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From Telangana to Berlin: A Case Study of Cross-Border B2B Market Entry, Prospect Development and Multi-Channel Outreach in the European Industrial Battery Sector

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Abstract

Cross-border business development in specialized industrial markets requires a sequence of research, prospect qualification and relationship-building activities before commercial outcomes can be assessed. This paper examines how an India-based advisory team organized early-stage B2B market development for an industrial battery-sector client targeting European buyers. It adopts a qualitative, descriptive single-case design based on the author's participation in a project undertaken in 2026, supported by non-confidential process documentation and published literature. The case describes four linked activities: industry and market scanning; prospect identification and segmentation; lead-stage management; and coordinated outreach through professional networking, telephone contact and email. Rather than testing channel effectiveness, the study develops an operational account of how these activities can be combined within a small advisory team. Its contribution is a process framework and four propositions for future empirical examination concerning qualification discipline, channel complementarity, contextual adaptation and continuity of documentation. Proprietary prospect records, contact information and campaign outcomes are not disclosed. The paper is therefore an exploratory account of process design, not a statistical evaluation of outreach performance or export success.

Keywords: international market entry; business-to-business marketing; prospect development; customer relationship management; industrial batteries; qualitative case study

1. Introduction

For an industrial supplier, entry into a new country rarely begins with an immediate sale. Before a buyer can evaluate a proposed relationship, the supplier or its representative must identify relevant organizations, understand their applications, find the appropriate roles, explain the offering and manage follow-up. These steps are especially consequential when the prospective supplier is unfamiliar to the buyer and the product category involves technical specifications, reliability expectations and compliance obligations.

The European industrial battery sector provides a useful context for studying such preparatory work. Batteries used in industrial, stationary and backup applications sit within an evolving regulatory environment. Regulation (EU) 2023/1542 sets requirements for batteries and waste batteries placed on the European Union market, with obligations that depend on battery category, relevant dates and other conditions (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2023). This paper does not assess a particular manufacturer's conformity; instead, it treats regulatory awareness as a relevant topic in preliminary market scanning.

Existing research addresses international market entry through relational and digital approaches (Watson et al., 2018),



while CRM research emphasizes the organizational functions associated with managing customer relationships (Kevork & Vrechopoulos, 2009). Less visible in those broad frameworks is the everyday arrangement of research, classification, follow-up and handoffs by a small advisory team during the exploratory phase of a cross-border engagement. The purpose here is to make that process explicit without making claims that the available evidence cannot support.

The research asks: (RQ1) How can a small advisory team organize early-stage prospect development for cross-border industrial B2B outreach? (RQ2) What distinct roles can professional networking, calls and email play within an integrated contact process? (RQ3) Which process-design considerations warrant testing in future research?

2. Literature and Conceptual Background

2.1 International market entry and relationship development

Watson et al. (2018) distinguish relational, digital and hybrid approaches to international market entry. Their work provides a lens for considering why digital discovery and professional profiles may complement rather than replace interpersonal contact. In an industrial setting, several roles may participate in assessment, and initial outreach must often be followed by more detailed technical or commercial dialogue. This paper uses the hybrid perspective to interpret the design of outreach activities, not to assume that a specific combination produced superior outcomes.

2.2 Industry scanning and segmentation

Industry structure can be examined using Porter's (1979) framework of rivalry, buyer and supplier bargaining power, substitutes and entry threats. A PESTEL lens organizes political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal conditions. In this case, these are organizing tools used in desk research; neither tool constitutes direct evidence that any particular European market was more attractive or that a given company was ready to purchase. Their primary contribution was to support questions and criteria for subsequent prospect screening.

2.3 CRM discipline and meaningful performance claims

CRM is not merely a directory of contacts: it also provides a language for organizing relationship stages and recording the status of interactions (Kevork & Vrechopoulos, 2009). Research on marketing performance cautions against conflating activity or intermediate measures with economic outcomes (Katsikeas et al., 2016). In a related B2B context, Järvinen and Karjaluoto (2015) emphasize that the usefulness of measurement depends on organizational processes and the interpretation of metrics. Accordingly, this study separates a documented process from unmeasured claims about conversion, revenue or comparative channel effectiveness.

