

# ibNEWS

## international business news from the heartland

Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, North & South Dakota

### Growth Continues in Imports and Exports, Report Shows.

#### Event & Information Web sites

- Nebraska events and news: [www.mitaonline.org](http://www.mitaonline.org)
- Iowa events & news: [www.iowatraders.com](http://www.iowatraders.com)
- Kansas City events & news [www.itckc.org](http://www.itckc.org)
- Minnesota events & news [www.mgta.org](http://www.mgta.org)
- South Dakota events & news [www.sd-exports.org](http://www.sd-exports.org)
- North Dakota events & news [www.exportnd.com](http://www.exportnd.com)

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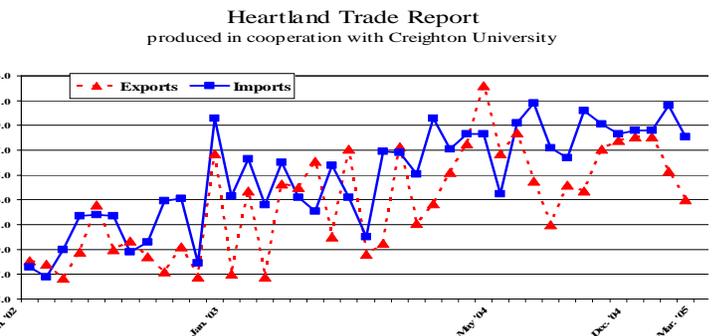
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2005 1st quarter exports and imports show continued growth, propping up the Heartland economy, according to the March Heartland International Business Index of supply managers. "Although new export orders slipped slightly to 53.0 from February's 55.3., it was the seventeenth straight month that supply managers reported expanding export orders.," reported Prof. Ernie Goss of Creighton University.

As in past months, the weak dollar, making US goods cheaper abroad, drove the export index up. However, weaker economic conditions among US trading partners has slowed growth in recent months.

Despite the weak dollar, imports remain strong with a March reading of 58.1. As in past months, rising prices for

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) which meets every five years to discuss international postal issues, met 4Q, 2004. Key issues discussed included how to standardize address formats and rates. "While Europe has long charged by size and weight, many countries have not," pointed out



commodities and oil-related goods pushed imports higher measured in dollars even with stable or slightly declining quantities of imports.

The *ibNDEX* comes from a monthly survey of Heartland purchasing managers.

The *ibNDEX* is a real-time indicator of monthly changes in both new export orders and imports for the nine-state region including Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota,

Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, North & South Dakota.

#### Imports

February	60.6
March	58.1

#### Exports

February	55.3
March	53.0

### Postal Union To Standardize International Formats, Rates.

Adam Langston, President of Access Worldwide.

"One of the things they are dealing with is how these countries charge for delivering each other's mail," said Langston.

Findings will be posted on the UPU Web site at some time soon—[www.upu.org](http://www.upu.org).

The other issue is dealing with postal delivery in countries hit by the tsunami disaster. "There just isn't any mail being delivered," Langston said.

"The postal infrastructure is gone. Even mail airlift has been superseded by relief deliveries," Langston reported. For more information, you can contact Langston at [atalangston@accessworldwide.net](mailto:atalangston@accessworldwide.net)



Simple tricks, creative word usage and non-traditional methods can maximize your internet search efficiency, and get you the information you need.

## Market Research— Tricks of the Trade.

Search engines are one of the most powerful research tools available, if the searcher uses ingenuity in the effort to obtain information. Simple tricks like using “Chilean” for information on Chile will greatly improve your results. Typing “Chile” in the search bar, regardless of other keywords, gains you 100s of “hits” for Chili’s restaurant, not to mention 1000s of chili recipes. The word “Chilean” will get you directly to the country and its people, even if

Chilean doesn’t make sense in regards to your search.

Another example of creative word usage is a simple search for “steam cleaner market information”. By typing “steam cleaners” in the search bar, regardless of other key words, you access every company on earth that sells steam cleaners online. Any research information will be from research companies charging from 100s to 1000s of dollars for their studies. The smart researcher will use keywords or phrases like “houseware sales”

or “innovative floor cleaning” to obtain industry information. This trick might not get you a full market report, but will prompt articles and published studies with substantial information.

