table above on your phone, tick only what you can point to in words, and write the date at the top.
- 2 **Get a second score.** Ask your export manager or a recent joiner to score it separately, without seeing yours, and compare the two.
- 3 **Name who holds each missing fact.** Beside every empty box, write the name of the person in your company who knows the answer: the factory head for capacity, the compliance or quality head for audits, the shipping clerk for carton and container figures, the accounts head for the legal name and GSTIN.

The Overseas Buyer's Five Questions

Whoever looks you up from abroad, and whatever she buys, she is answering five questions in order. Three are the questions any buyer asks. Two more come with distance and with the law in her own country.

Imagine a buyer at a home decor importer in Ohio. Call her Megan. Her company wants a range of brass and iron candle holders and wall decor for the autumn season, and she has four Moradabad names from an agent. She opens their websites one after another at her desk.

The first opens with a slider of shiny photographs and a line about tradition and craftsmanship. There is no product name on the first screen, and the email is a Gmail address. The second has products, each with a code and a photograph, and nothing else: no size, no finish, no minimum. The third gives sizes in inches and centimetres, finishes, a minimum per design, pieces per carton, lead time, the port it ships from and a page that names a social audit with its date. It also says, in a sentence, that it has supplied two American home decor chains for six years. The fourth looks much like the first.

Megan writes to the third company that afternoon, and to the second because she is short of names. The first and the fourth never hear from her.

Five questions, in order

- **1. “Are you real?”** A company that exists, at the address it gives, run by people who can be named and reached.
- **2. “Do you make what I need?”** Her product, in her size, material and finish, at a minimum she can order, packed the way she ships.
- **3. “Can you deliver my order, to my standard, on time?”** Her quantity, her quality checks, her delivery window.
- **4. “Will you keep me out of trouble?”** What her own law and her own compliance team demand: audits, tests, certificates, traceability.
- **5. “Who has trusted you already?”** Buyers like her, in markets like hers, who have bought from you and come back.

Questions 2, 3 and 5 are the three questions every buyer asks, the same three as in my book for manufacturers who sell within India. Questions 1 and 4 are the ones distance adds. A buyer in Pune can see your factory gate on her way to work. A buyer in Ohio cannot, and if your goods fail a test in her market, it is her company that answers to the regulator.

The order matters. A buyer who cannot settle the first question rarely reaches the second. A buyer who cannot tell what you make never reaches your certificates, however good they are.

The first question: are you real?

Here she is deciding whether you are safe to write to at all. She has heard of companies that exist only as a website, and of fraudsters who copy a real exporter's photographs. The evidence is plain: a legal name, a factory address with a map, a GSTIN, an email on your own domain, a named person and a number that is answered. In the check of 30 websites described at the back, the main email

was on the company's own domain on 23 of the 30; four used only a free email address and one gave no email at all.¹ Chapter 4 deals with this question.

The second question: what you make

She has a specific item in mind and wants to see quickly whether it falls inside your range and whether she can order it. The evidence is the product named in the first heading, and a page for each product with sizes, materials, finishes, a minimum order and packing, as figures. The check found that the first heading said what the company makes on 16 of the 30 sites. A minimum order was stated on 8; carton or container packing on none. Chapter 5 deals with this question.

The third question: can you deliver?

Once she knows you make the item, she is deciding how much risk she takes on your factory. The evidence is capacity in her unit, a lead time from approved sample to shipment, how you check quality and whether her inspector is welcome, and the port and terms you ship on. The check found a capacity figure on 6 of the 30 and a lead time on 7. On three sites, figures such as years in business, countries, clients or machines were animated counters that read as zero in the page text. Chapter 6 deals with this question.

The fourth question: will you keep me out of trouble?

This is the question her compliance team asks, and it can end a deal that the buyer herself wanted. The evidence is each social audit and certificate named with the body that issued it, its

number or platform ID and its validity, and the product tests her market requires. The check found a certificate named with its issuing body on 6 of the 30 and a certificate number on 1. A social audit was named on 8, and at least three of those described an audit as a certification, which a compliance officer notices. Chapter 7 deals with this question.

The line between the fourth question and the fifth is simple. The fourth is about what her law and her auditor demand of any supplier. The fifth is about who has already bought from you, and for how long.

The fifth question: who has trusted you already?

She is deciding whether someone like her has taken this risk with you already, and whether she can defend the choice to her own manager. The evidence is the countries you ship to, by name; buyers named with their consent or described by country and type; the years you have supplied them; and the fairs where she could meet you. The check found countries named on 21 of the 30, but buyers named or described on only 5. Chapter 8 deals with this question.

Why words matter

Sometimes the evidence is on the website in a form that only a patient person can use. Three habits are common.

- **Certificates as logos.** A row of badges with no names, numbers or dates beneath them. A compliance officer cannot check a badge, and a search engine may read nothing at all.
- **Buyers as a strip of pictures.** The names are inside images. A hurried buyer catches two, and nothing in the page text says who they are.

- **Everything in the catalogue.** The figures are in a PDF, sometimes a scanned one, and the page that links to it says “various sizes available”.

Google says it uses an image’s description, along with its own image recognition and the rest of the page, to understand what a picture shows.² That is a long way from reliably reading every certificate in a row of badges. ChatGPT and the other assistants, when they search the web, work in the main from the text of the pages they find, and you should not count on them to read a name inside a picture.

Keep the pictures if you like them, and write every fact in words as well.

The five questions at a glance

The buyer asks	What she wants to see	What the check found
“Are you real?”	Legal name, factory address and map, GSTIN, own-domain email, a named person.	Own-domain email on 23 of 30. Free email only, or none, on 5.
“Do you make what I need?”	The product in the first heading. Sizes, materials, finishes, minimum order and packing as figures.	Product in the first heading on 16 of 30. Minimum order on 8. Packing data on none.
“Can you deliver?”	Capacity in her unit, lead time to shipment, quality checks, inspection, port and terms.	Capacity on 6 of 30, lead time on 7, an Incoterm on 1.
“Will you keep me out of trouble?”	Audits and certificates with body, number or ID and validity. Product tests for her market.	Certificate with its issuing body on 6 of 30, with a number on 1.
“Who has trusted you already?”	Countries by name. Buyers named or described, with years. Fairs attended.	Countries named on 21 of 30. Buyers named or described on 5.

The answers are in registers, audit reports and shipping files your own people keep.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 **Time a stranger.** Give your phone to someone outside the company and ask them to answer the five questions from your website in ten minutes. Write down where they stopped.
- 2 **Read your last ten first emails.** Take the first email from each of your last ten new enquiries and list the questions in it. Each question is one the website could have answered first.
- 3 **Read two competitors' sites.** Pick the two Indian exporters you most often lose buyers to, and read their websites on your phone against the five questions. Note where a buyer would find them ahead of you.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See "About the 30-Site Check".
2. Google Search Central, "Image SEO best practices", last updated 2 March 2026, read 8 October 2026: "Google uses alt text along with computer vision algorithms and the contents of the page to understand the subject matter of the image."
developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/google-images

Prove You Are Real

The first question is the one a buyer at home rarely needs to ask. A buyer abroad asks it every time: is this company what it says it is, at the address it gives, run by people she can reach?

Picture a buyer at a garden and home importer near Rotterdam. Call him Joost. An Indian company has emailed him a price list for iron planters, and the prices are good. Two years ago a colleague paid a deposit to a supplier who turned out to have no factory at all, so before he replies, Joost looks.

The website has handsome photographs, but two of them he has seen before on another supplier's site. The address is a city name and a PIN code. The email in the footer is a Gmail address, and the company name on the site is not quite the name on the price list. Each of these may have an innocent explanation. Joost has no time to find out which, and he does not reply.

Of the 30 websites checked for this book, four used only a free email address and one gave no email at all. Six still showed placeholder or unfinished text: a testimonial signed by "John Doe", a certificate page that said "update soon", an accordion that read "Detail 1, Detail 2, Detail 3".¹ On one site the company's name, its domain and its email domain were three different names.

What goes wrong

- **A city and nothing more.** No street address, no map, no sign of where the goods are made.

- **A free email address.** Anyone can open a Gmail account in any company's name, and buyers abroad know it.
- **Photographs that are not yours.** Stock pictures, or pictures from a catalogue, which a buyer can find elsewhere with a reverse image search in a few seconds.
- **Leftovers from the template.** Placeholder names, sample text and dead pages, which suggest that nobody in the company reads its own website.

The company, by name

Write your legal name exactly as it appears on your GST registration, with “Pvt. Ltd.” or “LLP” where it applies, and your trade name beside it if you use one. Give the year the company was founded and your GSTIN, as text, on the contact page and in the footer. An Indian buying agent working for a foreign buyer can check a GSTIN on the GST portal in a minute.

You may also give your Importer Exporter Code. Since 2017 the IEC has been the entity's PAN, and the PAN already sits inside your GSTIN, as its third to twelfth characters, so publishing the IEC exposes nothing new.² Keep bank account details off the site altogether.

The factory she cannot visit

Give the full address of each unit, labelled: registered office, factory, warehouse, showroom. Embed a map with the pin on the factory gate, not the middle of the industrial area. A buyer abroad will often switch to the satellite view to see whether there is a building of the size you describe. Street View, which came to India

through local partners in 2022, now covers many roads, but not every industrial estate, so do not count on it.³

Then show the factory in words and pictures that are plainly yours. Photographs of your own floor, your own people and your own goods, each with a caption: “Hand-tufting section, 40 frames, Bhadohi unit”. A two-minute walk-through video, shot on a phone in daylight, with captions, does more than any brochure. A buyer who has seen your cutting tables and your packing bay has, in a small way, visited.

