Mission / Purpose

The mission of the Alabama International Trade Center is to increase the level of international trade activity for small businesses in Alabama, fostering expansion of the state’s economy. This mission is part of the University’s role of service and outreach to existing industry for economic development. The AITC utilizes teams of UA professional staff, consultants, and students to provide research, training, and counseling services to small business clients. The Center operates on a contract basis as a federal-state-university partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the State of Alabama, and other federal, state, and local organizations. The AITC is subject to SBA and other program reviews and financial audits.

Other Outcomes, along with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

OthOtcm 1: Assist small businesses with international trade
Assist small businesses statewide through individual research, counseling, and training in international trade.

Connected Document
Alabama International Trade Center Timetable 2013-2014

Related Measures

M 1: Annually assess client counseling assistance with MIS system
Assess client counseling assistance annually with a Management Information Software (MIS) system to track service coverage by county, number of clients assisted, and number of hours of assistance provided.

Production reports are compiled from the Management Information Software system and reviewed every three months to track performance against goals. The production reports are reviewed by the center's management team and used to assist staff consultants in providing direction for client counseling and meeting goals. The data is used to compile semi-annual reports to funding agencies to show performance versus project goals.

Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Target:
Serve 25 small business clients per quarter and 100 per year.

Finding (2013-2014) - Target: Met
AITC staff counselors served a total of 201 clients located in 51 counties and provided 2,207 hours of counseling assistance. The center exceeded its annual goals.

M 2: Use of evaluations to assess the quality of counseling and training
Assess the quality of counseling and training through use of evaluation surveys completed by small business clients.

Counseling surveys are sent to active clients during June, July and August each year. The clients are asked to complete a series of questions to rate the quality of the services provided and counseling experience. The surveys are compiled and reviewed by the management team for improvements.

In addition, surveys are distributed to attendees at AITC workshops to collect feedback on two main indicators - if the information was presented effectively and if the information was practical. The surveys also collect demographic information on minority status and all attendees to suggest future workshop topics of interest.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

Target:
Maintain minimum response rate of 10% of total clients within one year.
Maintain minimum of 80% client satisfaction rate.

OthOtcm 2: Track progress and economic impact
Track progress and economic impact of assistance through annual client survey

Connected Document
Alabama International Trade Center Timetable 2013-2014

Related Measures

M 3: Survey of client progress to collect economic impact
Conduct an annual survey of client progress to collect impact in terms of export sales made and export financing secured. The assessment is conducted by telephone and personal visits to provide feedback on services, improvements, and future actions with each client.

Staff counselors conduct an annual telephone and in-person interview with the Center's clients that have reported progress to make international sales and enter foreign markets as a result of the Center's and the client's actions. The purpose of the interview is to quantify the amount of foreign sales completed and identify the amount of export financing secured to support exports. The interview is also used to identify areas of assistance for the next fiscal year period.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

Target:
Help create a minimum of $5 million in export sales per year for clients.

**Finding (2013-2014) - Target: Met**
Client actions based on counselor assistance from the Center helped to secure $9.3 million in export sales and $1.75 million in export financing.

**OthOtcn 3: Provide practical training on international trade to UA students**
Provide practical training on international trade to UA students through internships whereby students assist in the delivery of services to small businesses

**Connected Document**
Alabama International Trade Center Timetable 2013-2014

**Related Measures**

**M 4: Recruit students for AITC internships**
Recruit graduate and undergraduate students interested in international trade careers for AITC internships. Use announcements, an application and interview process to select students. Conduct an orientation and training program for interns and assign students to work under the supervision of professional staff. Track the placement of graduating AITC interns in international trade jobs.

Student interns are recruited through crimson careers and the AITC website. Interviews are conducted during May and December. Students selected for the internships complete an orientation training program. Interns are provided a research manual that contains typical client requests for foreign market information, sources used to find the requested information, and sample research reports and output formats for presenting the findings to client companies. AITC professional staff provides supervision for student interns for daily assignments and direction to help students excel in finding and reporting foreign market information and in understanding client needs. Reports generated by each intern are reviewed by the AITC professional staff before its given to the client. The Center maintains an intern database to help track job placement by AITC interns in international trade related career paths.

**Source of Evidence:** Administrative measure - other

**Target:**
Provide a minimum of 5 to 8 undergraduate internships per year.

**Finding (2013-2014) - Target: Met**
Fourteen UA students completed internships with the AITC.
Mission / Purpose

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Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

OthOtcm 1: Assist small businesses with international trade
Assist small businesses statewide through individual research, counseling, and training in international trade.

Related Measures

M 1: Annually assess client counseling assistance with MIS system
Assess client counseling assistance annually with a Management Information Software (MIS) system to track service coverage by county, number of clients assisted, and number of hours of assistance provided.

Production reports are compiled from the Management Information Software system and reviewed every month to track performance against goals. The production reports are reviewed by the center's management team and used to assist staff consultants in providing direction for client counseling and meeting goals. The data is used to compile semi-annual reports to funding agencies to show performance versus project goals.

Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Target:
Serve 25 small business clients per quarter and 100 per year.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
AITC staff counselors served a total of 229 clients located in 54 counties and provided 2,619 hours of counseling assistance. The overall result was the center exceeded its annual goals.

M 2: Client Surveys are sent to firm 90 days after start of counseling
Assess the quality of counseling and training through use of evaluation surveys completed by small business clients.

Counseling surveys are sent to active clients 90 days after start of counseling. The clients are asked to complete a series of questions to rate the quality of the services provided and counseling experience. The surveys are compiled and reviewed by the management team for improvements.

