



What the **** are we going to do about America?



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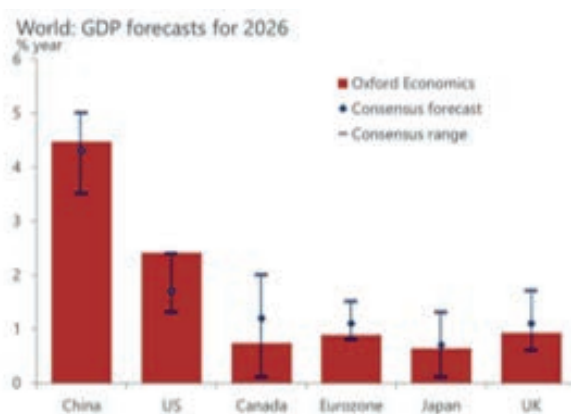
Shutting government labs. Putting anti vaccine activists in charge of the Department of Health. Driving up the costs of our medicines. Threatening tariffs because we object to him annexing the territory of a NATO member. Each of these, on its own, would be troubling enough - but taken together, Mr Trump's actions are shaking the foundations of global stability. And by the time you read this, it's entirely possible that another twenty extraordinary pronouncements will have spilled out of the White House.

The US is a huge, hungry market - but it is also a fiercely competitive one

And yet, and yet...

The US economy continues to thrive

GAMBICA commissions economic research from Oxford Economics for members, focused on our industries and the industries of our customers. The reports are exclusively for GAMBICA members, but I've been given permission to share two of the December slides with you. The first makes it uncomfortably clear: the US economy, despite the climate of geopolitical uncertainty affecting everyone else, is roaring ahead.



Source: Oxford Economics/Haver Analytics



Source: Oxford Economics, Haver Analytics

The second slide shows just how severely the European market is being undermined by Chinese imports. And the rest of the report is unequivocal - Chinese exports are still rising.

Despite plenty of bold rhetoric about tackling dumping, the EU simply isn't nimble enough to respond effectively. Markets across the Far East are also being overwhelmed by Chinese products, and while the UK appears slightly less exposed directly, our markets are certainly feeling the impact.

So where do we turn?

It seems we may need to take up our long spoons and sup with the Americans.

Breaking into America: What it really takes – and what it really costs

The US is a huge, hungry market - but it is also a fiercely competitive one, dominated by well established domestic suppliers. It's a marketplace that punishes hesitation, under investment, and early mistakes.

That's why, at the GAMBICA Conference in March, we've recruited three specialists in US market entry to bring you a grounded, US based perspective on what's actually required to build a credible, scalable American presence. Tailored specifically for MDs and senior leaders, this session will slice through optimism and myth and deal squarely with operational reality.

A central theme will be the difference between selling into America and succeeding in America. Too many UK companies dabble in the US - and dabbling simply doesn't work. Costs are underestimated, resources are spread too thinly, and momentum evaporates. The session will outline what it really takes to be taken seriously by American customers, focusing on the fundamentals driving US growth today: local service and support, reliable fulfilment, cultural intelligence, and the capital commitment needed to deliver them.

This isn't a debate about whether the US is attractive. It's about what leadership commitment is essential to succeed, and the confidence to decide, deliberately, whether the investment is right for your business.

It's not too late to book a day place at the conference - email me at jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk.

Taking control of your commercial destiny

If you've felt the commercial headwinds this past year, you are far from alone. The GAMBICA lab board has identified nine major issues affecting us all:

- Concerns about tariffs or potential tariffs
- Sluggish and unpredictable capital expenditure plans
- Chinese dumping, market manipulation, and counterfeiting
- Protectionist regimes abroad restricting our export potential
- University spending cuts and the Government's Student Visa policy
- Increasing use of AI to model experiments, reducing demand for capital equipment and consumables
- Sustainability registration costs and other regulatory burdens
- The persistent post Brexit perception that doing business with the UK is difficult
- Additional risks such as cyber security and supply chain fragility.

We'll be forecasting the impact of these challenges - and gathering delegates' views - at the March conference. The Board will then meet to take leadership action on behalf of the industry, identifying where we have leverage and shaping a strategy to address the most pressing risks.

But we want to hear from you. Which of these factors is hitting you hardest? What action do you think we should prioritise?

You can email me at jacqueline.balian@gambica.org.uk, Tony at tony.collins@gambica.org.uk, or leave me a voice message on 07990 016421.

We would genuinely value your insights.

More information about Oxford Economics is available here <http://www.oxfordeconomics.com/>

And there *is* good news...

We have started the year with a significant positive development: GAMBICA has appointed Tony Collins as an additional sector head for the lab sector.

Tony brings over 40 years of experience in the laboratory equipment and scientific manufacturing industry, most recently as Managing Director of Priorclave, one of the UK's leading autoclave exporters. His strengths span business growth, operational leadership, and strategic planning - and he also brings hands on expertise in production management, technical sales, and financial oversight. His arrival gives GAMBICA members access to a new depth of practical, commercial insight.

You can reach Tony at
tony.collins@gambica.org.uk.



Tony has been particularly successful in using standards to drive business expansion.

After Brexit, he recognised that if the UK moved away completely from EU standards, the only surviving standard was nearly 50 years old - and, more importantly, that lab autoclave manufacturers might be forced to conform to hospital autoclave standards (which, bizarre as it sounds, are entirely different).

Through GAMBICA, all UK Lab Autoclave members collaborated to overhaul the British Standard for Laboratory Autoclaves (BS2646), modernising it into something practical, relevant, and export friendly. The unexpected bonus? With no equivalent EU standard available, European buyers began

specifying the British standard - originally associated only with UK suppliers.

Tony has also used academic collaboration to Priorclave's advantage, serving as an Industrial Liaison Committee member with the University of Greenwich (Engineering and Science faculties) for 25 years.

If you need support with standards, product development, productivity, business development, or technical sales, Tony is now available to assist all GAMBICA members. As he puts it:

"I'm thrilled to start my shared role at GAMBICA and eager to use my extensive commercial experience to make a meaningful contribution to supporting its members."



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