People with names

Name the owner or managing director, with a photograph and two lines about him or her. Name the person who handles export enquiries, with a designation, a mobile number the company owns and an email on your domain. In the check, a named person or a sales designation was offered as a contact on 14 of the 30 sites.

A buyer who has a name will often look it up on LinkedIn. So the people named on your site should have LinkedIn profiles that give the company’s name and their own role correctly, and the company’s LinkedIn page should be current, with a link to the website. A page last updated four years ago, showing a sales head who has since left, tells the buyer something you did not intend.

Email, phone and the bank

Use an email address on your own domain for everything a buyer sees: website, catalogue, visiting card, fair stand. Give phone numbers with +91, written so that a tap on a phone dials them, and a WhatsApp link beside them.

Add one sentence that protects you both: “We never change our bank details by email. If you receive such a request in our name,

call us on the number on this page before paying.” Fraud in which a criminal poses as a supplier and asks for payment to a new account is common enough that the FBI has published losses running to billions of dollars over a decade.⁴ A buyer who reads that line knows you have thought about her money as well as yours.

How buyers check from abroad

Beyond your own site, a careful buyer has a few ways to check you, and it helps to know what they show.

- **The map and the satellite view.** Whether your factory is where you say, and roughly the size you say.
- **LinkedIn.** Whether the people you name exist and work for you.
- **Shipment records.** United States rules allow ocean import manifest data to be published, which is how trade-data services such as Panjiva, ImportGenius and Volza can show who has shipped to whom in the US.⁵ A US buyer who pays for such a service may see your past shipments. European Union and UK customs records are confidential, so a claim about a German or British buyer cannot be checked the same way.
- **Her own agent in India.** Who may visit, ring a fellow exporter, or check your GSTIN.

None of these is under your control, but every one of them goes better when your website says the same thing they show.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 **Search your own GSTIN.** On the GST portal's Search Taxpayer page, compare the legal name, trade name and principal place of business with what your website says, and mark every difference.
- 2 **Find your factory from abroad.** Open your own address in Google Maps, switch to the satellite view and check that the pin sits on your gate. If it does not, ask whoever looks after your Google listing to correct it.
- 3 **Hunt the leftovers.** Read every page of your site for placeholder names, sample text, free email addresses and photographs that are not yours, and list them for removal.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See "About the 30-Site Check".
2. Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Trade Notice No. 09/2018, 12 June 2017: the PAN of an entity is used as its Importer Exporter Code. dgft.gov.in
3. Google India Blog, "Making Google Maps more helpful in India with local partnerships", 27 July 2022. blog.google
4. FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center, "Business Email Compromise: The \$55 Billion Scam", public service announcement, 11 September 2024. ic3.gov/PSA/2024/PSA240911
5. United States, 19 CFR 103.31, "Information on vessel manifests and summary statistical reports"; importers may ask for their names to be kept confidential. ecfr.gov. For the EU, Union Customs Code, Regulation (EU) No 952/2013, Article 12; for the UK, Commissioners for Revenue and Customs Act 2005, section 18. All read 8 October 2026.

Say What You Make

The second question is whether you make what she needs, in a form she can order. For an exporter that means more than the product: the minimum order, the packing, the container and the label all belong on the page.

Take a buyer at a British department store group. Call her Sarah. She needs an own-label cotton canvas tote, 38 by 42 cm with a 10 cm gusset, in 10 oz canvas, printed in two colours, 6,000 pieces for a spring promotion.

The first site she opens says, under a photograph of a woman with a bag on her shoulder, that the company makes eco-friendly bags in various sizes and colours as per customer requirement. The second has a canvas tote page that gives the canvas weights it stocks in ounces and grams per square metre, the standard sizes in centimetres and inches, the print methods, a minimum of 1,000 pieces per design, 100 pieces to a carton and the carton's size and weight. Sarah can work out from that page roughly how many cartons her order makes and what freight will cost. Her artwork goes to the second company that afternoon. The first company may well make a better bag; it has given her no way to tell.

The check of 30 websites found that the first heading on the home page said what the company makes on 16 of the 30. A minimum order was stated on 8. Carton or container packing was given on none, and an HS code on none.¹

What goes wrong

- **A slogan, or “Home”, as the first heading.** On several sites in the check the first heading was the word “Home”, the company’s name, or a line about tradition.
- **Design numbers without figures.** A gallery of photographs labelled with codes, and no size, material, finish or minimum.
- **“Various sizes as per buyer’s requirement.”** True, and of no use to a buyer who wants to know whether her size is normal for you.
- **A shop window for the wrong buyer.** Product pages built as a retail store, priced in rupees, which tell an importer that the site is not meant for her.

The first heading and the first screen

The first heading is the large line at the top of the home page. With the line beneath it, it should tell a buyer abroad what you make, in which material, and that you export. Keep the heading to a dozen words or so, and make both lines typed text, so that a buyer, Google and an AI assistant all read the same words. The examples are illustrative; brackets show where your own facts go.

Trade	Heading, and the line beneath it
Bags	Jute and cotton shopping bags, made to your design and label Manufacturer and exporter, [town], India. Supplying retailers and promotional buyers in Europe and the US.
Rugs	Hand-tufted and hand-knotted rugs in wool, jute and viscose Made at our own looms in [town], India. Custom sizes and colours from [figure] square metres per design.

Trade	Heading, and the line beneath it
Metal decor	Brass, iron and aluminium home decor, made in Moradabad Candle holders, planters, wall decor and tableware for importers and retail chains.
Leather	Leather bags, wallets and belts for private-label brands Cutting, stitching and finishing in-house at [town], India.
Castings	SG and grey iron castings, 1 to 200 kg, machined or as cast Foundry and machine shop at [town], India. Exporting to pump and valve makers in Europe.

One page for each product line

A buyer asks about one thing at a time. If your totes, your shopping bags and your wine bags share one gallery, a buyer looking for a wine bag has nowhere to land, and neither does a search engine trying to match her words to a page. Give every product line its own page, and on it, as text:

- **Sizes.** In centimetres and in inches, since a buyer in the United States thinks in inches. The standard sizes, and whether you make others.
- **Material and construction.** The figure your trade is judged by: grams per square metre or ounces for canvas, knots per square inch for a hand-knotted rug, thickness for leather, gauge for sheet metal, grade and standard for a casting.
- **Finishes and colours.** What you offer as standard, and how a buyer chooses others, such as from a Pantone reference.
- **Minimum order.** Per design, per colour or per size, whichever you use, and whether you take smaller trial orders.
- **Private label and customisation.** Whether you make to the buyer's design, print or emboss her brand, and use her labels, swing tags and barcodes.

- **Photographs.** Of your own products, each captioned in words. Products made to a buyer's design need her consent before they appear (Chapter 8).

A job shop that makes to the customer's drawing, such as a foundry or a machine shop, gives each process its page instead: the weight range, the largest size, the materials and standards, the tests on every batch.

Packing and the container

This is the part almost nobody writes down, and it is often the first thing a buyer abroad works out. She buys by the container. She needs to know how many pieces fit, so that she can add freight and duty to your price and see what each piece will cost her on arrival.

For each main product, give the pieces to an inner pack and to an export carton, the carton's size and gross weight, and roughly how many pieces or cartons fit in a 20 ft, a 40 ft and a 40 ft high-cube container. Say that you pack, label and mark cartons to the buyer's instructions, and that you can apply her barcodes. A figure marked "approximately" is far more useful than no figure.

The HS code

Give the six-digit HS code for each product line: the first six digits of the code on your shipping bill. The first six digits of the Harmonized System are shared by almost all trading countries, so a buyer can use them to look up her own import duty. Say plainly that her own country adds digits of its own and that her customs broker decides the final code. Have your customs broker or

forwarder confirm each code before it goes on the site; a wrong code in print is worse than none.

Labels and the buyer's law

Many markets require certain information on the product or its packaging: a care label on textiles, the country of origin, and for most consumer goods sold in the European Union, a product identifier and the maker's name and address under the General Product Safety Regulation.² You do not need to explain the rules on your site. One line that says you print care labels and product identifiers to the buyer's requirements tells her you have done this before. Chapter 7 deals with the rest of her law.

Catalogues

Keep your catalogue, dated on its first page, because a buyer will forward it to her product team. Put the same facts on the product pages as text, and let her download the catalogue without filling in a form. A catalogue behind a form loses the buyer who only wanted a quick look, and a search engine or an AI assistant cannot read it at all. A catalogue made of scanned pages is a picture of words that nothing can pick a figure out of.

Where your range stops

Say what you do not make. "We work in wool, jute and viscose; we do not make synthetic machine-made rugs." "Castings from 1 to 200 kg; we do not pour steel." "Minimum 500 pieces per design; sampling for smaller orders by discussion." Lines like these save

both sides a wasted email, and a buyer who sees the limits stated believes the rest of the page more readily.

A product page, before and after

Imagine a cotton bag maker in Kolkata. Its present page reads, in full: “We are a leading manufacturer and exporter of eco-friendly cotton bags in various sizes, colours and designs as per buyer’s requirement. Best quality at competitive prices.” Every word may be true, and a buyer can check none of it. Here is the same page with the company’s own facts.

Cotton canvas tote bags, printed, to your design and label	
Canvas	8, 10 and 12 oz (about 270, 340 and 400 g/m²), natural or dyed to Pantone
Standard sizes	38 × 42 cm (15 × 16.5 in) and 35 × 40 cm (14 × 16 in), with or without a 10 cm gusset; other sizes to order
Printing	Screen print up to four colours; digital print; embroidery
Minimum order	[Your figure] pieces per design; trial orders by discussion
Packing	[10] pieces to an inner pack, [100] to a carton of [size] cm, [weight] kg gross; about [figure] pieces in a 40 ft high-cube container
HS code	[first 6 digits of the code on your shipping bill]; your import code is set by your own customs
Labels	Your woven label, care label, swing tag and barcode applied in our factory
Next step	Send your artwork or a reference photo with an enquiry, or ask for a sample

Illustrative. Figures are examples for an invented company, not recommendations. A bracket marks a figure to print from your own records.

