

# The basics of doing business in Ukraine

## Compiling a datasheet of contacts

There exists so far not one single and unified online database, where one can make a quick search on a company, the address and the product portfolio. In other words: [www.krak.dk](http://www.krak.dk) and [www.degulesider.dk](http://www.degulesider.dk) does not exist in Ukraine. There are a lot of fragmented databases but none of those can be used as a tool in itself as they are small, fragmented, not updated and often badly organized. *The fundamental things of Business just takes longer time in Ukraine but is even more needed than anywhere else.*

At first it may sound like a joke that that an address on a company and a person's complete coordinates can be so difficult to report, fix and verify. But our experience tells us the opposite. Finding coordinates and contact persons is not only difficult and time consuming it is also connected with a lot of confusions, misunderstandings and misconceptions. Only a few individuals have the discipline to do it in a way that the collected information can be used and applied by others.

As a rule of thumb and as an average estimate it takes 15 min to verify coordinates and 30 min to 45 min to find a company's coordinates if only the name is known, unless of course it is among the few well known companies in Ukraine with a web page.

Even though the main source of mistakes and errors are the part collecting and verifying the information there are several reasons why this work is particular difficult in Ukraine:

- Lack of one single and unified online database
- Companies are “rising” and “falling” quick in Ukraine, as in any other economy
- The internet penetration level is low and internet is still seen as a standard marketing channel but as a luxurious addition to the company
- Telephone numbers and area codes are recently changed or they are often believed to be so evident that locals do not mention pre-fix codes in their coordinates
- People are changing work very very often and “growth companies” are often changing names and office address
- Transcription mistakes often happens when a Ukrainian name and address is transliterated into the Latin alphabet or visa versa
- It is a big country and there are many locations, places and companies to confuse
- Most companies still have a strict functional division, meaning that a fax or letter sent to the book keeper will not be delivered to the sales manager or purchase officer
- There are no commonly accepted way of indicating telephone numbers and exact location
- If the exact location of the target is outside the big cities the address often goes “*The enterprise on top of the hill in the small village to the left*”
- The postal service is not reliable and a letter sent is not identical with a letter received – not at all

In case you have to hand over contacts in Ukraine to a third person for further processing (for invitation, for follow-up for verification etc.) the best and most handy solution is still to **scan in the business cards and send them along with the datasheet.**

The general rule though is:

- **Time:** If you have not verified the coordinates for the last three months it is most likely wrong by now
- **Advantage:** If you have updated contact material on your target group, you are way ahead of your competitors
- **System and Discipline:** It takes longer time than you expect, and even though the job seems easy, it takes a good deal of local knowledge and discipline to keep the datasheet updated and beneficial for “real work”