



YOUR GUIDE TO
EXPORTING



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POLAROID
From the UAE



“Dubai, the major global city in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the gateway to the Middle East of modern times, is on the up and up.”

We all know about the skyscrapers and the cranes (many of them courtesy of Multiplex) dominating the Dubai skyline, but now...

Dubai is going in for expansion of a different kind with shopping malls, marinas and various lifestyle activities to entertain the occupants of all those high-rise apartments.

There's Burj Dubai the Dubai Mall, the Mall of the Arabias, Dubailand, and a series of off-shore marina-type cities such as The Palm Deira and The Palm Jebel Ali.

So, why all this focus on malls? "It's basically because the locals like to shop, and it's too hot for the expatriates to do anything else with their kids in the middle of the day," says Peter Linford, Australia's Dubai-based Senior Trade Commissioner for the Middle East.

In Linford's three years in Dubai, he has seen a massive growth in Australian companies setting up in Dubai to launch their Middle East operations. "It's a real gateway to the region, like a Singapore or Hong Kong. And with Emirates Airlines having its hub here, it's a great place for Australian exporters to base themselves for doing business in the Gulf States, the Middle East (in general) and even North Africa – where new opportunities are beginning to be tapped into." Linford says.

The new developments in Dubai have certainly brought in many great opportunities for Australian companies. I couldn't help but overhear Australian accents when attending business functions around town. According to the Australian Consulate's James Wyndham, there are around 12,000 Aussies here, compared to about 3000 six years ago.

Nowhere is that more apparent than at the 'Mother of all Malls' in the Burj Dubai.

Check out this for evidence of a 'Kangaroo mafia' in the UAE. At Burj Dubai: the leasing of the shops is managed by Melbourne's Jeanette Bennett and Fred Douglas; the architecture was designed by Wood Bagot; the food concept for the mall is being undertaken by Future Foods, a small Melbourne niche exporter; and the mall's aquarium (containing 35,000 tropical fish and a good handful of sharks and stingrays) is being installed by the Melbourne aquarium company, Oceanis. In fact, even before construction, the entire site's masterplan was developed by Modelcraft – run by Sydney modeller, Matthew Roche.

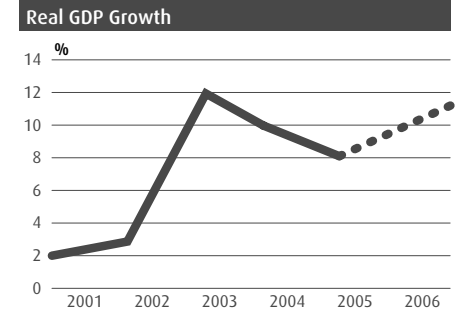
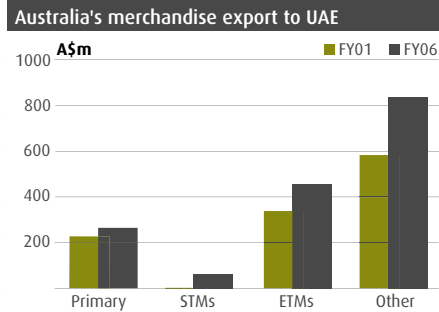
So what of the UAE's future? It's a matter of living beyond oil. According to Peter Linford, "There's plenty of diversification within the UAE, to Abu Dhabi and also elsewhere in the Gulf. This will bring new opportunities in education and training, environmental technology and agribusiness as well as in retail, hospitality, recreation and leisure activities." Linford points to the example of the University of Wollongong's campus in Dubai and the success of the leading agribusiness firms like GRM (led by the experienced Stewart Routledge) as great examples for others to follow.

So expect bigger things for Australian companies in Dubai, and in the UAE, the Gulf States and Middle East as a whole. Dubai will continue to be a place of growth and expansion as the UAE moves beyond an energy – export dependent economy. And expect to see a lot more Aussie action when the Burj Dubai opens. The 'Mall' is certainly in our court.

Tim Harcourt is chief economist at Austrade and author of *Beyond Our Shores* www.austrade.gov.au/economistscorner

General Information

Capital	Abu Dhabi
Surface area	84 thousand sq km
Population	4.7 million (2005)
Exchange rate	A\$1 = 2.7576 Dirhams (July 2006)



Australia's Trade Relationship with UAE

MAJOR AUSTRALIAN EXPORTS*, 2005-06 (A\$m)	
Passenger motor vehicles	277
Non-monetary gold	86
Meat (excl. bovine) f.c.f.	66
Zinc	62

*Includes A\$674m of confidential items, 41% of total exports.

Compiled by the Market Information and Analysis Section, DFAT www.dfat.gov.au/geo/

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