Every line on the second page is a fact the buyer can put in her comparison sheet, which gives her a reason to write. The enquiry route at the bottom is the subject of Chapter 10.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 List your products against your pages.** Write down every product line you export. Beside each, write the page that covers it and whether that page gives a size, a material figure and a minimum order. Every blank is a missing page.
- 2 Get the packing figures.** Ask your shipping or packing supervisor for pieces per carton, carton size and weight, and pieces per container for your five main products, from the last shipments.
- 3 Confirm your HS codes.** Send the same five products to your customs broker and ask for the six-digit codes you ship them under.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See "About the 30-Site Check".
2. Regulation (EU) 2023/988 on general product safety, applying from 13 December 2024, Articles 9 and 11. eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/988/oj

Prove You Can Deliver

The third question is whether you can make her order, to her standard, and have it at the port on time. It is answered by a handful of figures, stated so that they hold up when her inspector arrives.

Picture a supplier quality engineer at a valve maker in northern Italy. Call him Marco. His company wants a second source for ductile iron valve bodies, five sizes, about 3,000 pieces a year, and his manager has given him a list of three Indian foundries. Before he sends a drawing to anyone, he wants to know whether each foundry pours in his weight range, how much it melts in a month, whether it machines in-house, how it tests, and how long a first order would take to reach Genoa.

The first site gives a figure for the factory's floor area and nothing about output. The second has a counter that should show tonnes a month, which reads as zero in the page text. The third says, in a sentence, that the foundry melts about 400 tonnes a month on two induction furnaces, castings from 2 to 250 kg, machined in-house, with a spectrometer report on every heat and inspection by the buyer's agency welcome. Marco sends his drawing to the third.

Across the 30 sites checked, a capacity figure was stated on 6 of the 30, and a lead time on 7. On three sites, figures such as years, countries, clients or machines were animated counters that read as zero in the page text. On six, figures on one page did not agree with figures on another.¹

What goes wrong

- **Floor area in place of output.** “1,00,000 sq ft” tells a buyer the size of the building, not how many pieces leave it.
- **Counters that read as zero.** Figures that count up on screen in an animation can read as zero to anything reading the page text, a search engine included.
- **Two figures for one fact.** 100 artisans on one page and 1,000 on another; 53 countries in one place and “over sixty” in the next. The buyer believes neither.
- **“Timely delivery” and no time.** A promise with no number in it.

Capacity in the buyer’s unit

State capacity in the unit your buyer orders in, and use the same figure everywhere: on the website, in the catalogue, in your marketplace listings and on your audit paperwork.

Trade	Capacity a buyer can use
Bags	Pieces a month by bag type, and the largest single order shipped
Home textiles	Metres of fabric woven or processed a month; pieces of made-ups a month
Rugs	Square metres a month by construction: hand-knotted, hand-tufted, flat-weave
Metal decor, furniture	Pieces or containers a month; the largest item you can make and pack
Leather goods	Pieces a month by product type
Castings, forgings	Tonnes a month; weight range per piece; machining capacity

Print the capacity you can show an auditor, and say on what basis: “About 20,000 bags a month on one shift.” Whether to publish how

full you are is your own call. Many owners will rightly choose not to, since existing buyers and competitors read the site too. Whatever you print, the factory must bear it out when an inspector walks the floor.

Lead time, from approved sample to port

A buyer abroad thinks in two lead times. The first is sampling: how long from her design or reference to a sample in her hands. The second is bulk: how long from her approval of the sample to goods at the port. Give both as ranges, by product type: “Samples in 10 to 15 days. Bulk orders 45 to 60 days from sample approval to shipment, depending on quantity.” A single figure for every order is not believed.

If your trade has a season, say so. Many decor, textile and gift buyers place Christmas orders early in the year and want goods shipped by late summer. A line such as “For Christmas shipments, we book production from January; orders after April may need longer” tells a buyer you know her calendar, and nudges her to write sooner.

What you make, and what you send out

Say which processes you do yourself and which you send out: weaving, dyeing, printing, plating, powder coating, heat treatment, machining. Buyers and their auditors find out in any case. A line such as “Dyeing at an approved partner unit 10 km away, under our own quality control” reads as a company that knows its own process.

If you are a merchant exporter who works through partner units, say so plainly, and describe the arrangement: how many units, for how long, what your own team does at each, and which audits each unit holds. Many buyers are happy to work with a good merchant

exporter. None of them is happy to discover that the factory in the photographs was not yours. Never borrow a factory photograph.

Quality checks and inspection

Describe how you check quality at each stage, in a few lines: raw material checks, inline checks, final inspection before packing. If you inspect to an Acceptable Quality Level, say which, and name the sampling standard; buyers commonly refer to ISO 2859-1, whose current edition was published in 2026.² Say that inspection by the buyer’s own agency is welcome, at your factory, before shipment. For engineering goods, name the tests on every heat or batch and the inspection certificate that goes with each shipment, such as a type 3.1 certificate to EN 10204 where you issue one.

Port and terms

Say where you ship from, the port or inland container depot, and the Incoterms you usually quote, such as FOB or CIF, written with their place: “FOB Nhava Sheva”. Incoterms 2020, published by the International Chamber of Commerce, is still the current edition.³ Say that you also work with the buyer’s own forwarder. In the check, an Incoterm appeared on 1 site of the 30.

A facility at a glance

One table can carry most of this. The example is for an invented leather goods maker.

Facility at a glance	
Factory	[Street address], [town], West Bengal, India. 3,000 m ² covered
Capacity	About 25,000 wallets and small leather goods, or 6,000 bags, a month on one shift

Facility at a glance	
In-house	Leather selection, clicking (cutting), skiving, stitching, edge finishing, quality control, packing
Sent out	Metal fittings bought from approved suppliers; embossing dies made by a partner
People	[Number] people, including [number] in quality control
Samples	10 to 15 days from design or reference
Bulk lead time	45 to 60 days from sample approval to shipment
Inspection	Final inspection to AQL 2.5 under ISO 2859-1; buyer's inspection agency welcome
Shipping	FOB Kolkata by sea; FCA Kolkata by air; CIF on request; buyer's forwarder welcome

Illustrative. Figures are examples for an invented company, not recommendations.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 Settle one capacity figure.** Take the capacity from your last audit or buyer questionnaire, in the unit your buyers order in, and decide that this is the figure every page and listing will carry.
- 2 Write your two lead times.** From your last ten orders, work out the usual time from design to sample and from sample approval to shipment, and write each as a range.
- 3 Find the disagreeing figures.** Read your website, catalogue and marketplace listings for capacity, workforce, countries and years in business, and mark every place where two figures disagree.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See "About the 30-Site Check".

2. ISO 2859-1:2026, "Acceptance sampling by attributes, Part 1: AQL-indexed sampling schemes for lot-by-lot inspection", which replaced the 1999 edition in January 2026.
[iso.org/standard/85464.html](https://www.iso.org/standard/85464.html)
3. International Chamber of Commerce, "Incoterms rules", read 8 October 2026:
Incoterms 2020 in force since 1 January 2020, no later edition published. [iccwbo.org](https://www.iccwbo.org)

Keep the Buyer Out of Trouble

The fourth question is the one her compliance team asks. In her own country, she is answerable for what you ship. Your audits, certificates and tests count only when a compliance officer can read and check them.

Picture a compliance officer at a European home furnishings chain. Call him Pieter. A buyer in his team wants to place a first order for jute and wool rugs with an Indian maker she met at a fair. Before the order can go out, Pieter must see the factory's social audit on the platform his company uses, test reports showing the dyes are within the European limits, and some assurance on child labour in the supply chain.

The maker's website shows a row of badges, BSCI, SEDEX, ISO, and a line saying the company is "BSCI certified and SEDEX certified". Pieter knows that neither is a certification. There is no amfori ID, no Sedex reference, no date, no rating. He writes to ask. The reply takes four days, because the person who handles audits was at a buyer's inspection. By then the buyer has lost a week of her season.

Of the 30 sites checked, a certificate was named with the body that issued it on 6 of the 30, and a certificate number appeared on 1. A social audit was named on 8, and at least three of those called an audit a certification. One site showed a certificate whose stated validity had already passed.¹

What goes wrong

- **Badges without names.** A row of logos with nothing beneath them: no standard, no body, no number, no date.
- **“Certified” for an audit.** amfori BSCI and SMETA are audits, not certifications. A compliance officer reads “BSCI certified” as a sign that the supplier does not know its own paperwork.
- **A certificate with no issuer.** “ISO 9001:2015 certified” with no certification body. Certificates from bodies that are not accredited exist, and buyers know it.
- **A lapsed date.** A certificate past its validity, still on the page. It does more harm than no certificate at all.

Why the importer cares so much

A buyer at home who buys from you takes a commercial risk. A buyer abroad takes a legal one as well. In the European Union, for most consumer goods, there must be a business inside the EU that is responsible for the product’s safety, and that is usually your importer.² From December 2027 the EU will bar products made with forced labour from its market.³ In the United States, goods made wholly or partly in the Xinjiang region of China, or by companies on a published list, are presumed to be made with forced labour and are barred, so a US buyer of cotton goods will ask whether any Chinese cotton or yarn entered your chain.⁴ When something goes wrong, the regulator calls her, not you.

So she reads your compliance page as a list of the documents she will need, and as a test of whether you will produce them without a week of emails.