3. Research Design and Ethical Boundary

A qualitative, descriptive single-case design was selected because the object of inquiry is an operational process embedded in one project rather than a representative sample of European buyers. This approach is consistent with the use of bounded cases to examine practice in context (Yin, 2018). The author participated as a business research and growth intern in a Pune-based advisory firm supporting a confidential India-based industrial battery-sector client. This paper covers work described during the May–October 2026 phase of an internship scheduled to continue into November 2026; it does not claim to present final project results.

The case reconstruction draws on the author's documented responsibilities and non-confidential descriptions of sector scanning, prospect identification, record organization and communication workflow in the contemporaneous OJT report (Shete, 2026). The restricted report is acknowledged as an unpublished internal source; confidential source records are not reproduced. Published scholarship supplies the conceptual interpretation. The analysis is descriptive and does not rely on a formal interview protocol, controlled comparison, survey, or independently auditable conversion data.

The focal context is a small advisory team engaging potential counterparties in Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, the



United Kingdom, Austria and the Czech Republic. The country list defines project scope only; it is not evidence of national differences in response behavior. To respect confidentiality, the names of the advisory firm, client, prospects and individual contacts are omitted, as are prospect counts derived from internal CRM records, outreach logs, call outcomes and other proprietary performance information. No identifiable person-level data are reported.

4. Case Description: The Prospect-Development Process

4.1 Market scanning and relevance criteria

The engagement began with secondary research on industrial battery applications, selected European markets and the broad competitive and regulatory setting. Relevant applications included industrial backup power and other business uses in which purchasing decisions involve organizational buyers. The research served an operational purpose: define categories of potential counterparties and identify questions to investigate before outreach. The resulting output was a structured basis for screening, not a quantified forecast of market demand.

4.2 Prospect identification and segmentation

Potential organizations were identified from public-facing company information, industry directories and professional networking sources. Candidate organizations were then assessed for apparent fit to the client's target profile. Categorization considered dimensions such as geography, organization type, company size and product/application relevance. The MECE principle was used as a practical discipline for reducing unnecessary overlap and omissions within individual classification dimensions. Because real organizations can operate in several segments, the approach should be interpreted as mutually exclusive category rules within each field, rather than a claim that companies themselves belong to only one business segment.

4.3 Lead-stage management

The team used a staged approach to distinguish organizations identified for research from those contacted or further engaged. In the original workflow, lead stages included Researched, Contacted, Engaged, Qualified and Not Applicable. These labels are presented as a general process taxonomy, not as a disclosure of lead-level results. A stage model helps specify what further action is appropriate, and it creates a shared vocabulary for handoffs and periodic team reviews.

Stage	Operational meaning
Researched	Potential organization identified and assessed for relevance.
Contacted	Initial outreach attempted through an appropriate channel.
Engaged	A response or substantive interaction makes follow-up relevant.
Qualified	Further discussion indicates a possible fit for the offering.
Not Applicable	Record excluded from further pursuit because of mismatch or decline.

4.4 Roles of the outreach channels

Three channels featured in the project workflow: LinkedIn for professional identification or initial visibility, calling for direct conversation when an appropriate contact could be reached, and email for introducing the offering or preserving written context after contact. Their use varied by prospect priority and practical circumstances; the case does not establish a single mandatory order or an optimal sequence. The channels are therefore best interpreted as complementary options



within a coordinated process, not as an experimentally validated funnel.

Channel	Process role	What this case does not establish
Professional networking	Identify relevant roles and provide a visible professional point of contact.	An independent lift in response or conversion.
Telephone	Seek timely dialogue and clarify whether further contact is appropriate.	A higher response rate than email or networking.
Email	Provide a documented introduction, requested material or follow-up.	A quantified effect on qualification or sales.

4.5 Coordination and documentation

The documented work routine combined desk research, updates to shared prospect-management records, outreach preparation and team review. The purpose of documentation was to maintain continuity across contacts and reduce ambiguity about the next step. The OJT report also describes internal reporting and prospect-tracking support built with no-code tools; their contribution is noted here as an operational activity, without claiming any measured productivity improvement.

5. Findings: What the Case Can Support

The available, publishable evidence principally supports findings about how the team organized its work. It does not support causal statements about national culture, channel performance or client commercial results. Three process-level observations can be drawn from the documented activities.

