

How Ningbo Manufacturing is Winning Over SCO Markets

By Jin Yuhan

A China-Europe freight train loaded with photovoltaic equipment, home appliances, electric vehicles and auto parts recently departed from the Yining Railway Freight Station in Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, Xinjiang, expected to arrive in Kazakhstan in just three days.

The regular service, operated by a Ningbo-based company, cuts shipping time and logistics costs for exporters by about one-third. Less than a year after its launch, it has become a key freight link for Ningbo companies expanding into Central Asian markets.

The growing flow of goods reflects how Ningbo manufacturers are expanding into emerging markets as trade ties among SCO members. Data from Ningbo Customs show that in the first seven months of this year, Ningbo's imports and exports with other SCO member states reached 62.31 billion yuan, up 11.3% year-on-year. Exports accounted for 53.55 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 18.7%, driven by mechanical and electrical products, high-tech goods and electric vehicles.

After years of adapting, how have Ningbo companies cracked these markets and earned a reputation?

Built for the Climate

From sandstorms in Central Asia to harsh winters in Russia and intense UV rays in the Persian Gulf, the varied climates of SCO member states present the first challenge for exporters.

"In the early years, we sold standardized wiper products to Iran. But we soon realized that the rubber strips would age and soften after prolonged sun exposure, and fail to work properly when the rainy season arrived," recalled You Yongbiao, general manager of Aido Wiper, a Ningbo-based manufacturer.

Countless experiments on wiper materials followed. R&D staff adjusted the ratio of natural rubber to silicone to com-



Ningbo Xintianxia Holding Group Co., Ltd. has established more than 20 after-sales service outlets. [Photo provided to Ningbo Times]

bine the strengths of both materials. The new blended material retains the excellent elasticity of natural rubber while adding silicone's resistance to sun exposure and aging. Its service life doubled, helping the company quickly expand its presence in the Iranian market.

The company also redesigned its molds to produce thicker, reinforced snow wipers, with rubber strips and brackets optimized for winter weather. More than 500,000 such snow wipers are sold annually to the five Central Asian countries.

"Ningbo's exporters excel at identifying local environmental pain points and making product upgrades accordingly," said Zhu Youjun, president of the Ningbo Yongcheng Private Economy Research Institute.

Service Over Sales

Recently, Murat, a resident of Almaty, Kazakhstan, noticed a warning light come on in his Chinese-made car. He took it to a local after-sales service center, where mechanics quickly diagnosed the problem and restored the ve-

hicle. It was up and running again in no time.

"In the past, when buying imported vehicles, even minor issues like this required waiting for spare parts to be shipped in, and that could take weeks. Now, service centers close to home can solve the problem," Murat said.

The car Murat bought was exported by Ningbo Xintianxia Holding Group Co., Ltd. The after-sales service network was also set up by the same firm.

In Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Belarus, the company has established more than 20 after-sales service outlets, with multiple locations in some countries.

"In the early days, many Chinese companies exporting to the Central Asian market only did wholesale business. Once the products were handed over at transit hubs like Bishkek, the deal was considered done," said Yao Biqin, director of the General Manager's Office at Xintianxia Group. However, Xintianxia has come to realize that merely selling vehicles is far from enough — service capability is the real key for sustaining a foothold in

the local market.

With this in mind, Xintianxia Group has developed a strategy to synchronize vehicle inventory with after-sales service networks. In recent years, the company has maintained annual business growth of about 60%, and this year it aims to export 12,000 vehicles.

Xintianxia's approach reflects a broader trend among Ningbo companies, which are moving beyond simple exports to build localized service networks in SCO markets.

Designed for Local Living

Freight forwarders in Ningbo are also seeing more exporters turn to SCO member states as alternative markets.

"With ocean shipping routes becoming riskier this year, many small-home-appliance exporters are turning to other SCO member states," said Liu Meng, a representative from a freight forwarding company in Ningbo's Eastern New Town.

Countries differ vastly in family structures, dietary customs, energy conditions and consumer preferences. Without a genuine understanding of local life, products can hardly find their way into ordinary households.

Ningbo's home appliance

makers have already taken note.

In Central Asia, for instance, many families preserve the tradition of living in large extended clans, with a single household often having more than a dozen members. Such families require significant storage for beef, mutton and dairy products. To meet this need, Ningbo Handian Electric Appliance Co Ltd has increased the capacity of its refrigerators and freezers, optimized adjustable shelves and specifically adapted them for storing large quantities of meat and dairy.

