



MASSACHUSETTS DISTRICT

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Optim LLC named Exporter of the Year

STEP grants helped open doors to international trade shows and key markets

BOSTON – The Small Business Administration (SBA) has named Optim LLC the 2019 Exporter of the Year for Massachusetts and New England.

Optim LLC earned the recognition for outstanding international sales activity; and innovations in the medical, security and industrial markets. The company develops, manufactures and supports state-of-the-art endoscopy products and accessories that help medical professionals, law enforcement officers and industrial users work more effectively and efficiently.

“Export sales have been vital to Optim’s overall increase in revenue and a key ingredient for small businesses sustainability in today’s global marketplace,” said SBA Massachusetts District Director, Robert Nelson. “Leveraging special initiative grants such as the State Trade Expansion Program, allows small businesses to direct resources into other areas of growing their company and connects them with key resources such as our state partners – the Massachusetts Export Center and the Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment. “

In the last 3 years, export sales have grown from approximately 5% of total revenue to over 10% of total revenue. Led by Director of International Sales Grace Preston, Optim experienced a record increase for international sales growth by about 49% from 2016 to 2017. In 2019, exports are forecast to grow by another 20%.

“We are honored to be this year’s recipient of the 2019 Exporter of Year for MA and New England award,” said Doug Hughes, CEO and President. “This award is confirmation of Optim’s focus on global growth, the efforts set forth by our committed team who build by hand a world-class solution to a global client base, and our focus on product innovation and customer satisfaction.”

Starting in 2016, Optim has been awarded STEP grants in consecutive years to assist with overseas business development activities.

- The first grant in the amount of \$8,500 was used to provide local translations and Gold Key Matchmaking services to participate in the Arab Health trade show in Dubai.
- In 2017, Optim was awarded a STEP grant in the amount of \$10,000 and utilized it to participate in the Security and Counter Terror Expo in London.
- In 2018, Optim was awarded a STEP grant in the amount of \$12,000 to participate in the SOFEX Show in Amman, Jordan.
- Most recently in 2019, Optim was awarded the STEP grant in the amount of \$12,000 which was used to participate at Medica in Dusseldorf, Germany.

All of these international trade activities would have been beyond Optim’s capacity without the assistance of grant awards and export resource providers.

“Optim achieved success by significantly revamping its’ international marketing strategy with a focus on assessing current markets and sales partners,” said Julia Dvorko, Regional Program Director for the Central & Western Massachusetts MA Export Center/MSBDC. “Optim eliminated underperforming partners in Belgium and Denmark and appointed new partners in Sweden, Israel and Chile, all of which have had a strong impact on international growth.”

The company was nominated by Julia Dvorko, Regional Director Central and Western Mass International Trade Program/ MSBDC Network, a staff member of UMass Amherst Isenberg School of Management.

Grace Preston, Director of International Sales will be honored at the annual SCORE Boston / SBA awards luncheon along with other 2019 Massachusetts Small Business Week winners at Assumption College on Wednesday, May 8th, 2019.

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About the U.S. Small Business Administration

The U.S. Small Business Administration makes the American dream of business ownership a reality. As the only go-to resource and voice for small businesses backed by the strength of the federal government, the SBA empowers entrepreneurs and small business owners with the resources and support they need to start and grow their businesses. It delivers services to people through an extensive network of SBA field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations. To learn more, visit www.sba.gov.