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How to Get a DUNS Number: A Step-by-Step Guide

D-U-N-S Registration for International Expansion: US, EU, UK, Ukraine

DUNS Registration: How a Global Identity Strengthens Your Business

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A note on illustrative examples. All case studies and company stories in this book (“GlobalTech Innovations,” “Bright Future Technologies,” “SilkRoute Imports,” “CodeCrafters,” “GreenTech Solutions,” “AquaPura Technologies,” “InnovaCraft,” “EcoPure Solutions,” and others) are **fictional** and were created solely for illustration. Any resemblance to real companies or people is coincidental. Where it matters, the author cites real public data with links to the sources.

Contents

• Introduction

• Chapter 1: Understanding the DUNS Number—History and How It Works

• Chapter 2: The Registration Process—Step by Step

• Chapter 3: An Important Update for the US Market: The Shift to UEI and SAM.gov

• Chapter 4: How DUNS Affects International Operations

• Chapter 5: Step-by-Step Guides by Country

- 5.1 Ukraine
- 5.2 United States
- 5.3 European Union
- 5.4 United Kingdom
• Chapter 6: DUNS and the Apple Developer Program
• Chapter 7: The Paydex Scoring System—Your Business Credit Score
• Chapter 8: DUNS in a Comprehensive Business Strategy
• Chapter 9: Advanced Uses of a DUNS Number
• Chapter 10: Practical Tips and Checklists
• Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
• Conclusion
• Appendices and Resources

Introduction

In eleven years of business consulting, I have run into the same situation again and again: a company with a strong product and an ambitious team hits an invisible wall when it tries to enter an international market. The cause is rarely technical or financial. Most often the problem is the lack of a verifiable identity.

When a potential partner in Germany, Canada, or Singapore receives your commercial proposal, the first thing they do is check your company. If no reliable information about your organization exists in a database, trust does not form. The deal gets postponed or falls through altogether.

The DUNS number (Data Universal Numbering System) is a unique nine-digit identifier that Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) assigns to each legal entity. It has existed since 1962 and has become the de facto standard for identifying organizations in international trade, government procurement, and financial transactions.

This book is written as a practical guide. I have deliberately kept metaphors and allegories to a minimum, so you will get concrete instructions: what to do, where to go, which mistakes to avoid. The book covers not only the basic process of obtaining a DUNS number but also country-specific details, niche uses (the Apple Developer Program), the Paydex scoring system, and recent changes in the United States, where a new identifier, the UEI, was introduced for federal procurement in April 2022.

Whether you are at the startup stage or running an established business, this book will help you understand the global identification system and use it to your advantage.

Who this book is for

• Entrepreneurs and owners of small and medium-sized businesses planning to enter international markets

• Executives bidding on tenders for government organizations or international corporations

• Software developers who need a DUNS number to register in the Apple Developer Program

• Chief financial officers responsible for building a business credit history

• Lawyers and consultants who support clients through international expansion

How the book is organized

The book moves from the general to the specific: we start with the history and basic mechanics of the system, move on to step-by-step registration instructions, and then cover country-specific details and niche uses. Each chapter ends with practical takeaways. At the end of the book you will find an FAQ with the twenty most frequently asked questions.

Chapter 1: Understanding the DUNS Number—History and How It Works

1.1 History and Development of the DUNS System

The history of the DUNS number began in the United States in 1962. Dun & Bradstreet, founded back in 1841 as a commercial information service, faced a practical problem: its databases had accumulated millions of company records, but there was no single standard for identifying them unambiguously. The same firm could be recorded under several variants of its name, and companies with similar names in different cities were mixed up.

The solution was a system of nine-digit numeric codes: the Data Universal Numbering System. The principle was simple. Each legal entity (not an industry, not a brand, but a legally constituted subject) is assigned a unique number that does not change throughout its life.

International trade grew quickly in the 1960s, and the need for standardized identification was acute. DUNS filled that gap. By the 1970s the system had spread beyond the United States into Europe and Asia.

In the 1990s the DUNS number gained special status thanks to two developments. First, a United Nations standardization body recommended it as one way to identify participants in international trade. Second, the US government made DUNS a mandatory requirement for suppliers receiving federal contracts. This created a powerful incentive: any company that wanted to work with American government agencies had to register a DUNS number.

By the early 2000s most of the world’s large corporations had DUNS numbers. International financial organizations, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, began using DUNS to verify grant recipients and contractors.

Today the D&B database holds information on more than 500 million companies in 240 countries.

It is important to understand that DUNS remains the standard in the corporate and international context, but in the United States it was replaced for federal procurement in 2022 (more in Chapter 3). Even so, DUNS keeps a key role in:

- international tenders outside the United States
- business credit scoring through the Paydex system
- Apple’s requirements for developer programs
- verification when signing large corporate contracts
- grant programs of international organizations

1.2 The Structure of a DUNS Number

A DUNS number consists of nine digits and carries no “meaning”: it is a purely sequential identifier. Unlike some tax codes that encode a region or an industry, DUNS is a random sequence that reveals nothing about the company.