For the Indian and Central Asian markets, Ningbo Vasion Electric Appliance Co Ltd has enlarged the grilling area of its barbecue grills and added multi-tier racks to accommodate large-family dining needs.

In the first seven months of this year, Vasion exported 79.22 million yuan's worth of barbecue grills, air fryers, yogurt makers and other products to other SCO member states, a year-on-year increase of 3.9 times. The modified small appliances have received wide acclaim on local e-commerce platforms.

By tailoring products to local needs, Ningbo manufacturing is finding its way into homes across the region.

Yan Ziyi Claims Diamond League Title with Meeting-Record Throw

By Zhao Yu

In the early hours of September 6, Beijing time, the 2026 Diamond League Final was held in Brussels, Belgium.

In the women's javelin final, 18-year-old Ningbo native Yan Ziyi staged a comeback, winning the title with a fifth-round throw of 68.42m — claiming her first career Diamond League Final crown and setting a new meeting record.

With the victory, Yan has now won all five Diamond League meetings she entered this season, remaining undefeated.

It was Yan's first appearance on the Diamond League final stage, and the competition was far from straightforward.

She fouled on her first attempt, managed only 62.21m on her second, and fouled again on her third. After three rounds, Paris Olympic champion and Japanese star Haruka Kitaguchi led with 64.56m, while Yan sat in third place.

The momentum shifted in the final three rounds. On her fourth attempt, Yan responded with a 64.95m throw to overtake Kitaguchi. On her fifth, she let fly even further — the javelin landing at 68.42m. That mark not only extended her lead but also broke the meeting record of 68.11m set by American Kara Winger.

In the final round, Kitaguchi threw 65.44m, a season-best for her, but it was not enough to challenge Yan's lead. Yan won with 68.42m, while Kitaguchi took second and Colombia's Flor Denis Ruiz Hurtado finished third.

After Yan's win at the Diamond League Oslo meet in June, her coach Lu Xiurong said in an interview, "I admire Yan Ziyi's quick adaptability and her stubborn, never-say-never spirit." That attitude was once again on full display at the sport's highest level — the Diamond League final.

Since her Diamond League debut this year, Yan has shown remarkable consistency beyond her years.

On May 23 in Xiamen, she launched 71.74m on her first attempt, breaking the Asian record, the world U20 record and the Diamond League record, while also setting the world-leading mark for the season. In June in Oslo, battling low temperatures and strong winds, she threw 67.11m on her first attempt, winning by a margin of over five meters. In Paris, she repeated her "one-throw-win" formula with 67.44m for her third straight victory. At the Monaco meet, she raised her winning mark to 68.75m.

Yan is scheduled to compete next at the World Athletics Ultimate Championship, which opens on September 11 in Budapest, Hungary, followed by the women's javelin event at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games on September 27.

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"Hi Craft" Cultural Hub Brings Ningbo Culture to Phnom Penh

By Jin Lu

A compact cultural display in the lobby of the JD Polman Hotel in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, is offering international guests a window into Ningbo.

The space features the city publication This Is Ningbo, Ningbo-themed stamps, intangible cultural heritage hand fans, and other craft items. Though just a few square meters in size, it gives visitors a glimpse of Ningbo's rich history, its Maritime Silk Road heritage, and the distinctive culture of the Jiangnan

region.

The concept is straightforward: rather than building a conventional exhibition hall, the organizers tap into existing public spaces to present Ningbo culture in a light-weight format. A book, a stamp, or a handicraft can each serve as a portal into the city.

For business travelers and tourists, the display offers an unexpected chance to discover Ningbo without leaving Phnom Penh — and underscores the deepening economic and cultural ties between the Chinese port city and

Cambodia.

This is not the project's first appearance in the country. Previously, the "Hi Craft" Cultural Hub has been set up at factories run by Ningbo companies in Cambodia, bringing a touch of home to employees working abroad. Its move into hotels marks a new step, opening the culture to a broader and more mobile international audience.

From factory floors to hotel lobbies, Ningbo's miniature cultural stations are finding new, intimate ways to share the city's stories with the world.



The Ningbo cultural hub in the lobby of JD Polman Hotel.

[Photo provided to Ningbo Times]