Social audits are not certificates

This is the most common mistake in the check, and the easiest to fix. Write each audit as what it is.

Scheme	What it is	How to write it
amfori BSCI	An audit, rated A to E, held on amfori's platform against your amfori ID. amfori says it is not a certification. ⁵	"amfori BSCI audit, [month year], rating [B]. amfori ID [number]."
SMETA	An audit method from Sedex, 2-pillar or 4-pillar, with the report shared on the Sedex platform. ⁶	"SMETA 4-pillar audit, [month year]. Sedex site reference [ZS number]."
SA8000	A certification, issued by a certification body accredited for it, listed by Social Accountability International. ⁷	"SA8000 certified by [body], certificate [number], valid to [date]."
WRAP	A facility certification for sewn products; the Gold level is valid for a year. ⁸	"WRAP [Gold] certified facility, valid to [date]."

Keep audit reports themselves off the public page. Say that buyers can see them on the platform, or that you share them on request. A buyer's compliance officer needs the ID and the date to find you; the report is for his eyes only.

Certificates a buyer can check

For each certificate, give six things in words: the standard and its edition, the body that issued it, the scope as written on the certificate, the number, the validity, and where it can be checked.

Most of the certificates exporters hold can be checked in a public database.

Certificate	Where a buyer checks it
OEKO-TEX	Label Check on the OEKO-TEX website, by certificate number
GOTS	The GOTS public database of certified suppliers. Each shipment also needs its own transaction certificate.
FSC	The FSC certificate search at info.fsc.org, by certificate code
GoodWeave	A licence and a numbered label on each rug, traceable to the maker
ISO 9001, 14001, 45001	IAF CertSearch, for accredited certificates whose body takes part; if one is missing, the buyer asks the body
IATF 16949	The IATF certificate validity check, for automotive parts
Fair trade	Three separate systems: Fairtrade International (through FLOCERT), WFTO Guaranteed membership, and Fair Trade USA. Name the one you hold.

Put the certificate number beside the product it covers, as well as on the compliance page. Offer a copy on request or as a watermarked image; a copy with selectable text can be altered and passed off by someone else. Change the page the week a renewed certificate arrives, and take a lapsed one down the day it lapses.

Rules a buyer may ask about

You do not need to explain your buyer’s law to her. You need to show that you know what she will ask for, and that you have it. The table names the rules most often raised for each trade, as they stood on 8 October 2026. Several are changing, so treat it as a list

of questions to ask your buyer and your testing laboratory, not as advice.

Trade	Rules a buyer may raise	What she may ask you for
Cotton bags, home textiles	EU: REACH limits on azo dyes; product safety and traceability. US: forced labour rules on cotton.	Dye test reports from an accredited laboratory; a map of the cotton supply chain with ginning and spinning records.
Rugs	EU: REACH azo dyes. US: forced labour rules where cotton is used. Most buyers: child labour assurance.	Test reports; GoodWeave or similar evidence; a list of subcontracted looms.
Metal decor	US: California Proposition 65 warnings, often for lead in brass. EU: general product safety, and REACH limits for items that touch the skin or that children may handle. EU CBAM, only where the HS heading is one it covers, such as other iron and steel articles (7326) or aluminium articles (7616). Brass is not covered.	Lead test reports; Prop 65 label artwork; where CBAM applies, emissions data per tonne.
Wooden craft, furniture	EU: Deforestation Regulation. US: Lacey Act plant declarations; formaldehyde rules (TSCA Title VI) for MDF and plywood. CITES for shisham and Indian rosewood items with 10 kg or more of that wood each. UK and US: fire rules for upholstered furniture.	Species by scientific name; country and plot of harvest; legal-origin papers such as transit passes; CITES permits where needed; panel certificates; flammability test reports.

Trade	Rules a buyer may raise	What she may ask you for
Leather goods	EU: REACH limits on chromium VI in leather (3 mg/kg) and on azo dyes. US: Prop 65.	Chromium VI and azo test reports per leather lot; tannery details.
Castings, forgings, fasteners	EU CBAM: fasteners (7318), cast pipe fittings (7307) and other iron and steel articles (7326) are covered now. Other castings (7325) are not covered today; a proposal would add them.	Embedded emissions per tonne, by installation; the source of your steel; material certificates; for automotive parts, IATF 16949.

As read on 8 October 2026. Sources in the notes. The Deforestation Regulation applies from 30 December 2026 to larger importers and from 30 June 2027 to small ones. The CBAM proposal on castings would apply from 2028 if agreed. Leather was removed from the EU Deforestation Regulation in September 2026. CBAM applies only to importers bringing in more than 50 tonnes of covered goods a year. Check every line with your buyer and laboratory before relying on it.

On your website, the useful line under each product is short: the rules the product is tested against, and the laboratory. “Tested for azo dyes to EU REACH limits by [laboratory]; reports per lot on request.” That one line answers a question a compliance officer would otherwise have to email.⁹

A page for agents, buying houses and auditors

Many orders reach exporters through a buying agent or the sourcing office of a foreign brand in India. Before the agent brings a buyer to your factory, her merchandiser looks you up; before the brand’s auditor arrives, he looks too. Both want the same things, and one page can hold them.

- **A company profile as a PDF.** A few pages, dated on the cover, with the same facts written as text on the page itself.

- **Audits and certificates.** Each one in the form above, with its ID or number and its validity.
- **Factory facts.** Capacity, workforce, units, processes done in-house and sent out (Chapter 6).
- **What you send on request.** Test reports, audit reports, the answers to a buyer's supplier questionnaire, chemical management policy.
- **A named compliance contact.** With a direct email and the hours in which he replies.

A buying house will usually ask you to fill in its own vendor form, take a technical audit and approve samples before any order. The page does not replace that. It tells the merchandiser that you are worth starting it with.

What I do not decide

Which audits and tests your goods need depends on the product, the market, the buyer and the use, and it changes. That is for you to settle with your buyer and your testing laboratory. This chapter is about one thing: showing what you hold in a form that a

compliance officer abroad can read and check without writing to you first.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 Lay out every audit and certificate.** Put them on one table. For each, note the standard, the body, the number or platform ID, the scope and the expiry date. Set aside any that has lapsed.
- 2 Rewrite the wording.** Rewrite each line on your site in the form shown in this chapter. Remove the word “certified” wherever it sits beside an audit.
- 3 List what buyers asked for.** Ask whoever handles compliance for every document a buyer requested in the last year. That list is the page for agents and auditors.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters’ websites, 8 October 2026. See “About the 30-Site Check”.
2. Regulation (EU) 2023/988 on general product safety, applying from 13 December 2024, Article 16, read with Regulation (EU) 2019/1020, Article 4. eur-lex.europa.eu
3. European Commission, “Forced labour regulation”: Regulation (EU) 2024/3015 applies from 14 December 2027. single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu
4. US Customs and Border Protection, “Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act”. cbp.gov/trade/forced-labor/UFLPA
5. amfori, response published by the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre, 4 July 2025: “amfori BSCI is not a qualification or certification system.” bhrrc.org
6. Sedex, “SMETA audit”. sedex.com/solutions/smeta-audit
7. Social Accountability International, “About SAAS”, and the list of SA8000 certified organisations. sa-intl.org
8. WRAP, “Certification”: “WRAP certifications are valid for one year.” wrapcompliance.org/certification

9. For the table: Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 (EUDR) as amended by Regulation (EU) 2025/2650, and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2026/2102, published 17 September 2026, which removed cattle hides, skins and leather; European Commission, “Deforestation Regulation implementation”, green-forum.ec.europa.eu. Regulation (EU) 2023/956 (CBAM), definitive period from 1 January 2026, with the 50 tonne threshold set by Regulation (EU) 2025/2083; Commission proposal COM(2025) 989 of 17 December 2025 on downstream goods, including heading 7325, not yet agreed; taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu. REACH Annex XVII entries 43 (azo dyes) and 47 (chromium VI in leather), as summarised by Business Companion, “Leather goods”, businesscompanion.info. USDA APHIS, “Frequently Asked Questions About Lacey Act Declaration Requirements”, aphis.usda.gov. CITES CoP19, interpretation of “10 kg per shipment” for *Dalbergia* finished products, cites.org. US EPA, “Formaldehyde Emission Standards for Composite Wood Products”, epa.gov. All read 8 October 2026.

Prove Your Record

The fifth question is who has trusted you already. For an exporter it is the hardest to answer, because so much of the work is done under a buyer's brand and a promise to say nothing. It can still be answered.

Picture a buyer at a Scandinavian homeware brand. Call her Ingrid. She is looking for a maker of flat-woven jute and wool rugs, and the site in front of her looks promising. Under “Our Clients” it shows thirteen logos in a row, small and greyed out, with no names beneath them. She recognises two. The page above says the company serves “500+ happy clients in 40+ countries”.

Ingrid needs to tell her manager why this maker is safe to try. “Thirteen logos, two of which I recognise” is not a reason she can write in an email. A line such as “supplying two Scandinavian homeware brands since 2017 and a German mail-order company since 2019” would have been.

The check found export countries named on 21 of the 30. At least three buyers were named, or described by country and type, on 5. Of the 5 sites that named a trade fair, three named only fairs from 2020 or earlier.¹

What goes wrong

- **Counts in place of names.** “500+ clients in 40+ countries.” A buyer cannot check a count, and she cannot show it to her manager.

- **Logos as pictures.** A strip of buyers' logos, with nothing in the page text to say who they are (Chapter 3).
- **Testimonials from nobody.** A first name, a sentence, no company, no country. Or worse, "John Doe".
- **A record that stops.** Fairs and news from years ago, and nothing since. A buyer wonders what happened.

