A leading figure in the North West's fashion industry is calling on the government to back small- and medium-sized businesses with global ambitions.

Mahesh Patel, managing director of SRG Apparel, believes not enough is being done to promote support services in the region at a time when politicians talk of doubling export sales to £1trn by 2020.

"Export targets are very ambitious," he said. "The fact that exports have been pretty flat over the past couple of years suggests these are not achievable unless Britain's small- and medium-sized enterprises receive adequate help from the government."

He added: "Help does exist with bodies such as UK Trade & Investment (UKTI), the Chambers of Commerce and the Export Credits Guarantee Department, but not enough is known about where these organisations can help and not enough publicity is seen to promote their services."

Patel said for small businesses unable to afford international specialists in-house, they should be able to seek advice to "build their knowledge in a difficult market".

In March, UKTI said it had increased the number of medium-sized businesses receiving international assistance from 1,000 to 3,000 in the previous 12 months.

SRG Apparel is a supplier of fashion to high-street retailers around the world. Its products are sold into established markets such as the US, France and Australia as well as emerging markets such as Kazakhstan.

Mahesh Patel will be speaking at Insider's Around the World in 80 Minutes breakfast, which is being held on the morning of Wednesday, 13 May 2015 at EventCity in Manchester.