



Made by Niki stays in shape with state-of-the-art website

Fast facts

Company: Made by Niki

Industry: Retail - Fashion

Target Markets: USA, Online

UKTI Services: Passport to Export, Tradeshow Access Programme, Market Visit Support, E-Exporting Programme

www.madebyniki.co.uk



UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) provided funding for UK lingerie company Made by Niki to overhaul its website and improve its e-Commerce relationships with customers, retail buyers and partners.

Little in fashion remains taboo and lingerie is more visible in the marketplace than ever before. So, how does a forward-thinking fashion company make sure it gets noticed? Made by Niki gives shapewear and lingerie classics a modern voice, with daring designs that attract the interest of a host of loyal fashion bloggers, fans and customers, as well as countless celebrities and established fashion retailers.

Established in 2006, the company took off as mature student Niki McMorrough prepared coursework for her degree in Lingerie Design at De Montfort University in Leicester. Niki's designs first caught the eye of UK fashion icon Victoria Beckham, who bought some

lingerie for her personal wardrobe. Today, Made by Niki collections are carried by Coco de Mer in Covent Garden and more than 100 stockists in Europe and around the world.

"Lingerie and fashion are passions I share with millions of people worldwide," says Niki, CEO and Creative Director at Made by Niki. "Before becoming a full time student, I did short courses in textiles, fashion, printing and design. I also travelled the world meeting fabric suppliers and got a feel for the industry. I always dreamed of making my mark on the business. We were fortunate to develop a celebrity clientele and to connect with fashion influencers early on. Our brand was not so much launched as brought to market by loyal fans and brand evangelicals."

Paris and New York

Niki completed her first 100-piece collection by hand in September 2006. After launching a basic portfolio-style

website in 2007, the company started to receive interest from customers overseas. It turned to UKTI for advice and support, especially about exporting to the US market. Niki's Husband, Scott, and a friend from the Lingerie Design Degree Course, Lucy, joined the business in 2009.

Made by Niki joined Passport to Export, a UKTI programme that helps businesses to prepare for international markets, to learn about the legal and practical requirements of exporting to the USA and internationally.

"UKTI helped us to create a stronger online presence to maintain and boost our export sales"

Niki McMorrough, CEO and Creative Director at Made by Niki

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Niki McMorrough, CEO and Creative Director at Made by Niki

UKTI's Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) provided funding for the brand to attend seasonal fashion shows in Paris and New York between 2007 and 2012. Over the years, UKTI also provided Market Visit Support that has allowed the company to travel to private meetings in Holland, Ireland and the USA.

“In my previous working life I had been Head of Marketing for Ministry of Sound and Turner Broadcasting, so I was confident in my ability to operate a business,” says Niki. “However, we understood that we were new to the lingerie industry and using UKTI's services accelerated our entry into the market. They helped us to court the international fashion scene almost immediately after we launched and we soon started to enjoy seasonal sales of lingerie and shapewear lines worth £100,000, 50 per cent of which came from the US market.”

That community vibe

The impact that UKTI helped Made by Niki to make overseas boosted interest and exposure back in the UK too. In 2011 and 2012, the company won numerous UK Lingerie Awards, including Best Shapewear Brand and Most Innovative Brand.

Now a mainstay in the intimates industry, Made by Niki wanted to reinvigorate its website. The company received funding from UKTI to update and restructure its online presence to make it more attractive to global markets. Niki plans to join UKTI's e-Exporting Programme, which is soon to be launched to help brands and retailers with their online exports.

As a result of UKTI's support, Made by Niki's new improved website launched in July 2014, with a particular focus on making it easy to make online purchases from anywhere in the world. The company started to accept payment in 3 different currencies, the pound, the US dollar and the euro. Clear instructions

are included for customers, fashion buyers and stockists ordering from overseas, and all of its social networks are accessible with 1 click.

“UKTI helped us to create a stronger online presence to maintain and boost our export sales,” says Niki. “Social media can provide countless opportunities to interact with fans on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest, and we needed an inviting and functional website at the centre of it all. Now, if someone posts a picture of themselves wearing our lingerie with the tag #MadebyNiki, we can find and publish it on the website and all our social media networks and welcome them into our creative community. Having achieved such success working with UKTI experts in the last 8 years, we will continue to make the most of UKTI support as we grow online and overseas.”

The UK and the USA

The UK and the USA are each other's single largest investors and most important partners in science and innovation. In fact, more than a quarter of new investment projects in the UK come from US investors, and bilateral trade between the UK and the USA is worth around £120 billion per year.

In 2013, the USA continued to strengthen its relationship with the UK, funding 501 projects and creating 32,488 new jobs. About a million people in the USA work for British companies, while a further million in the UK work for American firms.

The US economy is integrated and largely self-contained, with every major industry represented. The sheer size of the USA means it should be treated as a series of regional markets with varying characteristics.

For further information about business opportunities in the USA, please go to gov.uk/ukti

UKTI's e-Exporting Programme

Being at the vanguard of e-commerce, UK companies are well placed to take advantage of digital opportunities that will allow them to access international markets.

UKTI's e-Exporting Programme can help UK retailers and brands accelerate their global growth via online channels.

By joining UKTI's e-Exporting Programme, you will be able to:

- get help and advice on building your online presence
- increase the reach of your brand globally
- identify new e-marketplaces around the world
- set up on e-marketplaces quickly
- attend retail/e-commerce themed events and webinars

To find out more about UKTI's e-Exporting Programme, visit gov.uk/e-exporting or speak to your local UKTI office.

UKTI was delighted to support Made by Niki in its business overseas.

To connect with an International Trade Adviser and begin your own success story now, visit gov.uk/ukti, or email enquiries@ukti.gsi.gov.uk

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