

# Meet the Chillionaires

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BEING a "Chillionaire" doesn't come easy — but when you crack the Chinese market profits flow.

China is Australia's largest two-way trading partner, with imports and exports totalling \$194.6 billion in the past financial year, up 11.7 per cent year-on-year, according to Austrade. Here are some Australian business owners who've realised a \$1 million turnover by moving into China, or are on their way to that milestone.

**DR VINCENT CANDRAWINATA**

Sydney-based scientist Dr Candrawinata is the first person to find and secure the patent for the technology to extract antioxidant compounds from plants.

Using apples from Orange in rural NSW, his company Renovatio extracts antioxidants from the fruit and sells it as an organic phenolic supplement to help people with inflammation. He moved into China last year, where they trialled it in retirement villages.

"We surveyed retirees' health conditions and it did improve their wellbeing. Our product is very hard to explain so to show them how it works at the cellular level was important," he said.

He has secured his intellectual property to avoid getting copied and has a trademark in China.

In the next six to eight months he is projecting to sell \$500,000 worth of product in China.

Boston Consulting Group forecasts that China's overall health and wellbeing market could be worth \$86.4 billion by 2020.

Dr Candrawinata's advice is to understand regulations in China, secure your intellectual property and work with the right distributors.

**CATHERINE CERVASIO**

The CEO and founder of Aromababy already has a million-dollar turnover in China after entering the country 11 years ago.

Now Ms Cervasio has signed a deal with the potential to be worth millions over the next three years.

The Melbourne-based single mother of two boys sells Australian-made natural and organic skin care.

"We were approached by buyers in China looking for alternatives to chemical products to treat sensitive skin and conditions like eczema and dermatitis," she said.

Ms Cervasio said her business wasn't always about money and turnover. "The Chinese want to know me, connect with me and understand the product — that's how they trust you, compared to someone just trying to make a deal."

Ms Cervasio said those keen to get into China must protect their IP, get trademarks early and get on the ground there.

**DR RICHARD HAMILTON**

The owner of Lecrofield and Hamilton Wines in McLaren Vale, South Australia, entered the Chinese market in 2013 after China first came to them for their wines.

"They recognise the history and heritage of our wines and place a big value on that," he said.

"They know their wines. We chose to sell the best wine and they will pay a premium price for it because they know it was the second best."

At the end of last year, the com-



**HOW TO BE A CHILLIONAIRE**

- Know if your product is suitable
- Be prepared to commit for the long term
- Get your IP and trademarks
- Go to trade shows
- Have Chinese nationals on the ground to help
- Respect Chinese culture
- Be confident, offer a premium product and don't undercut yourself

pany was turning a \$1 million profit. He said the Chinese love red wines as the colour red represents "good luck and warmth and wealth".

"They will push you on price as they're very competitive business people but one of our wines is made from a vine that's from 1892 and it's a super premium product," he said.

He told those keen to export to China to "be patient. It doesn't happen overnight. Be frank, honest and passionate. Be confident with your product and don't undercut yourself."

**LINDY ANDREWS**

The Gold Coast-based founder of Meditrav, a company that helps patients get medical treatment and wellness programs around the world, Ms Andrews said she "hasn't even scratched the surface". Despite only being in China for 18 months, Meditrav is on its way to a \$1 million turnover.

A U.S. trade re-

Australian services like Meditrav being exported to China totalled \$16.9 billion in 2017-18, up 17.2 per cent year-on-year. Ms Andrews's company has 20 consultation companies in Shanghai, Beijing and Shenzhen where patients come to get access to hospitals and medical clinics in places such as Australia.

"We're bringing Chinese patients to Australia for IVF treatment, health assessments, dental work and hip replacements," she said.

Ms Andrews said the Chinese are "cash-paying" and willing to invest to get the best healthcare.

"Health is their number one focus," she said.

Ms Andrews said you need a Chinese partner to help set up your company, and understanding the culture was essential.

**NICK LEDOWSKY**

Mr Ledowsky is co-founder and director of eRetail logistics, which helps Australian retailers sell goods directly into China.

His global private parcel and mail distribution company "takes the pain" out so retailers can sell direct to Chinese customers at half the price of a competitor like FedEx or DHL.

In the next six to 12 months, he is expecting to generate \$3-5 million as the business expands.

Mr Ledowsky, from Sydney, said he has helped retailers sell apparel, food, baby formula and health supplements.

But getting into China hasn't been easy. "The laws in China have changed and there's a registration process with Chinese customs that we help with, so retailers' products don't get held up and the receiver doesn't have to pay more tax and deal with import duties afterwards," he said.

He said businesses needed to understand whether their product was suitable for the Chinese market.



Dr Vincent Candrawinata and, (left, from top) the Hamilton family, Catherine Cervasio and Lindy Andrews.