The private-label problem

Much of what Indian exporters make is sold under the buyer's own brand. Purchase contracts and supplier agreements often say that the supplier will not disclose the relationship, and some buyers refuse to be named in any form. I have not read your contracts. Have them read before you name anyone. Then work down this ladder, using the highest step you can for each buyer.

- **Written consent.** An email or letter from the buyer saying you may name them, and how: name only, name and logo, or a short description of what you supply. Keep it on file with the date.
- **Country, type and years, without the name.** "A department store group in the UK, supplied since 2018." "A homewares importer in the Netherlands, five seasons." Keep the description true, and treat a buyer who could be identified from the description alone as named.
- **The buyer's own public list.** Some brands publish lists of their suppliers. If your buyer's list names you, you may say so and link to it.
- **Never without consent.** A buyer's designs, her brand on your product photographs, her prices or her volumes.

Countries, by name

Name the countries you ship to, in words. “We export to Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, the United States and Australia” is checkable, at least by a buyer from one of those countries, and it tells an AI assistant something it can repeat. “We export worldwide” tells nobody anything. If you give a number of countries, give it once and keep it the same on every page.

Supply sheets

A short sheet for each notable account does more than a long list of countries. Give each its own headed section, with five lines:

- **Buyer.** Named, if you have consent; described by country and type, if not.
- **Product.** What you make for them, with the main sizes or materials.
- **Size of the business.** A range is enough: “several containers a season”, “over 20,000 pieces a year”.
- **Years.** The year supply began, and whether it continues.
- **One photograph.** Your product, at your factory, without the buyer’s brand unless she has agreed.

Three examples show the form. “Hand-tufted wool rugs for a homewares importer in Germany: several containers a year since 2016.” “Printed jute shopping bags for a supermarket group in the UK: about 200,000 pieces a year since 2020.” “Machined ductile iron valve bodies for a valve maker in Italy: regular monthly supply since 2021.”

Fairs, councils and status

A few public facts help a buyer place you, and each takes a line.

- **Fairs.** The fairs you exhibit at, by name, city and the years you attended, and the next one where she can meet you. Leave out stand numbers; they change every edition.
- **Your Export Promotion Council.** Membership of EPCH, the Carpet Export Promotion Council, the Council for Leather Exports, EEPC India, TEXPROCIL, the Jute Products Development and Export Promotion Council or whichever council registers you, with your RCMC.
- **Status Holder.** If the Directorate General of Foreign Trade has recognised you as a One Star to Five Star Export House, say which. Under the Foreign Trade Policy 2023 the thresholds run from 3 to 800 million US dollars of exports, so a buyer who knows the scheme can read your size from it.²
- **Geographical Indications.** Moradabad Metal Craft, Hand made Carpet of Bhadohi and Saharanpur Wood Craft are registered GIs. Only the registered proprietor and registered authorised users may claim a GI.³ If you are one, say so with your registration. If you are not, say where you make your goods, which is a fact, and leave the GI to those who hold it.
- **Awards.** Each with the body that gave it and the year.

Testimonials

A testimonial is worth printing only if a buyer abroad could believe it: a real person, with permission, giving her name, role and company, or her role and a described company, and her country. A short video of a buyer at your factory, made with her agreement, is

better still. Never write one yourself, and never leave a template's sample testimonial on the page.

"My competitor will read this"

He will. He also knows most of the buyers in your trade already, from the fairs and the agents. The buyer who has never dealt with you does not, and she is the reader the page is for. Hold back prices, volumes, designs and anything a buyer gave you in confidence, and show the rest.

Keep it all in one place

Put countries, supply sheets, fairs, councils and testimonials under one menu heading, such as Our Record or Who We Supply. Put the date of the last update at its foot, "Updated September 2026", and look at it every quarter.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 Sort your buyers by permission.** List your fifteen longest-standing buyers. Have the contracts or supplier agreements for each read for confidentiality clauses, and mark which you may name, which you may only describe, and which not at all.
- 2 Ask three buyers.** Write to the three buyers you know best and ask whether you may name them on your website, and in what words.
- 3 Write three supply sheets.** Pick three accounts and have someone write the five lines of a supply sheet for each, from your shipping records.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See "About the 30-Site Check".

2. Foreign Trade Policy 2023, status holder categories: One Star 3, Two Star 15, Three Star 50, Four Star 200 and Five Star 800 million US dollars of export performance in the current and previous three years. dgft.gov.in. Check the thresholds in force on the DGFT site before relying on them.
3. Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, sections 17, 21 and 22. Registrations as shown on the GI Registry public search, read 8 October 2026: Moradabad Metal Craft (application 161), Hand made Carpet of Bhadohi (148), Saharanpur Wood Craft (184). search.ipindia.gov.in

Buyers Who Do Not Know You Yet

Most of your buyers come to you through fairs, agents and people who already know your name. The others find you through Google or an AI assistant, and then your website is working alone, in her language, on her screen.

Picture a buyer at a promotional products company in Texas. Call her Lauren. A wine maker has asked her for 5,000 jute wine bags with a printed logo, and her usual supplier does not make them. She opens ChatGPT and types: “Who are reliable manufacturers of custom jute wine bags in India? Show sources.” The answer gives five names with links. Two are directory listings. Three are makers whose own pages describe jute wine bags, with sizes, a minimum order and a print method.

Then she types “burlap wine bags manufacturer India” into Google. She does not use the word “jute”, because in Texas the fabric is called burlap. The makers whose pages say only “jute” are harder for her to find than the ones that use both words.

What goes wrong

- **Your words, not hers.** “Carpets” when an American buyer searches for “rugs”; “jute” when she types “burlap”; “brassware” when she types “brass home decor”.
- **Products as codes.** A gallery labelled with design numbers, which no buyer ever searches for.

- **A site that is slow from abroad.** Hosted in India, built with heavy images, and slow to open on a phone in Europe or the United States.
- **Thin translated pages.** German and French versions produced by a translation tool, with half the page still in English.

The words buyers abroad type

Write each product page in the words your buyers use, and include the trade term you use as well. A buyer who searches with either should find you.

Your term	Words a buyer abroad may type
Jute bags	Burlap bags (US), hessian bags (UK), jute tote bags, jute shopping bags
Carpets, dhurries	Rugs, area rugs, flat-weave rugs, kilim rugs, runners
Made-ups	Table linen, kitchen textiles, bedding, cushion covers, throws
Brassware, artware	Brass home decor, metal wall decor, candle holders, planters, decorative accessories
SG iron castings	Ductile iron castings
Exporter	Manufacturer, supplier, factory, wholesale, private label, OEM

Put the product and the country together, in text, where a reader meets them: the heading of each product page, its first paragraph, and the title a search engine shows. “Hand-tufted wool rugs, made in India” matches what a buyer types far better than a page titled “Collection 7”.

How the assistants find names

ChatGPT can search the web to answer a question with current information, and its answers can carry links to the sources it used.¹ Gemini may also show its sources.² For the AI answers inside Google Search, AI Overviews and AI Mode, Google says there are no extra requirements: a page must be indexed and able to appear in ordinary results with a snippet.³

These tools work from what has been written somewhere they can read: your own site, and other sites that mention you, such as your Export Promotion Council's member list, a fair's exhibitor list, trade directories and news reports. Two things follow. Your own site should hold every fact in text, from Chapters 4 to 8. And your web team should check that the site does not block the crawlers these services use. OpenAI, for example, says that sites which block its search crawler will not be shown in ChatGPT's search answers.⁴

Whether your name comes up is not in your hands. What is in your hands is that the facts these assistants find about you are complete, correct and the same everywhere.

A site that opens quickly abroad

Your buyer opens your site from Hamburg or Ohio, often on a phone. Ask your web team to measure how quickly the home page and a product page open from Europe and the United States, not only from your office. Large uncompressed photographs and a server in one Indian city are the usual causes of a slow site. A

content delivery network, which keeps copies of the site on servers in several countries, is the usual cure.

Other languages

Most sourcing in your trades is done in English, so start with English done well. Add another language only when you can have the pages properly translated and kept up to date, and when buyers in that language are worth the effort. Google does not object to translated pages that help users, but translation used to produce many low-value pages can be treated as spam.⁵ If you add languages, your web team should mark each version so that search engines show the right one.

Check it yourself: the evening test, from abroad

You need your phone and half an hour. Keep every answer as a dated screenshot.

- 1 **Write three searches.** Your main product with “India”; the same product in the buyer’s words (“burlap”, “rugs”); and your main product with “manufacturer” and “private label”.
- 2 **Run them as a buyer abroad.** The Google app lets you choose a search region in its settings.⁶ Results still vary with location and history, so treat what you see as an approximation. Better still, ask a buyer you know in Europe or the United States to run the three searches and send you screenshots.
- 3 **Ask two assistants.** In ChatGPT and Gemini, ask each search as a question, such as “Which Indian companies make hand-tufted wool rugs for importers? Show sources.” Then ask “What do you know about [your company name], [your town], India?” Ask each question twice and keep both answers.

- 4 Mark what is wrong.** On each screenshot, circle any fact about you that is wrong or out of date, and note which sources were shown.

Your website beside the marketplaces, fairs and social media

You probably have a listing on Alibaba or IndiaMART, an entry in your council's member list and in fair catalogues, a LinkedIn page, and perhaps an Instagram or Facebook page. Each does a job your website cannot do alone. Marketplaces put you in front of buyers searching by product, and also teach them to compare suppliers on price. Fair catalogues and council lists confirm that you exist. LinkedIn shows the people behind the company (Chapter 4). Instagram suits design-led trades such as rugs, decor and furniture, where designers and boutique buyers browse; Facebook matters less to a buyer abroad.