In addition, surveys are distributed to attendees at AITC workshops to collect feedback on two main indicators - if the information was presented effectively and if the information was practical. The surveys also collect demographic information on minority status and all attendees to suggest future workshop topics of interest.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

Target:
Maintain minimum response rate of 10% of total clients within one year.

Maintain minimum of 80% client satisfaction rate.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
The center revised the counseling evaluation form and implemented a different timetable for collection.

OthOtcm 2: Track progress and economic impact
Track progress and economic impact of assistance through annual client survey

Related Measures

M 3: Survey of client progress to collect economic impact
Conduct an annual survey of client progress to collect impact in terms of export sales made and export financing secured. The assessment is conducted by telephone and personal visits to provide feedback on services, improvements, and future actions with each client.

Staff counselors conduct an annual telephone and in-person interview with the Center's clients that have reported progress to make international sales and enter foreign markets as a result of the Center's and the client's actions. The purpose of the interview is to quantify the amount of foreign sales completed and identify the amount of export financing secured to support exports. The interview is also used to identify areas of assistance for the next fiscal year period.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations
Target:
Help create a minimum of $5 million in export sales per year for clients.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Client actions based on counselor assistance from the Center helped to secure $12 million in export sales and $3 million in export financing.

OthOtcm 3: Provide practical training on international trade to UA students

Provide practical training on international trade to UA students through internships whereby students assist in the delivery of services to small businesses

Connected Document
Alabama International Trade Center Timetable 2012-2013

Related Measures

M 4: Recruit students for AITC internships
Recruit graduate and undergraduate students interested in international trade careers for AITC internships. Use announcements and an application and interview process to select students. Conduct an orientation and training program for interns and assign students to work under the supervision of professional staff. Track the placement of graduating AITC interns in international trade jobs.

Student interns are recruited through crimson careers and the AITC website. Interviews are conducted during May and December. Students selected for the internships complete an orientation training program. Interns are provided a research manual that contains typical client requests for foreign market information, sources used to find the requested information, and sample research reports and output formats for presenting the findings to client companies. AITC professional staff provides supervision for student interns for daily assignments and direction to help students excel in finding and reporting foreign market information and in understanding client needs. Reports generated by each intern are reviewed by the AITC professional staff before its given to the client. The Center maintains an intern database to help track job placement by AITC interns in international trade related career paths.

Source of Evidence: Administrative measure - other

Target:
Provide a minimum of 5 to 8 undergraduate internships per year.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Seventeen UA students completed internships with the AITC.
Mission / Purpose

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Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

OthOtcm 1: Assist small businesses with international trade

Assist small businesses statewide through individual research, counseling, and training in international trade.

Related Measures

M 1: Annually assess client counseling assistance with MIS system
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Production reports are compiled from the Management Information Software system and reviewed every three months to track performance against goals. The production reports are reviewed by the center's management team and used to assist staff consultants in providing direction for client counseling and meeting goals. The data is used to compile semi-annual reports to funding agencies to show performance versus project goals.

Source of Evidence: Activity volume

Target:
No target established

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
The results of the assessment showed that AITC staff counselors served a total of 243 clients located in 55 counties and provided 3,827 hours of counseling assistance. The average number of hours per case for the year was 15.75 hours, an indicator of in-depth counseling assistance. The overall result was the Center exceeded its annual goals.

M 2: Use of evaluations to assess the quality of counseling and training
Assess the quality of counseling and training through use of evaluation surveys completed by small business clients.

Counseling surveys are sent to active clients during June, July and August each year. The clients are asked to complete a series of questions to rate the quality of the services provided and counseling experience. The surveys are compiled and reviewed by the management team for improvements.

In addition, surveys are distributed to attendees at AITC workshops to collect feedback on two main indicators - if the information was presented effectively and if the information was practical. The surveys also collect demographic information on minority status and all attendees to suggest future workshop topics of interest.

Source of Evidence: Evaluations

Target:
no target established

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
The center received 25 completed counseling surveys from 243 for a response rate of 10%. All respondents felt the counseling services provided responded to their needs; 100% of respondents agreed the counselors possessed the necessary skills to assist them; all respondents would recommend the service to other businesses.

The Center collected surveys from 73 attendees at 4 workshops. The surveys indicated that 95% strongly agreed or agreed that the information was presented effectively; and 92% strongly agreed or agreed that the information presented was practical.

OthOtcm 2: Track progress and economic impact

Track progress and economic impact of assistance through annual client survey

Related Measures

M 3: Survey of client progress to collect economic impact
Conduct an annual survey of client progress to collect impact in terms of export sales made and export financing secured. The assessment is conducted by telephone and personal visits to provide feedback on services, improvements, and future actions with each client.
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**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
Client actions based on counselor assistance from the Center helped to secure $18.7 million in export sales and $10.9 million in export financing.

**OthOtcm 3: Provide practical training on international trade to UA students**
Provide practical training on international trade to UA students through internships whereby students assist in the delivery of services to small businesses

**Connected Document**
Alabama International Trade Center Timetable 2011-2012

**Related Measures**

**M 4: Recruit students for AITC internships**
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**Source of Evidence:** Administrative measure - other

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
Seventeen UA students completed internships with the AITC.
## Timetable: What Assessment Measures will be Administered When for Each Expected Outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Outcome #1</th>
<th>Outcome #2</th>
<th>Outcome #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Training surveys</td>
<td>Annual Economic Impact Report</td>
<td>Intern Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>MIS Reporting</td>
<td>Counseling Surveys</td>
<td>Intern Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Training surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intern Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Training surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intern Recruitment &amp; Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>MIS Reporting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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