

# 2020 EXPORTING BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



## SkuTouch Solutions, LLC

<b>Owner</b>	<b>Douglas Obershaw</b>
<b>Nature of Business</b>	<b>Material Handling</b>
<b>City, County</b>	<b>Lenexa, Johnson</b>
<b>Website/Email</b>	<b>www.skutouch.com/info@skutouch.com</b>
<b>Structure</b>	<b>LLC</b>
<b>Began</b>	<b>2003</b>
<b>Employees</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>KSBDC Consultant</b>	<b>John Addressi</b>

When most people think of exporting, they imagine large scale corporate conglomerates engaging in massive multi-million-dollar contracts all over the world. While this may represent a small portion of exporters, a surprising 97% of U.S. exporters are actually small and medium sized businesses, with 67% of those having less than 20 employees. SkuTouch Solutions, LLC, based out of Lenexa, Kansas, is one such successful exporter.

In 2003, brothers Doug and Terry Obershaw established SkuTouch Solutions, LLC. Initially serving as a reverse logistics service and asset recovery software provider, the company later morphed into an international manufacturing source for material collection and transportation. Today, SkuTouch is well-known as an export management consulting company. Doug and Terry, with their decades of experience overseas, have a keen ability to provide clients with valuable insights into markets around Southeast Asia and Europe, as well as the timelines, costs, risks, and rewards clients can expect.

With a cornerstone expertise in product returns management as a function of customer service, SkuTouch has been established as an international supply chain logistics provider, and a USPS Global Direct Entry partner. The company moves up to 400 tons of air and sea cargo from China to the U.S. every month. From market entry to international logistics, SkuTouch helps customers to grow their e-commerce bottom line.

SkuTouch first reached out to the Kansas SBDC in 2005. At the time, they had installed their software into a leading 3PL logistic provider in Canada, and they were seeking financing to take their company to the next level. They wanted to know more about the potential market for their services and how to leverage networking opportunities to gain a financial foothold to build up their company. After working with Kansas SBDC advisors with regard to investors and financing options, the Obershaw brothers decided to spend some time focusing on their sales.

In 2017, Doug attended The Riddle of the Exporter, a class taught by Kansas SBDC advisor John Addressi. The following year they received a \$100,000 loan, and in 2019 they worked with Addressi to diversify their markets. The on-going trade war with China was causing tension, and with their business dropping off, SkuTouch felt it was necessary to begin looking into other markets.

With that in mind, Addressi made the decision to reach out to Samira Hussein, professor of Business Administration at Johnson County Community College. Hussein teaches an international business class, and Addressi felt that Hussein's students and SkuTouch would be an ideal collaboration. Professor Hussein had been awaiting an appropriate case study that could be used in the international business class, and SkuTouch Solutions fit the bill perfectly.

"The professor of the class is very pleased to have a real-world case study and the in-person connection, while the students enjoy working on a project which is timely, interesting and very real," said Kansas SBDC advisor, John Addressi. "SkuTouch Solutions, LLC benefits from hundreds of research hours under the guidance of the professor and the Kansas SBDC."

Doug and Terry both participated in setting up the initial project with the class. With the assistance of the Kansas SBDC and the students of the JCCC international business class, SkuTouch will have 14 additional sets of eyes and ears to research quantitative indications of market potential, giving SkuTouch the information needed to diversify their markets and grow their sales.

"The SBDC listened to our needs and helped us to put a plan into action," said Doug Obershaw.



**Kansas SBDC at JCCC**  
**Regnier Center, Room 240**  
**12345 College Blvd.**  
**Overland Park, KS 66210**  
**913-469-3878**  
**www.jccc.edu/ksbdc**

