



NAVIGATING NON-TARIFF BARRIERS AND GLOBAL TRADE CHALLENGES WITH BILL EDWARDS – October 23, 2025

The Global Chamber® Export-Import Forum, moderated by **Anita Rodal**, featured **Bill Edwards**, CEO and Global Trade Advisor at Edwards Global Services, in a dynamic and highly informative discussion on international trade challenges and non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that impact businesses especially small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

The conversation explored regulatory, compliance, and cultural challenges that companies face when entering global markets, and how to navigate these obstacles effectively through market research, local partnerships, and access to international resources.

Moderated by **Anita Rodal**, President of SVPI Services, the session brought together exporters, consultants, and business leaders focused on expanding international trade opportunities. **Bill Edwards**, who has managed projects in over 50 countries, shared his expertise on global market entry, trade policy, and compliance management.

Bill emphasized that while tariffs are often discussed in trade policy, non-tariff barriers — including certification requirements, labeling regulations, customs procedures, and shifting political environments — often create even greater obstacles for small exporters. “About half of all non-tariff barriers serve legitimate public purposes,” Bill explained, “But the other half can act as discriminatory trade barriers — depending on market.”

Listen to the YouTube interview at this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7_pH5kSF6Q

Key Takeaways

Non-tariff barriers hit SMEs hardest.

SMEs often face higher fixed costs and uncertainty due to regulatory requirements and local certification processes, making international expansion more complex and expensive.

Local partners accelerate market entry.

Real-world examples, such as working with halal certification partners in the Middle East,



Recipient of the US Presidential “E” and “E” Star Awards for Excellence in Exporting



showed how strategic local relationships can reduce market entry time from months to weeks.

Regulatory compliance is country-specific.

Markets like Brazil and India require local testing, complex labeling, and lengthy import approval cycles. Understanding each country's system — and keeping up with frequent changes — is critical.

The EU presents unique compliance challenges.

From CE marking and multilingual labeling to strict GMO regulations, European markets require product adaptation and continuous compliance efforts.

Research before entry.

Bill encouraged exporters to leverage **trade.gov**, the **U.S. Commercial Service**, and **Global Chamber® connections** to identify and navigate country-specific trade barriers before investing heavily.

Cultural adaptation drives success.

Examples like KFC's menu localization in China illustrate how cultural awareness and product customization improve market performance and brand trust.

Reflections on Global Trade

The discussion underscored the importance of understanding and adapting to international trade environments. By combining strong local partnerships, deep market research, and a commitment to cultural understanding, businesses can overcome barriers and thrive globally.

Global Chamber® continues to provide a trusted platform for global trade leaders to exchange insights, foster collaboration, and drive international business growth.

About the Speakers

Bill Edwards

CEO & Global Trade Advisor, Edwards Global Services, Bill has decades of experience in international operations and consulting, having worked in more than 50 countries. His firm specializes in guiding U.S. companies through global expansion, helping clients navigate regulatory frameworks, franchise development, and cross-border market entry strategies. Bedwards@edwardsglobal.com

Anita Rodal

President, SVPI Services & Moderator, Global Chamber® Export-Import Forum, Anita is an expert in global business strategy, import/export operations, and cultural alignment in

international trade. She leads the monthly Export-Import Forum at Global Chamber®, fostering global connections and knowledge exchange among trade professionals. anita@sbpiservices.com

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