

## So the small ones can conquer the world

Digital foreign trade platform created by Brazilian firm Intradebook will be used in United Nations projects focused on female entrepreneurs. The solution helps small and medium-sized companies to export.

**Isaura Daniel\***

São Paulo – A digital foreign trade platform created by a Brazilian company will be used in projects run by the United Nations (UN). It will be used mainly to connect small and medium-sized companies to the international business environment. The creator of the system is Intradebook, a company from Florianópolis, capital of Santa Catarina state, and the platform was named after the firm.

Intradebook was founded in 2012 by economist Alfredo Kleper Lavor. He used to teach courses on foreign trade to small and medium-sized companies at the Brazilian Micro and Small Business Support Service (Sebrae) and he noticed the trouble that entrepreneurs had concerning foreign trade routine, markets and logistics. That's when Lavor started to plan the InTrade software.

The platform is divided in modules. InTrade is an import and export step-by-step guide, a distance training. InBusiness brings free advertising of export offers and import demands and it's the place where international sellers and buyers can make contact. There's also the InService, a list of foreign trade and logistics services, and InControl, a panel where export and import operations can be tracked and monitored.

The development of the digital solution began effectively in 2013 and concluded at the end of last year. Currently, there are over 10,000 companies registered, from which 2,500 are active, that is, are operating. Users come from 98 countries, with Brazil leading the way in numbers, followed by Colombia, Peru, Mexico, India, Argentina and Spain, according to information that Lavor sent to ANBA via email.



The international agreement came after the company contacted the International Trade Centre (ITC) mid-2016. ITC is a development agency dedicated to the support of the internationalization of small and medium-sized companies, a joint initiative by the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

ITC, also called Intracen, works for small and medium-sized companies from developing and transition economies to become more competitive and to connect to international markets, increasing their revenues and creating jobs, especially among women, young people and poor communities.

Lavor says that in the second half of last year, ITC returned the contacts made by Intradebook and analyzed the platform and asked for more information. Two months later a draft for a memorandum of understanding with the company was ready and was signed in March of this year. By the agreement, Intradebook will contribute with ITC in projects such as WomanAcrossBorders and SheTrades.

WomanAcrossBorders offers business training to 2,300 female entrepreneurs from Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania and SheTrades aims to train and empower for foreign trade 800,000 female entrepreneurs throughout the world using the Intradebook platform. "With the projects from ITC, the distribution by countries will change," says Lavor on the leading nations on the number of users that currently uses Intradebook.

Intradebook will make available the platform and ITC will promote it for the women affiliated with the projects. In the case of WomanAcrossBorders, the company will develop a version of the platform in Swahili, which is spoken by 40 million people in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. According to Lavor, Intradebook and Intracen will probably launce a contact center to better help the entrepreneurs.

The use of the platform is free of charge but the users can choose some additional functions if they so choose, such as storage space for documents and issuance of digitalized documents. According to Lavor, they are still evaluating what will be the functions charged for, but by the agreement with ITC the basic version will always be free to allow for the access of all the small companies in the world, no distinction made.

Intradebook was incubated by MIDI Tecnológico, an incubator project by Sebrae and the Association of Technology Companies of Santa Catarina (Acate). The process started early in 2013 and the company graduated in 2016, meaning that it went through all the phases of the operation. It also received subsidies through the program Tecnova, from the Funding Authority for Studies and Projects (FINEP) and the Research Support Foundation of Santa Catarina State (Fapesc), and had three projects as beneficiaries of Sebraetec, a national services program on innovation and technology.

Intradebook has, in addition to the founding partner, a major shareholder, the attorney and businesswoman Denise Karst Felix. The company aims to include all employees as partners.

## **Contact info**

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