All of them send buyers to your website, and none of them has room for your capacity, your audits and your record. So treat the website as the master copy. Keep one written list of the facts that appear in more than one place: legal name, address, capacity, products, certificates, contact. When a fact changes, change it on the website first, then everywhere else, in the same words. Make every listing and profile link to the right page of your site, and keep a note of who holds each login.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 Ask a buyer how she searches.** Ask two buyers abroad which words they would type to find a maker of your main product. Compare their words with your page headings.
- 2 Run the evening test.** Follow the four steps above, and put a date in your diary three months from now to run it again.
- 3 List your places and logins.** Write down every place your company appears outside its own website, and who holds the login for each. Where nobody does, find out.

NOTES

1. OpenAI Help Center, “ChatGPT search”: ChatGPT “can search the web to answer questions with current information and links to relevant sources”. help.openai.com
2. Gemini Apps Help, “View related sources & double-check responses from Gemini Apps”. support.google.com/gemini/answer/14143489
3. Google Search Central, “AI features and your website”, last updated 10 December 2025. developers.google.com/search/docs/appearance/ai-features
4. OpenAI, “Overview of OpenAI Crawlers”: “Sites that are opted out of OAI-SearchBot will not be shown in ChatGPT search answers.” developers.openai.com/api/docs/bots. Perplexity publishes similar guidance for PerplexityBot at docs.perplexity.ai/guides/bots.
5. Google Search Central, “Spam policies for Google web search”, last updated 28 August 2026, on scaled content abuse, and “Tell Google about localized versions of your page”, last updated 21 September 2026. developers.google.com/search
6. Google Search Help, “See results for a different country”. support.google.com/websearch/answer/873

All read 8 October 2026.

From Visit to Enquiry

A buyer who is satisfied by what she reads still has to write to you. The route from your page to her enquiry should be short, should work while you sleep, and should tell her how you do business before she has to ask.

Picture a buyer at a housewares distributor in Toronto. Call her Priya. It is eight in the evening there, half past five the next morning in India. She has found a maker of cotton kitchen textiles whose product pages have everything she needs, and she has a tech pack for a range of tea towels and aprons.

She taps “Request a quote”. It opens a box asking for her name, email and a message. There is nowhere to attach the tech pack, and nothing on the site says what the minimum is per colour, whether samples are charged, or what payment terms the company works on. She types “Please send your price list and terms”, sends it, and hears nothing for two days. By then a maker in another country has sent her terms, a sample cost and a lead time.

The check found an enquiry form separate from the general contact form was found on 10 of the 30. Payment terms were stated on 4, and an Incoterm on 1. A WhatsApp link was found on 15.¹

What goes wrong

- **The quote button opens the contact form.** The buyer is asked the same three things as a job seeker, and her enquiry lands in the same inbox.

- **No way to send a file.** Her tech pack, artwork or drawing has to wait for a second email.
- **Terms only by email.** Minimum, samples, payment, lead time and Incoterms are all things she must ask, one email at a time, across a time difference.
- **A form built for India.** A drop-down of Indian states, a field for a GST number, a phone field that rejects her country code.

A “How we work” page

This is the single page an overseas buyer most often looks for, and it is rarely there. It sets out, in one place, how you do business, so that her first email can be a real enquiry instead of a list of questions.

- **Minimum order.** Per design, colour or size, and whether you take trial orders.
- **Samples.** How long they take, whether they are charged, whether the charge is set off against the first order, and how they are sent: “Samples in 10 to 15 days. Sample cost refunded against the first order. Courier on your account or ours.”
- **Payment terms.** The terms you usually work on, such as “30 per cent advance, balance against a copy of the bill of lading”, or “letter of credit at sight from a bank acceptable to us”. You need not print every exception.
- **Currency and prices.** The currencies you quote in, and that prices are given against a specification and quantity.
- **Lead times and season.** From Chapter 6.
- **Inspection.** Your own checks, and that her inspection agency is welcome before shipment.
- **Shipping.** Port, the Incoterms you quote, and that you work with her forwarder.

- **Documents.** What goes with each shipment: commercial invoice, packing list, certificate of origin, test reports, and anything else her market requires.

Link to this page from every product page and from the enquiry page. Whether to print payment terms is your own call. Many exporters prefer to discuss them; even so, one line on the terms you normally work on saves an exchange of emails and shows a buyer that you are used to export trade.

An enquiry route of its own

Give enquiries their own page, separate from Contact Us, and link to it from the top of every page and the foot of every product page. When the buyer comes from a product page, the form should already carry that product's name. Ask only what you need to send a price or a sensible question back.

- **Product.** Filled in from the page she came from, with room for size, material and colour.
- **Quantity.** And whether it is one order or a yearly need.
- **Destination.** Country and port, from a list of countries, not Indian states.
- **Date needed.** For samples, and for goods at her port.
- **Own label or yours.** Whether she wants private label.
- **A file.** Tech pack, artwork, reference photo or drawing, as an upload.
- **Who she is.** Name, company, country, email, and a phone field that accepts any country code.

State the file size limit, and give an email address for anything larger that reaches the same person. Say in one true sentence what you do with designs she sends, for example that they are used only

to prepare samples and a quotation, and that you sign a non-disclosure agreement on request.

Replies in her working day

Decide who receives every enquiry, and name a deputy for the days that person is away. Then set a reply time you can keep, and print it beside the form: “We acknowledge every enquiry within one working day, and send a price, samples information or our questions within three.” The numbers are yours to choose.

- **An acknowledgement at once.** An automatic email with a reference number and the name of the person handling her enquiry, so that a buyer writing at night in Toronto has an answer when she wakes.
- **WhatsApp.** A click-to-chat link opens a chat with your number without her saving it, and can carry a first line already typed, such as “Enquiry from the tea towel page”.² Put the hours it is answered, in Indian time and in GMT, beside it.
- **A reply she can use.** A quotation with specification, price, currency, Incoterm and place, validity, minimum, sample terms and lead time; or a short list of what you need to quote; or a polite regret if the item is outside your range.

Junk and scams

Exporters receive their share of enquiries that are not what they seem. Indian missions abroad have warned of “buyers” offering large contracts and then asking the exporter to pay a registration or facilitation fee, and of payment proofs that turn out to be false.³

Others send no fee request but collect free samples from supplier after supplier.

Do not make the enquiry form hostile to deal with them; it is your real buyers who will suffer. Instead, let the form's questions do the work. A real buyer will tell you her company, country, product and quantity. Before sending free samples, look her company up as she looked you up. Charge for samples and refund the charge against an order. Never pay a fee to win an order. Check any letter of credit through your own bank, never through contacts supplied by the buyer, and release documents only when your bank confirms payment.

Data and privacy

An enquiry form collects personal data: names, emails, phone numbers. Put a short privacy notice beside it saying what you collect, why, and how long you keep it. Where you collect enquiries from people in the European Union, the EU's data protection rules can apply to you even though you are in India, and India's own data protection rules come fully into force by May 2027.⁴ Ask your adviser what this means for your company. The notice itself is a small thing that a careful buyer notices.

After a fair

A fair puts your name in front of buyers for a few days. Give them somewhere to go afterwards: a page on your site for the fair, showing the collection on the stand, with an enquiry form and the

contact who met them. Print its address as a QR code on the stand and on your visiting cards.

An enquiry register

Keep one sheet of every enquiry, by whatever route it came. A spreadsheet is enough.

Column	What goes in it
Date and reference	The day it arrived and the number in the acknowledgement
Buyer, country, product	Company and person; the item and quantity as she described it
How she found us	Asked in the first reply: fair, agent, marketplace, Google, an AI assistant, a referral
Handled by	One name
Acknowledged, quoted, sampled	Three dates
Result	Order, lost, pending, regretted, with the reason if lost, and the order value

Once a month, count: enquiries received, how many came from each source, how many were answered within the time you printed, samples sent, and orders won with their value. After six months you will know from your own records, not from anyone's report, whether the website brings enquiries and whether your office answers them in time.

WHAT TO DO THIS WEEK

- 1 Send a test enquiry at night.** From an email address your office does not know, send an enquiry through your own site late in the evening, with a file attached, as a buyer from abroad. Note when it was acknowledged, when it was answered and by whom.
- 2 Draft your “How we work” page.** With your export manager, write down your usual minimum, sample terms, payment terms, lead times, port, Incoterms and documents, on one sheet.
- 3 Start the enquiry register.** Start it from today, with every enquiry that arrives by any route.

NOTES

1. The check of 30 exporters' websites, 8 October 2026. See “About the 30-Site Check”.
2. WhatsApp Help Center, “How to use click to chat”.
faq.whatsapp.com/5913398998672934
3. For example, High Commission of India, Abuja, “Advisory to Indian Businesses and Employment Seekers”, 27 June 2017, hciabuja.gov.in; and Consulate General of India, Dubai, “Trade Advisory for Indian Suppliers/Exporters”, 24 October 2019, cgidubai.gov.in.
4. Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR), Article 3(2). For India, Press Information Bureau, notification of the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, November 2025, with an eighteen-month period for phased compliance. All read 8 October 2026.

A Worked Example: The Rug Maker

One exporter's website, before and after, read the way an overseas buyer reads it.

Imagine a rug maker in Bhadohi. It has been weaving for thirty years, first for other exporters and for the last fifteen under its own name. It makes hand-tufted and hand-knotted rugs in wool, jute and viscose, about 6,000 square metres a month, for importers and retail chains in Germany, the UK and the United States. It has a SMETA audit, an OEKO-TEX certificate for its yarns and a GoodWeave licence, and it exhibits every year at a carpet fair in India, and at Domotex in Hannover when it runs.

Its website, like many in the check, says little of this. Here is how it reads before and after the facts are put in.

