International Post Corporation

An Postâ€™s â€˜UK Directâ€™ opens door to Britain for Irish SMEs

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UK Direct gives Irish SMEs a seamless route to the UK market through: Innovative technology which bridges the trade gap and accelerates growth by overcoming the obstacles to sending parcels from Ireland to the UK post-Brexit; Pre-cleared UK customs and three-day e-commerce parcel delivery to the UK via Dublin Port; End-to-end tracking and an integrated customer-friendly Returns service

As Irish small and medium sized businesses continue to face complexity, cost and considerable delays when shipping to Britain, UK Direct provides seamless innovation to firms wishing to sell, ship and scale up into Britain's 69 million-strong consumer market. Firms simply register to integrate with the new UK Direct service, a full turn-key solution including advance customs payments, 3-day delivery with end to end tracking.

Between customs charges and the exacting compliance demands of Brexit, selling into Britain has become increasingly difficult for Irish small and medium-sized firms. Despite all the red tape however, Enterprise Ireland1 forecasts that 97% of Irish companies want to expand into new markets over the next 12 months and in their recent pilot programme for potential new exporters, circa two thirds of participants prioritised the UK as their target market.

An Post worked closely with Irish SMEs to understand the full extent of their difficulties in trying to expand their trade with the UK. In designing the new service, and partnering with Royal Mail, An Post is providing SMEs with a bridge directly into the vast UK market, a seamless shopping experience for UK consumers, and a simple secure system for Returns and Refunds.

Launching UK Direct, An Post CEO David McRedmond said:
"UK-Irish trade is central to Ireland's economy. This new UK Direct solution reopens that market for businesses facing the challenges posed by Brexit. Ireland's 400,000+ SMEs are the backbone of this economy, and in building new infrastructure for Ireland, An Post is opening doors to new trade with the UK through a full end-to-end service from one of Ireland's most trusted companies.

"UK Direct removes barriers to trade,

providing Irish SMEs with access to over 69 million new customers. Instead of being tied up in the complexities of customs fees or other red tape, they can focus on huge growth opportunities and ensuring a top quality retail experience for their new UK customers", he added.

Welcoming the announcement, Kara Owen, British Ambassador to Ireland, added:
"I'm delighted to see this new service come to life through such strong cooperation between An Post and Royal Mail. Businesses on both sides of the Irish Sea want simple, dependable ways to reach their customers, and UK Direct delivers exactly that. What matters most is giving firms the confidence to trade and grow — and that comes from practical, workable solutions like this. By making everyday commerce easier, we are strengthening our 2€ billion a week trading relationship, the economic ties that sustain the UK–Ireland relationship and support to communities and customers across both our countries."

Fiona Fitzsimons, CEO of contemporary Irish jewellery company, Betty and Biddy said
"This UK Direct service is a total gamechanger for us. We get enquiries from the UK all the time but right now, trying to navigate initial customs charges and reliable delivery in the UK, never mind customer returns, is a total nightmare. An Post currently handles our national parcels and this new UK service will help take our business to the next level, something we've been working towards for a long time."

Simon McKeever, CEO of the Irish Exporters Association, commented:
"The Irish Exporters Association supports Irish businesses to expand their market into the UK. Today's announcement marks a positive shift in how Ireland can do business with our nearest neighbour. There's a massive market ready and waiting for quality Irish products and it's now within the grasp of Irish SMEs, thanks to this practical and highly innovative UK Direct service."

As Ireland's leading logistics expert, An Post's new UK Direct solution is set to accelerate trade from Ireland into the UK, fuelling critical economic growth.

Source: An Post

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