

Buying Agents Association formed



BUYING
AGENTS
ASSOCIATION

aims to facilitate regular interface of buying agents,
exporters and overseas buyers with various agencies

The 'Buying Agents Association(BAA)' was formally registered on 14th July, 2016, with the active support of leading buying agencies and EPCH to fulfill the expressed need of buying agents to get together formally and work to improve their standards and growth avenues.

BAA's inception dates back to 26th August, 2015, when a meeting of eminent and veteran buying agents was held with leading EPCH member exporters and Executive Director, EPCH, Mr. Rakesh Kumar, during which formation of a Buying Agent Association was proposed. Acknowledging buying agents' valued contribution to the handicrafts sector, Mr. Rakesh Kumar welcomed the buying agents and appreciated their endeavours towards promotion of exports from the country. He expressed confidence that the proposed association would give an identity to the services of buying agents/houses/representatives;

Main Objectives

To facilitate regular interface of buying agents, exporters and overseas buyers with various agencies viz. technology providers, testing laboratories, compliance & certification bodies, shipping agents, machine tools providers, etc.

To organize training & capacity building workshops for creating awareness amongst the manufacturers and their suppliers on social, quality and statutory compliances and various other trade related subjects.

To participate in national and international trade fairs, buyer-seller meets, road shows, symposiums, conferences related to the objects of BAA and to compile, edit and publish technical reports and papers related to the objects of the association to promote export from India.

Founding Members of the Buying Agents Association

Mr. Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH
Ms. Mandira Malik, CEO, Something Else
Mr. Rahul Khubchand, Partner, Indus Valley & Greenfields
Ms. Christine Elizabeth Rai, Founder & CEO, Indian Inc.
Dr. P. Vasudevan, India Merchandising Service
Mr. C S Unni, CEO, India Export Consultants
Ms. Aarti Bartholomew, CEO, Kairos Krimson Pvt. Ltd.
Ms. Puja Rautela, CEO, Flat World Buying Services
Mr. S S Bhatnagar, Chairman, Sakshay International
Mr. Vikas Dhingra, Partner, Speciality Merchandising Services Pvt. Ltd.

address trade issues/challenges; improve vendor performance and due diligence; and help in adapting best trade practices amongst exporters such as compliances, trainings, testing, etc. In a nutshell, BAA is a body of advisors to whom BAA members can call on for advice from time to time.

To develop a "Common Compliance Code" for adoption, recognition and implementation by the sector on pan India basis.

Consultancy and Inspection-Buying Agents are consultants and inspection agencies and BAA is to take up various trade issues of the sector relating to consultancy and inspection and other issues with the Govt. of India and also at various forums at the national & international levels.

To create/establish a 'Code of Conduct' for the industry in order to regulate the industry and establish best practices.

To hold training workshops, seminars, conferences in compliance, merchandising, production, quality control, packaging and relevant fields to actively improve the skill of our vendors and other buying agencies, by helping them to understand the requirements of overseas buyers.



Leading ladies of the trade: (L-R) – Ms. Pooja Rautela, CEO, Flat World; Ms. Mandira Malik, CEO, Something Else; Ms. Christine Rai, CEO, Indian Inc.; Ms. Aarti Bartholomew, CEO, Kairos Krimson; and Mrs. Sonali Bhatnagar from Shakshay International

Mandira Malik, CEO, Something Else

"Providing ethical, efficient and competitive sourcing, juxtaposed with global design and trends"

Initiated into this domain by her mother, late Mrs. Malik, a doyen of the Indian handicrafts industry, Ms. Mandira Malik, a graduate from Parsons School of Design, Paris in 1988, started Something Else with her mother.



With combined experience, skills & expertise they created an agency that provides services combining international design with traditional Indian materials & skills to create products for global consumers. Operating with an ISO 2000-9001 system they provide clients with a unique platform to interface with factories where they are assured of compliances, competitive sourcing as well as added value of latest trends. They work with 150 factories across India with a team of 40 professionals. Based in Delhi, they have satellite offices in Moradabad, Jaipur and Karur.

Rakesh Kumar, Executive Director, EPCH

"Come together, reach out, engage, expand, harness potential and explore new possibilities"

A Post Graduate in Public Administration and International Foreign Trade, Mr. Rakesh Kumar has dedicated 27 years in service to the growth and development of the handicrafts sector.



Administering EPCH to grow into a renowned trade body, known the world over, he has also shaped the growth of many successful businesses and individuals, directly and indirectly linked to this cottage sector. He is the Executive Director (CEO) of Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) that has a membership of over 9,500. Established in 1986, EPCH is a non-profit organization actively involved in development and export promotion of Indian handicrafts through skill development, design support, infrastructure development and marketing opportunities through participation in fairs, exhibitions and buyer-seller meets.

Aarti Bartholomew, CEO, Kairos Krimson Pvt. Ltd.

"Kairos Krimson stands for creative, innovative, ethical and sustainable solutions to promoting and encouraging business options for global retailers sourcing from India"

Founded in September 1991, Kairos Krimson Pvt. Ltd. works with a team of 107 employees. They are a specialized buying house for textiles, floor coverings, kitchen textiles, furniture, housewares, decoratives & decorative accessories and are successfully serving clients in USA and UK through their supplier base of 102 exporters. Based in Delhi they have branch offices in Moradabad, Jaipur, Jodhpur and Karur.