5.1 Prospect development was treated as a sequence, not a contact list

Industry review, prospect screening, stage assignment and outreach formed linked activities. This matters because the decision to approach an organization depended on prior steps that established a working rationale for contact. The descriptive contribution is the arrangement of these activities and the explicit stage transitions, not an assertion that the arrangement increased conversions.

5.2 Channels performed different intended functions

The outreach design assigned different communication purposes to professional networking, calls and email. Distinguishing these purposes makes the work intelligible: discovery, conversation and written follow-up are separate tasks even when they concern the same prospect. The case cannot determine which channel or sequence was most effective because the required comparison data are outside the public evidence base.

5.3 Shared definitions made the process interpretable

A common lead-stage vocabulary and periodic review process allowed activities to be discussed using consistent categories. This is a design feature of the engagement rather than a tested improvement in data accuracy or team productivity. Its wider usefulness remains a proposition for future study.

6. Discussion and Propositions for Future Research

The case illustrates a practical hybrid approach in which desk research and digital contact information prepare the ground for human interaction. In relation to Watson et al. (2018), it describes one way that relational and digital activities may coexist at the start of market entry. In relation to Kevork and Vrechopoulos (2009), it suggests that the CRM lifecycle can



be understood as a coordination arrangement rather than merely a software feature. The following propositions are interpretations for future investigation, not hypotheses tested by this case.

Proposition 1 (qualification discipline). When prospect screening criteria and lifecycle stages are defined in advance, small cross-border B2B teams may be better able to maintain consistent decisions about whom to approach and when to follow up.

Proposition 2 (channel complementarity). The combined availability of professional networking, direct calls and written follow-up may help teams meet distinct communication needs more flexibly than an undifferentiated single-channel process.

Proposition 3 (contextual adaptation). Cross-border outreach protocols may require adaptation to market-specific communication and regulatory contexts; which adaptations improve outcomes should be evaluated with appropriately collected evidence.

Proposition 4 (documentation continuity). Shared status definitions and documented next steps may improve process continuity in lean advisory teams, particularly when multiple members contribute to the same engagement.

These propositions require future research with consented access to relevant records, clear outcome definitions, and comparison designs. Without such data, it would be misleading to present the proposed mechanisms as proven benefits of the documented project.

7. Managerial Implications

For advisory teams, the case suggests a usable checklist for designing a cross-border outreach process. First, specify the industrial application and target-customer criteria before compiling organizations. Second, keep classification dimensions explicit so that overlapping business activities do not produce inconsistent categories. Third, define what constitutes initial contact, engagement and qualification. Fourth, use different channels for clearly stated communication tasks rather than choosing a channel only because it is available. Finally, hold regular process reviews and document follow-up ownership.

For exporters, the case highlights the need to separate market scanning from claims about product compliance. Public regulations are important inputs to market entry research, but their applicability must be checked against a specific product and the relevant implementation provisions. For researchers, the case offers an initial process map that could be evaluated in another firm or sector through interviews, observation and appropriately authorized performance data.

8. Limitations

This is a single-project, participant-authored account based on documented activities rather than an independent assessment of their outcomes. Participant involvement creates interpretive bias, and the supporting records cannot be disclosed for external inspection. The paper does not include representative buyer interviews, statistical tests, verified channel-level comparisons, national response patterns, conversion figures or downstream commercial results. The six-country scope is contextual and should not be mistaken for a systematic country-comparative study. Generalization is therefore analytic and tentative: the case proposes a process for others to examine, not a demonstrated model of superior market-entry performance.

9. Conclusion

This paper describes how an India-based advisory team structured early-stage B2B prospect development for a confidential industrial battery-sector client exploring European markets. It organizes the engagement into market scanning, prospect segmentation, lifecycle management and coordinated communication. Its principal contribution is a transparent process account accompanied by propositions for future testing. The case shows what can be usefully documented in a confidentiality-constrained field setting, while maintaining a clear boundary between observable workflow, theoretical interpretation and unverified commercial outcomes.



Declarations

Conflict of interest: The author participated in the advisory engagement described. Funding: No external research funding is declared. Data availability: Proprietary prospect and outreach records are subject to organizational confidentiality restrictions and are not publicly available. Ethics and confidentiality: Names and identifying details of client and prospective counterparties are withheld. The manuscript does not disclose contact-level, CRM-level or commercial performance data.

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