Made in China Easy
MEDIA · BUSINESS INSIGHTS



International Entrepreneur's Guide to Setting Up a Business Abroad

The decisions, documents and yearly duties to plan for when you open a company outside your home country, explained in plain language.

By the Made in China Easy team, Guangzhou · 31 October 2026

Opening a company abroad can make trading easier: a local presence, a bank account in a business-friendly currency and a company your suppliers and customers recognise. It also brings duties you must keep up with every year. Here is how to think it through.

Start with the why

Be clear about what the company is for:

- **Buying and reselling internationally.** You need a stable company for contracts, invoices and payments, but not necessarily operations on the ground.
- **Selling inside a country.** You usually need a local company that can issue local invoices and register for local taxes.
- **Holding your international business.** You want a simple, well-regarded jurisdiction with clear rules.

The answer decides where you register and which type of company you need.

Choose the jurisdiction

Compare places on what matters to you: the tax system and whether foreign profits are taxed, banking access, the reputation of the jurisdiction with your partners, the language of company documents, and the yearly cost of staying compliant. For China trade, the usual choice is between Hong Kong and Mainland China. Our Hong Kong or Mainland China article compares them.

Prepare your documents

Most registrations ask for:

- Passport copies and proof of address for every owner and director
- A proposed company name, with alternatives
- A short description of the business activity
- Details of how the shares are owned
- A registered address in the jurisdiction

Some places need documents certified or translated. Plan time for this.

Banking takes the longest

Opening a business bank account is often the slowest step. Each bank reviews and approves its own applications, and they want to understand your business, your customers and where your money comes from. A clear business plan, contracts or quotes from suppliers, and complete documents help.

Know your yearly duties

Once registered, a company has obligations every year. Depending on the jurisdiction, these can include:

- Keeping accounting records
- An annual return and company renewal
- Audited accounts and a tax return
- A company secretary and a registered address

Missing deadlines can mean penalties. Put every date in one calendar from day one.

Get the right help

Legal, accounting and tax work should be done by licensed professionals. A good partner will explain your options before you commit and keep track of your deadlines. We coordinate registration, banking help, accounting and documents through qualified specialists in our network, as one point of contact.

Talk to our team in Guangzhou.
Get a quote: www.madeinchinaeasy.com/get-started · Ask a question: www.madeinchinaeasy.com/contact · Free consultation: www.madeinchinaeasy.com/insights/connect · WhatsApp: message us from our website

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