Read it as a buyer would

Picture a buyer at a German mail-order company who wants a range of hand-tufted wool rugs in four sizes for next autumn. She has the maker's name from a fair catalogue. She opens its website on her phone and wants five answers: whether it is real, whether it makes her rugs, whether it can deliver her quantity on time,

whether her compliance team will accept it, and who else buys from it.

What the old site said

- **A welcome, and no product.** The first heading welcomed the visitor. A slider of room photographs followed, with no words.
- **A city and a Gmail address.** No street address, no map, no legal name, no named person.
- **Collections as codes.** Rugs shown by design number, with no construction, material, sizes or minimum.
- **Counters that read as zero.** Years, countries and clients, all animated.
- **Badges with no names.** Certificate logos, and a line calling the company “SEDEX certified”.
- **One form.** Name, email and message.

What the new site says

- **Real.** Legal name, GSTIN, factory address with the map pin on the gate, the owner and the export manager by name, an email on the company’s domain, a two-minute walk-through of the looms.
- **What it makes.** A first heading that says hand-tufted and hand-knotted rugs in wool, jute and viscose. A page for each construction with materials, pile height, standard sizes in centimetres and feet, the minimum per design and colour, pieces per carton and an HS code.
- **Can deliver.** About 6,000 square metres a month, samples in three weeks, bulk in eight to ten from approval, the Christmas booking window, AQL inspection and buyers’ agencies welcome, FOB Nhava Sheva or CIF.

- **Out of trouble.** “SMETA 4-pillar audit, [month year], Sedex site reference [ZS number]”; the OEKO-TEX certificate number with a pointer to Label Check; the GoodWeave licence; azo dye test reports per lot on request.
- **Trusted.** Countries named; four supply sheets, two with the buyer’s consent to be named and two described by country and type; its fairs by name and year since 2012.
- **How to ask.** A “How we work” page, and an enquiry page with an upload, a reply time and a WhatsApp link with its hours.

The buyer asks	The old site	The new site
Are you real?	A city and a Gmail address.	Legal name, GSTIN, mapped factory, named people, own-domain email, a factory video.
Do you make what I need?	A welcome and design numbers.	Constructions, materials, sizes, minimums, packing, HS code.
Can you deliver?	Counters reading zero.	Square metres a month, sample and bulk lead times, inspection, port and terms.
Will you keep me out of trouble?	Badges, and “SEDEX certified”.	The audit with its reference and date, certificate numbers, test reports on request.
Who has trusted you?	Nothing.	Countries, supply sheets, fair history.
How do I ask?	Name, email, message.	“How we work”, an enquiry page with upload and reply time, WhatsApp.

Nothing was invented

Every fact on the new site was already true inside the company. The capacity, the lead times, the audit, the certificates, the buyers and the fairs all existed. No new loom, certificate or customer was

needed to write them down. The work was collecting those facts from the people who held them, getting the buyers' permission where it was needed, and putting it all into words on the page, where a buyer and a search engine can both read them.

What this example does not show

It does not show results. A website is one step on a buyer's road, beside fairs, samples and a trial order, and nobody can promise what a rebuilt site will bring. What can be said is narrower: a buyer who opens the new site finds a written answer to each of her five questions, and on the old one she found almost none.

Try it on your own site

- **Three columns.** On a sheet of paper, write the five questions down the side and three column heads across the top: what your site says today, what is true inside your company, and who in the company knows it.
- **Fill the first column from your phone.** Use only what is written as words on your site. A logo, a badge or a figure inside a picture does not count.
- **Fill the other two from your staff.** Ask the factory, export, shipping and compliance heads. The difference between the first column and the second is the work your web team needs to do.

What One Overseas Buyer Is Worth

Before you spend on a website, put a value on what is at stake each time a buyer abroad looks you up. One page of arithmetic, filled with your own figures, takes about ten minutes.

An overseas buyer who is happy with you is rarely one order. She comes back next season, adds a product line, and sometimes recommends you to a sister company. So set what the website costs against the margin from one new buyer, in your own numbers.

Use margin, meaning what is left from the order after the direct cost of making and shipping it: material, labour, processing, packing and freight to the port. Your accountant can give you a fair figure. Work in rupees at the FOB value you actually receive.

Your figures

Line, and what to fill in	Your figure	Example
A. Average FOB value of one order from such a buyer	Rs _____	Rs 25 lakh
B. Orders a year once she is buying regularly	_____	3
C. Sales a year (A × B)	Rs _____	Rs 75 lakh
D. Your margin on these orders	_____ per cent	12 per cent

Line, and what to fill in	Your figure	Example
E. Margin a year ($C \times D$)	Rs -----	Rs 9 lakh
F. Years such a buyer usually stays	-----	5
G. Margin over those years ($E \times F$)	Rs -----	Rs 45 lakh
H. Cost quoted for the website, plus your staff's time and a year's upkeep	Rs -----	Rs -----
I. Years of margin that equal it ($H \div E$)	-----	-----

The example uses invented round numbers, not figures from any company or trade.

Reading the example

In the example, one regular buyer brings Rs 75 lakh of sales and Rs 9 lakh of margin a year, Rs 45 lakh over five years. Whatever cost you write in line H, divide it by line E to see how many years of one buyer's margin it equals. If the cost in line H is no more than line E, one such buyer's margin for a single full year equals it.

Fill in what is true for you, and use the lower figure where you are unsure.

What the sum does not say

It does not promise that a website will bring you a buyer; no one can. A buyer abroad arrives through a fair, an agent or a search, then samples, then a trial order, and the website is one step on that way. The sum says what is at stake each time a buyer abroad looks you up, and how long the margin from one new buyer, if you win and keep her, would take to equal the cost.

The first order from a new buyer is often a trial, smaller than line A, so do not count the first year at full value. Exchange rates move,

and so does your margin with them. And the buyer judges your price on what the goods cost her on arrival, after freight and her own import duty, which sit outside your price and outside this book. Keep the enquiry register from Chapter 10, and in a year you can put real figures in place of these.

A Brief for Your Web Team

These pages may be copied and handed to whoever looks after the company's website, and are written to that person. Each row says what to do, and how the owner can see that it is done.

The site has one job: to let an overseas buyer, and a search engine or AI assistant, find five answers in words: whether the company is real, what it makes, whether it can deliver, whether it will keep the buyer out of trouble with her own law, and who has trusted it already. Then to let her send an enquiry easily, at any hour.

First, collect the facts

Do not start with the design. Start by collecting these from the company, through one person the owner names to gather and sign them off. This collection is most of the work.

- **Company.** Legal name and trade name as on the GST registration, GSTIN, year founded, the address of each unit, the owner and the export contact by name.
- **Products.** For each product line: sizes in centimetres and inches, materials and their figures, finishes, minimum order, private-label options, pieces per carton, carton size and weight, pieces per container, and the six-digit HS code confirmed by the customs broker. What the company does not make.
- **Delivery.** Capacity in the buyer's unit, sample and bulk lead times, seasonal booking, processes done in-house and sent out, quality checks, port and usual Incoterms.
- **Compliance.** For each audit: scheme, date, rating where there is one, platform ID. For each certificate: standard, body, scope,

number, validity, where it is verified. The tests done for each product and market.

- **Record.** Countries shipped to. Supply sheets: buyer or description, product, size of business, years, one photograph. A written list of buyers who have agreed to be named, and in what words. Fairs, council, status, awards.
- **Terms.** Minimum order, sample terms, usual payment terms, currencies, documents sent with each shipment, the person who answers enquiries and the reply time the owner has set.

#	What to do	How to see it is done
1. Are you real? (Chapter 4)		
1.1	Print the legal name, trade name, GSTIN and the labelled address of each unit as text on the contact page and in the footer.	Each matches the GST registration letter for letter.
1.2	Embed a map with the pin on the factory gate.	The pin sits on the gate in satellite view.
1.3	Use only the company's own photographs, each with a caption and alt text, and add a short captioned factory video. No stock photographs.	A reverse image search on three photographs finds no other company using them.
1.4	Name the owner and the export contact. Use emails on the company's domain only, readable as text, and phone numbers with +91 as tap-to-call links.	No free email address anywhere on the site; each number dials from a phone.
1.5	Add the line that the company never changes bank details by email. Remove every placeholder, sample text and unfinished page.	A search of the site for "lorem", "John Doe", "sample text", "Detail 1" and "update soon" finds nothing.
2. Do you make what I need? (Chapter 5)		

#	What to do	How to see it is done
2.1	Make the home page's main heading (the H1) say in words what the company makes. Never put it inside a banner picture.	Someone outside the trade reads the first screen on a phone and says what the company makes.
2.2	Give each product line its own page, with its figures as text: sizes in cm and inches, materials, finishes, minimum order, private-label options.	Press and hold a figure on a phone: it highlights as text.
2.3	Add packing (pieces per carton, carton size and weight, pieces per container) and the six-digit HS code to each product page.	The figures match the shipping supervisor's signed sheet.
2.4	Offer the catalogue as a dated PDF with selectable text, downloadable without a form, and put the same facts on the pages.	The PDF downloads in one tap and a line in it can be selected.
2.5	State on each product page where the range stops: what the company does not make, the largest and smallest, the smallest regular order.	The line is on the product page concerned.
3. Can you deliver? (Chapter 6)		
3.1	Build a facility page: capacity in the buyer's unit, sample and bulk lead times, in-house and outsourced processes, quality checks, inspection, port and Incoterms.	Each figure appears as text and matches the signed-off sheet.
3.2	Do not use animated counters. Use one figure for each fact everywhere on the site.	In View page source, each figure is found as written, and no fact has two values.
4. Will you keep me out of trouble? (Chapter 7)		
4.1	List each audit as an audit, with scheme, date, rating and platform ID. Never write "certified" beside an audit.	The word "certified" appears only beside certifications.

