

QUALITY PARTNERSHIPS contributed to the bulletin of the Swiss-Chinese Chamber of Commerce with this Q&A article.

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For the whole issue and more information about the Chamber please visit [www.swisscham.org/bei](http://www.swisscham.org/bei).

# Entering the China Market: Handle With Care!

Swiss national Klaus Ziegler, manager of the **Seconded European Standardization Expert for China** Project (SESEC), and owner of **Quality Partnerships GmbH**, a company offering technical support for certifications for market access in China, shares with us insights on entering and selling in the China market.



**Q Klaus Ziegler, first, a very straightforward question: is it easy to get the relevant certifications for selling in China?**

**Ziegler:** It depends on the kind of certification required, and who helps you to get it. The most widespread certification is the so-called CCC, **China Compulsory Certification**, which covers a very broad range of industries. On paper, the CCC process is very linear, but companies often find that in reality it is a very different story.

**Q Why?**

**Ziegler:** We could sum it up to three main causes: the large **room for interpretation** in **some** regulations; poor preparation by

agents who handle the application on behalf of clients; and a **lack of networks** within the Chinese system, as is the case with many foreign companies.

**Q Then, what would you recommend Swiss companies to do?**

**Ziegler:** With no hesitation and no doubt: **choose well** who is going to assist you with the certification process. And ensure that **your IP** is well protected before going off to China!

**Q Many believe that it is easier for Chinese companies to enter the European market than for a foreign company to sell in China. Would you agree with that?**

**Ziegler:** This is not entirely correct - **Switzerland is in the rare position that it enjoys a positive trade balance** with China, selling more goods into China than it buys, which is not the case with the EU or the US. The deficit of the major trading partners of China is more a result of the structure and less due to trade barriers. Nevertheless, the European Chamber points out that a considerable amount of **potential trade is lost due to technical barriers**. Such barriers can be eliminated only in close cooperation with China. **Global harmonization of standards is the key** to accessing the China markets - this can be achieved by inviting and accepting China as an equal partner in all relevant institutions.

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