Rahul Khubchand, Partner, Indus Valley & Greenfields

"Doing business with India-the right way"

Indus Valley was set up in 1983 by Mr. Ranjit (Mony) Khubchand and followed by its sister concern, Greenfields in 1996 representing reputed wholesalers/ importers and select specialty stores, for their buying from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh & Indonesia. They have their own representative offices in these countries. Mr. Rahul Khubchand joined the organization in 1995 and has been instrumental in expanding not only the product categories serviced and the countries where Indus Valley & Greenfields are strategically positioned to extend their support & service but also many large international importers who have shown remarkable growth in their own businesses. He combines a unique blend of design & aesthetics and understanding of international markets, trade & finance and believes strongly in the value of nurturing business relationships - many of which are now in their second generation of existence.



Christine Elizabeth Rai, Founder & CEO, Indian Inc.

"To be the finest service provider where shared values lead to total customer satisfaction"

Indian Inc. is a buying and sourcing agency, set up in 1993 by Ms. Christine Rai. Her passion for handicrafts combined with her dynamic & creative force in the competitive business of export and design, has deservedly earned her a highly revered international reputation in this challenging domain. Indian Inc. has grown with a very strong client-service focus that places equal importance to product development as well as timely shipping and quality control. Headquartered in Delhi, it has a network of field offices in the main production centers of India besides an outreach to neighboring countries. They have a workforce of 160 including the merchandising team which caters to five product categories. They represent highly regarded international retailers, wholesalers including niche boutiques and e-Commerce businesses.



Puja Rautela, CEO, Flat World Buying Services

"Relationships without Boundaries"

Established in 2005-2006 by Ms. Neena Chitkara and Ms. Puja Rautela, Flat World is a reputed buying agency with a working strength of 100 people, working across all product categories in home, hard lines, textiles, apparel and furniture-one of the major strengths of the agency since they were one of the first Indian agencies to delve into this category in depth.



Vikas Dhingra, Partner, Speciality Merchandising Services Pvt. Ltd.

"We thrive to be an extended arm of our customers, represent their interest to the best of our ability and to be a global benchmark in customer satisfaction by embodying quality as a way of life"

Established in 1992, Speciality Merchandising Services is a full service organization providing sourcing, product development, merchandising, quality assurance & quality control and consolidation & logistics support to their customers, through offices in New Delhi, Shanghai, Dubai and New York. They represent the likes of AAFES, USA and work in product categories like gifts and accessories, apparel, floor coverings, lighting and home textiles.



C S Unni, CEO, India Export Consultants

"There are no secrets to success - It is the result of preparation, consistent hard work and learning to overcome failure!"

Established in 1989, India Export Consultants (IEC) was set up by Mr. C S Unni who has an experience of about 30 years in the home furnishings sector. Prior to starting IEC, he worked with Associated Merchandising Corporation (AMC), USA. IEC works as a representative (buying agent) for overseas buyers who deal in home products like furniture, brass, silver plated metal, wood, glass, iron and stainless steel handicrafts, textile made-ups, etc. IEC's current business activities are from Delhi, Saharanpur, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Moradabad, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Madras, Bangalore, Karur, Panipat, Mumbai etc. which are the major production centers for wood / metal / textile products and miscellaneous items.



P Vasudevan, India Merchandising Service

"Through hard work, increase the exports of our country by providing employment to our craftsmen and spread the ideals of the Father of the Nation"

After working for 16 years with American buying house- Associated Merchandising Corporation, Mr. P Vasudevan set up India Merchandising Services (IMS) in 1991 to handle purchase of Williams Sonoma Group of Stores. In 1997 they ended up shipping USD 42 million worth of merchandise at cost. Currently, they work for wholesalers, retailers and mail order companies in USA, Europe, South Africa, etc. with a 25 members team. They work with 150 exporters from all across the country, educating them about buyers' quality requirements, packaging specialties, shipping guidelines, etc. Mr. Vasudevan has been awarded with a honest tax payer (in proprietorship category) and a Life Time Achievement Award for his contribution towards promotion of handicrafts from India.



S S Bhatnagar, Chairman, Sakshay International

"A leading sourcing company in India, offering quality and integrity in every service"

Established over two decades ago, Sakshay International started its operations as a buying house from its office in New Delhi specializing mainly in sourcing of handcrafted items along with exquisite gift items, garments and home furnishings. Sakshay being a process driven organization with a well-knit network of vendors has been catering to the needs of its clients worldwide by offering the best quality merchandise at most competitive prices. Sakshay International is supported by a qualified team of over fifty people and international associates in Singapore, New Zealand, Venezuela & New York.



Socio Legal Standards Handbook



EPCH has brought out a handbook on necessary compliances in the handicrafts sector - released in 11 regional languages

The Guidance Handbook on Socio Legal Standards which contains chapters providing knowledge and information of the applicable laws/ rules as well as the international standards that pertain to social and environmental compliance within the industry. For more details please visit:

www.epch.in/compliancehandbook/