The library is another great source of “free” market and research information. Most libraries have prepaid access to some “pay” market research centers. Your only cost is paying for the copies you make.

(Continued– Research page 3)



You can help support injured U.S. troops by logging on to [purplefingeroffreedom.org](http://purplefingeroffreedom.org)

## Support Building For Returning Injured U.S. Soldiers.

You’ve seen the ubiquitous car magnets for support of U.S. troops.

Not mentioned in the past was support for injured U.S. troops now numbering some 5,000 since the Iraq war began.

Now a Heartland non-profit organization has been formed to bring assistance to those wounded or otherwise injured in the Middle East. It is called the Purple Finger of Freedom spawned from images of Iraqis

who voted in overwhelming numbers earlier this year.

The main beneficiary of this effort is the Wounded Warrior Project in Washington, DC, which donates everything from backpacks to wheelchair ramps to those wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The freedom image is available on buttons (\$2.00) and car magnets (\$3.99) with net proceeds going to the Wounded Warrior Project.

Bobbie Race, Director of the Purple Finger of Freedom Pointed out that “we were so touched by the women and children dancing in the streets following the Iraq election, perhaps for the first time. We wanted to commemorate those who gave so much (U.S. soldiers) to make the election possible .”

Contact: Bobbie or Justin Race at (816) 682-8480 or visit the site at [www.purplefingeroffreedom.org](http://www.purplefingeroffreedom.org)



The weak dollar helps offer a chance for positive change in under-developed regions.

## Weak Dollar Benefits an Unlikely Country—Ethiopia.

We’ve all heard about the weak dollar, its pros and cons, and the efforts made to pull it in either direction. But the weak dollar does offer advantages in the most unlikely of places.

Ethiopia has long seen economic devastation and hopelessness. But a consortium of heartland business people is attempting

to use the weak greenback to offer positive changes to the grief-stricken land.

Saad Wakas, of International Community Marketing & Investment, is using his wide range of business contacts, along with the benefit of inexpensive US goods aboard, to reposition Ethiopia as an emerging market.

The weak dollar, which makes US products less expensive in foreign regions, will allow Wakas and his associates to purchase US-made refurbished equipment at a reduced rate in Ethiopia. He plans to use this equipment to develop or improve the ailing or non-existent infrastructure of the troubled country.

(Continued–Weak Dollar page3)

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*Each month, we'll bring you the latest trend in new export orders and imports for the Heartland. Our exclusive index is the only real-time, leading economic indicator of changes in exports and imports.*

*We'll also keep you updated with news, trends and regulations that affect your business. If you have suggestions to make **ibNEWS** more informative, please send your suggestions to [info@intermark3.com](mailto:info@intermark3.com).*

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## Unlikely Region, continued

In describing the Ethiopian economy Wakas said, "Heartland business people may not comprehend how strong a market is emerging there. Not only are infrastructure needs enormous, but there is a fast growing segment of the population who can afford Heartland goods of all kinds."

According to industry research, Ethiopia's somewhat instable economy seems to be growing.

With a population of 70 million, 2002/03 GDP grew by 8 percent. But with a vast population, the country is particularly vulnerable to drought and export prices.

According to Wakas, the top 10–15 percent of the population, the growing middle class, has personal product needs that includes clothing and cosmetics among other things.

"While they may not be customers for high-end personal products, they certainly have the ability to buy more moderately priced items," Wakas pointed out.

For more information on business opportunities in Ethiopia, you can contact

Saad Wakas at (816) 885-6126 or by email at [icmi@msn.com](mailto:icmi@msn.com)

## Research continued

For you international researchers, your best source is often in-country contacts. These valuable sources have access to broader information that they can obtain for little cost. The Internet in their country can offer more information about their region. Also, many research studies or reports that cost thousands from here may be inexpensive or free to someone in-country.

Consulates and embassies are an invaluable source for international information. These organizations will have the most up-to-date information on a variety of

topics from culture to industry. The offices are excited to help out individuals and businesses interested in their country, as they see an opportunity for economic growth.

The Internet, once seen as a save-all for the tiring and relentless work of obtaining information, has morphed into a very expensive commodity... unless one knows the tricks. Simple tricks and creative search word usage can maximize your Internet. And always keep in mind non-traditional sources that can get you the information you need.