#	What to do	How to see it is done
4.2	List each certificate with standard, body, scope, number, validity and where it is verified, and repeat the number on the product page it covers. Offer copies on request or as watermarked images.	Each certificate can be found in the register named. No date shown has passed.
4.3	Add a line on each product page naming the tests done and the laboratory, with reports on request.	Every product page has the line.
4.4	Build a page for agents, buying houses and auditors: dated profile PDF, audits and certificates, factory facts, documents sent on request, a named compliance contact.	The page opens from the main menu and every document on it opens.
5. Who has trusted you already? (Chapter 8)		
5.1	Name the countries shipped to in words. Name in text only the buyers on the owner's signed list; describe the others by country and type. Logos may sit beside names, never in place of them.	Every buyer named on the site is on the signed list.
5.2	Add supply sheets, fairs by name, city and years, council membership, status holder recognition, and real testimonials only, with a "last updated" date on the page.	The date is within the last three months.
5.3	Before each fair, publish a page for it: the collection on the stand, the people there, an enquiry form. Give its address as a QR code for the stand and visiting cards.	The QR code opens the page on a phone.
6. The route to an enquiry (Chapter 10)		
6.1	Build a "How we work" page: minimum order, samples, payment terms, currencies, lead times, inspection, shipping, documents.	It is linked from every product page and the enquiry page.

#	What to do	How to see it is done
6.2	Build an enquiry page separate from Contact Us: product pre-filled, quantity, country and port from a world list, date needed, private label, file upload, a phone field that takes any country code.	Send a test enquiry from abroad with a 10 MB file and see it arrive.
6.3	Send an automatic acknowledgement with a reference number and a named person, and print the owner's reply time beside the form. Add a WhatsApp click-to-chat link with a pre-filled first line and its hours.	A test enquiry sent at night is acknowledged at once.
6.4	Add a short privacy notice beside the form.	The notice says what is collected, why and for how long.
6.5	Filter spam without making the form hard for real buyers: a hidden spam trap or an invisible check, not puzzles or long mandatory fields.	A test enquiry from abroad goes through first time on a phone.

7. Technical basics (Chapter 9)

7.1	Keep every fact as text in the page the server sends, not inside images or only inside PDFs. Use the buyer's words and the country in page titles and headings.	A sentence from a product page is found in View page source.
7.2	Make the pages fast on a phone from Europe and the United States, with compressed images and a content delivery network if needed.	Google's PageSpeed Insights report for the home page and one product page, on mobile, plus a load-time test from a European and a US location.
7.3	Do not block search crawlers in robots.txt or at the host or firewall: Googlebot, Bingbot, and the crawlers of the AI assistants' search, such as OAI-SearchBot for ChatGPT and PerplexityBot.	A written confirmation, and yourdomain.com/robots.txt shows no "Disallow: /" under these names.

#	What to do	How to see it is done
7.4	Add structured data (labels in the page code that tell search engines what each fact is): one Organization on the home page, with legal name, address and contact, and a Product on each product page.	A screenshot from validator.schema.org showing no errors.
7.5	Add other languages only with proper translations, marked with hreflang so search engines show the right version.	Each translated page is fully translated and links to its other versions.
7.6	Verify the site in Google Search Console and Bing Webmaster Tools under a company account. Keep the domain and hosting in the company's name. When pages move, redirect every old address to its closest new page.	The owner can log in to each, and has the list of old and new addresses.

Questions the owner will ask you

- Who in the company signs off each figure before it goes on the site.
- Who holds the domain, hosting and Search Console logins afterwards. The answer should be the company.

About the 30-Site Check

Several chapters cite a check of 30 websites of Indian exporters, done for this book on 8 October 2026. The companies are not named.

How the sites were chosen and read

The sites were found through ordinary web searches in English, of the kind a buyer abroad might type, for five groups of exporter, six sites each: bags and home textiles; carpets and rugs; metalware, handicrafts and furniture; leather goods; and engineering goods such as castings, forgings, fasteners and machined parts. Each needed its own website, had to show that it sells abroad, and was chosen to look mid-sized: not listed giants, not single-room traders. Directory and marketplace pages were passed over, and so were sites that would not load. The 30 came from ten states and union territories, with Uttar Pradesh (7) the largest.

The home page was read with up to four inner pages, normally the about or factory page, one product page, the certificates or quality page where there was one, and the contact page, as text only, through an automated fetch tool. Each site was marked yes, no or unclear on 18 points. Yes means the fact was found in the text of the pages read. Unclear means the evidence was ambiguous, or the item's own page was not among those read; it is never counted as yes or no.

The limits

- **Five pages per site at most.** Some sites allowed fewer, and several had no certificates page. The “no” figures are upper

limits and the “yes” figures lower limits.

- **Text only.** Logos, certificates and figures shown only as pictures were not counted. That is roughly how a search engine or an AI assistant reads a page, but a person looking at the screen may see more.
- **Size not verified.** “Mid-sized” is a judgement from what each site says. Two of the rug makers and one leather goods maker may be larger than that.
- **Not a random sample.** These are sites that came up in English searches and could be read. That favours sites already addressed to buyers abroad, so the weakest are under-represented.
- **Judgement calls.** A department name such as “Sales” given as a contact was counted as a sales designation. A buyer described only on an Indian project was counted under buyers described. A child-labour label was not counted as a social audit.
- **Quotes not reproduced.** The fetch tool summarises pages and can miss an item, so no wording from these sites is quoted beyond a few words of placeholder text. Patterns are described instead.
- **One day.** Sites change.

The results

Figures are sites out of 30. The evidence for each site is held by the author.

Point checked	Yes	No	Unclear
First home page heading says what the company makes	16	12	2
At least one export country or region named	21	7	2

Point checked	Yes	No	Unclear
A certificate named with the body that issued it	6	21	3
A certificate number given	1	29	0
A social audit named	8	22	0
Minimum order quantity stated	8	20	2
Production capacity stated as a number	6	23	1
Lead time stated	7	22	1
Carton or container packing given	0	29	1
HS code given	0	30	0
An Incoterm named	1	28	1
Payment terms stated	4	25	1
At least three buyers named, or described by country and type	5	24	1
A trade fair named	5	24	1
Enquiry form separate from the general contact form	10	14	6
WhatsApp link or number	15	15	0
Named person or sales designation as a contact	14	16	0
Main email on the company's own domain	23	5	2

Other things noticed

- **Placeholder or unfinished text** on 6 sites: a testimonial or chat widget signed “John Doe”, sample names, “Detail 1, Detail 2”, a certificate page reading “update soon”, a leftover heading from a template.
- **Figures that disagreed** between pages of the same site, on 6 sites: capacity, workforce, floor area, countries, minimum order.
- **Animated counters reading zero** in the page text, on 3 sites.

- **An audit called a certification** on at least 3 of the 8 sites that named a social audit.
- **A certificate shown past its stated validity** on 1 site.
- **Fairs named only from 2020 or earlier** on 3 of the 5 sites that named a fair.
- **Email addresses hidden** from the page text by an anti-spam tool on at least 6 sites, so that a reader of the text found none.

Read each figure as a count of what was found on the pages read, on one day, and as no measure of any one company. A site that scored poorly here may say much more on pages that were not read, and several of these companies clearly serve well-known buyers.

Work With EbizIndia

Everything in this book can be done by your own team. If you would like to see how your website reads to an overseas buyer, beside the two exporters you compete with most, I will go through it with you.

YOUR SITE BESIDE TWO COMPETITORS

Send me your website address and the names of two competitors. I review the three sites against the overseas buyer's five questions: are you real, do you make what I need, can you deliver, will you keep me out of trouble, and who has trusted you already.

Then I take you through what I found in 30 minutes, on a call or in person. You keep a one-page comparison of the three sites.

There is no charge, and no follow-up unless you ask for it. Your own web team is free to act on the comparison.

What EbizIndia does

EbizIndia builds and rebuilds websites, for exporters and manufacturers among others, so that a buyer abroad and a search engine can read what the company makes, whether it can deliver, what it holds in audits and certificates, and who has trusted it. The work starts with collecting the facts from your factory and your staff.

How to ask

Write to **arun@ebizindia.com** or WhatsApp **98310 27107** with your website address and the names of your two competitors. More about the company is at **ebizindia.com**.

Before the importer writes, she looks you up. **What does she find?**

Your export orders come through fairs, agents, buying houses and buyers who have known you for years. They will continue to. But a sourcing manager in Hamburg or Ohio cannot drive to your factory, so she opens your website first, often while your office is asleep.

For this book the websites of 30 Indian exporters were checked. A certificate number appeared on 1. Carton or container packing was given on none. Buyers were named or described on 5.

The book is built around the five questions an overseas buyer is settling:

- Are you real?
- Do you make what I need?
- Can you deliver my order, on time?
- Will you keep me out of trouble?
- Who has trusted you already?

It covers audits and certificates, buyers who find you through Google and AI assistants, and the route from a visit to an enquiry. A brief for your web team is at the back.

Nothing here promises a ranking. Every item can be checked on your own phone.

Arun Agrawal

AI Search Visibility Expert. He has worked in IT since 1986 and is the founder and CEO of EbizIndia Consulting Pvt. Ltd. He holds an M.E. (Gold Medal) from Jadavpur University, is a Charter Member of TiE, has spoken at industry events hosted by NASSCOM, TiE, CII, the Indian Chamber of Commerce, ICAI, MCCI and IIT Kharagpur, among others, has been quoted in The Times of India, and is the author of *Invisible to Prominent* and *Before the Buyer Calls*.