REAL EXPERIENCE · CASE STUDY

HOW I RUN THE PAPERWORK FOR A FAMILY IMPORT BUSINESS

BOSS JIM Grocery Products Distribution

Zamboanga City, Philippines · Registered owner and operations manager · 2020 to present

Since 2020 Handling all paperwork, permits, and bank transactions	**Registered importer** With the Bureau of Customs since 2021	**10,000+ cartons** In one 2021 shipment from Sabah, Malaysia (about 108 tonnes)	**4 areas** Customers in Zamboanga City, Basilan, Ipil, and Pagadian

The Business

BOSS JIM Grocery Products Distribution is my family's business. It's registered in my name as a sole proprietorship, and my two brothers and I run it together. We import grocery products from Malaysia, such as instant noodles, curry mix, coffee, biscuits, soy sauce, and cooking oil, shipped by sea from Sandakan, Sabah to Zamboanga City. We also buy from suppliers in Singapore and India. We sell wholesale and retail, and we also sell local products at retail.

Our wholesale customers include sari-sari stores, grocery stores, and vendors at Magay, a busy local market in Zamboanga City, with customers as far as Basilan, Ipil, and Pagadian. My brothers and I handle most deliveries ourselves, and we hire delivery staff for large bulk orders.

The Challenge

> Importing means a lot of paperwork that has to be right every time: supplier invoices and international payments, customs declarations, import duties and VAT, and cargo release at the port. On top of that, the business has to keep its BIR tax filings, DTI registration, and Mayor's permit up to date. A wrong payment, a missing document at customs, or a late filing can cost money or stop the business. My family trusts me to make sure none of that happens.

What I do

1. Supplier orders and international payments

- Review supplier invoices from Malaysia, Singapore, and India: items, quantities, prices, and payment details
- Prepare telegraphic transfer (international wire) applications in US dollars: beneficiary details, SWIFT codes, intermediary banks, and purpose of payment
- Keep invoices, bank debit memos, transfer confirmations, and shipping documents on file for every order

2. Customs and cargo release

- Prepare and sign import declarations with the Bureau of Customs as the business's representative
- Pay import duties, VAT, and fees, and keep the official receipts
- Secure the customs gate pass so our cargo can be released from the port

3. Taxes, registrations, and permits

- BIR filings: quarterly income tax (Form 1701Q), quarterly percentage tax (Form 2551Q), and the annual income tax return (Form 1701), filed with the business's financial statements
- DTI business name registration: first registered in 2020, now renewed through 2031
- Mayor's (Business) Permit from the City of Zamboanga, renewed every year

4. Banking, orders, and deliveries

- Handle the business's bank transactions across several accounts, local and international
- Take customer orders by phone, Facebook Messenger, and walk-in, and keep sales, stock, and expense records
- Help prepare and deliver wholesale orders of 50 to 100 boxes with my brothers

The paperwork I handle

Who	Documents	My part
Suppliers in Malaysia, Singapore, and India	Invoices, export manifests, telegraphic transfer forms, bank debit memos	Check details, send US dollar payments, keep records
Bureau of Customs	Importer registration, import declarations, official receipts, gate pass	File declarations, pay duties and VAT, secure cargo release
Bureau of Internal Revenue	Certificate of Registration, quarterly and annual tax returns, annual financial statements	File returns and financial statements, pay taxes due
DTI	Business name registration	Registered in 2020, renewed through 2031
City of Zamboanga	Mayor's (Business) Permit	Renew every year

The results

✓ Smooth since 2020
Paperwork, payments, and filings have run smoothly every year since I took them on.

✓ Large shipments cleared
Shipments of over 10,000 cartons imported, paid for, and released through customs.

✓ Trusted with the money
My family relies on me alone for the business's paperwork and bank transactions.

What this means for your business

What I do at BOSS JIM	How I can help you as your VA
Checking supplier invoices before every payment	Reviewing invoices, bills, and receipts; data entry and bookkeeping support, under your direction
Filing taxes and renewing permits by their deadlines	Tracking deadlines for filings, renewals, and appointments, with reminders so nothing is missed
Preparing customs documents with no room for errors	Filling out forms and preparing documents carefully and completely
Working with suppliers in three countries	Coordinating with vendors and suppliers clearly and professionally, across time zones
Taking orders by phone, Messenger, and walk-in	Replying to customer inquiries, managing messages, and following up

In my own words

In a family business, there's no one else to check your work. If I make a mistake on a transfer, a customs form, or a tax filing, my family feels it. That's taught me to double-check everything, finish what I start, and never let a deadline slip. I'd bring that same care to your business.

About this case study. This describes my real, ongoing role in my family's business. Supporting documents (customs, BIR, DTI, and permit records) are available on request, with ID numbers, bank details, and customer information removed.

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