

## Coming to America

### A growing multinational company navigates the United States K–12 market

#### Abstract

An international publisher of educational materials wanted to expand into the United States after reaching saturation in its existing Asian markets. Dramatic differences in educational policy, curriculum standards, and institutional buying processes, however, left the company unsure of how to introduce its proven educational supplements to the U.S. market. A comprehensive analysis of the U.S. K–12 market exposed opportunities and optimal target markets for the company's products, and gave the company the critical insight it needed to launch its line of academic supplements in North America.

#### The Challenge

Companies face numerous challenges when entering new global markets. For one of Asia's largest educational materials publishers, expanding into the U.S. K–12 industry required a 180° shift to its market development strategy.

The company, an education market leader with over \$5 billion in annual revenues



and a strong global reputation, offers an extensive line of high quality after-school study materials that combine proven pedagogical approaches with engaging, story-based instructional design. The success of its academic supplements in Asian countries is partially based on its close alignment to government-mandated school curricula. For students in each grade level, the after-school supplements enrich the material that they are learning in the classroom.

K-12 curriculum in the U.S., however, is not nationally standardized. Selected by local and state boards of education, learning objectives vary by region and grade level. The multinational company turned to the Gilfus Education Group for expertise on the U.S. educational market and to develop a viable strategy for entry.



## How the Gilfus Education Group helped

The project kicked off with a thorough review of the U.S. K-12 market leveraging ongoing research by the Gilfus Education Group. The client was provided with market size estimates and growth projections for supplementary education products, categorized by family and school-based spending. Market segmentation and competitor positioning maps were developed to reveal untapped market opportunities. The client's existing educational materials were then compared to U.S. common core and state standards in order to identify which prod-

ucts could be adapted to the U.S. market. This analysis built the foundation for selecting an appropriate target market and entry strategy.

The next phase of market development involves validating the concept for the U.S. market and launching the product through retail channels. Extensive market studies, including focus groups and target market surveys, were conducted to assess market demand for the after-school study program. To support the product's launch, a go-to-market strategy was created to determine the optimal marketing and sales channels as well as the most effective timing for promotional campaigns. The Gilfus Education Group then initiated a phase to align the clients content to the Common Core standards developing two Unit prototypes that can be used in active research with teachers and students. The planned product line for the U.S. K-12 market, an online education curriculum that promotes advanced learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), will be launched in 2013, to coincide with the beginning of the school year. The Gilfus Education Group continues to work closely with the client to ensure its market entry and growth will be a huge success.

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