However, every DUNS number is linked to a “D&B profile” (D-U-N-S Profile), which can contain:

- the official company name and all trade names
- the legal and actual address
- the number of employees
- revenue (if the company discloses it)
- the year of founding
- industry codes (SIC, NAICS)
- information about the parent company and subsidiaries
- payment history data (used to calculate Paydex)

This linked information is the main value of a DUNS number. The string of digits alone tells a counterparty nothing. The value

comes from the database behind the number.

1.3 Who Uses DUNS and What For

Many large corporations, especially in the aerospace, pharmaceutical, and financial industries, require a DUNS number when onboarding a new supplier. This lets the procurement team quickly pull a D&B credit report and assess the financial stability of a potential partner.

The governments of many countries use DUNS when registering suppliers. The European Union, Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom (until 2026, with a move to its own system planned), and most Asian countries rely on DUNS in their tender systems.

Organizations that receive funding from the EU (the Horizon Europe, LIFE, and ERDF programs), from international development funds, and from nonprofits are required to provide a DUNS number for verification.

Some banks ask for a DUNS number when opening corporate accounts or reviewing credit applications, as a quick way to verify a legal entity.

Developer companies not registered in the United States must provide a DUNS number to obtain organization status in the Apple Developer Program. This is one of the few cases where DUNS is required for a technical registration rather than for business procurement. More in Chapter 6.

1.4 What DUNS Is Not

There are several common misconceptions worth clearing up right away.

DUNS is not a tax number. It does not replace the INN, EDRPOU, EIN, or a VAT number. It is a separate system that exists in parallel with government identifiers.

DUNS is not a license or a certificate. Having a DUNS number does not mean your company has been vetted, audited, or approved by any regulator. It is an identifier, nothing more.

DUNS is not a guarantee of winning a contract. It is a necessary but not sufficient condition for taking part in many tenders.

DUNS numbers are not sold by intermediaries. The number itself is free and is issued directly by D&B. Intermediaries may offer help with paperwork (for a fee), but there is no reason to pay for the number itself.

Chapter 2: The Registration Process—Step by Step

2.1 The General Principle of Registration

A DUNS number is registered through Dun & Bradstreet. Basic registration is free. Paid options exist (expedited processing, an expanded profile, monitoring), but you can get the number without paying anything.

The standard processing time is 5 to 30 business days, depending on the country. Expedited processing (usually 5–8 business days for an additional fee) is not available in every region.

Before you start, make sure your company does not already have a DUNS number. D&B assigns numbers on request, but it also sometimes creates profiles on its own from public data. To check, use the D&B Hoovers tool or the free search on the dnb.com website.

2.2 What to Prepare Before Applying

Regardless of the country, you will need the following information:

Required data:

• The full legal name of the company (exactly as it appears in the registration documents)

• All trade names (DBA, “Doing Business As”), if any

• Legal address (country, region, city, street, postal code)

• Physical address (if different from the legal address)

• Main phone number

• Name and job title of a contact person

• Year the company was founded

• Legal form (LLC, JSC, sole proprietor, and so on)

• Primary industry

• Number of employees (approximate)

• Revenue for the last financial year (optional, but it makes the profile more credible)

• Information about the parent company (if your organization is a subsidiary)

Documents that may be requested for verification:

• A certificate of state registration or an extract from the registry

• Incorporation documents (in some cases)

• An invoice or a bank statement showing the company’s details

2.3 The Step-by-Step Registration Process (General Algorithm)

Step 1: Check whether your company already has a DUNS number

Go to dnb.com and open the “Get a D-U-N-S Number” section (or use the relevant regional D&B portal). Use the search by company name and address. If a number already exists, you do not need to create a new one; you need to claim the right to manage the

existing profile.

Step 2: Go to the official registration portal

For most countries this is: https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html

For the United States (nongovernmental organizations): https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html

Some regions have localized versions of the site (dnb.co.uk, dnb.de, and so on).

Step 3: Fill in the online form

Enter all the company details. This is critical: the company name must match the way it appears in your country's official registry, down to punctuation and abbreviations. Discrepancies are the most common cause of delays or rejections.

Step 4: Submit the application and wait for confirmation

After you submit, you will receive an email confirmation with a Reference Number. You will need this number to track the status.

Step 5: Wait for verification

D&B may contact you by phone or email to confirm the data. Respond promptly, because any delay on your side stops the process.

Step 6: Receive your DUNS number

After successful verification, the DUNS number will be sent to the email address you provided. Store it in a safe place and record it in your corporate documentation.

Step 7: Update the company information when things change

The DUNS number is permanent, but the company profile needs to be kept current when you change your address or name, reorganize, add subsidiaries, or significantly change the scale of your operations.

2.4 Typical Registration Mistakes

Mistake 1: A company name that does not match. If your country's registry lists the company as "OOO Alfa" and your D&B application says "Alfa OOO" or "Alpha LLC," the system may be unable to identify it unambiguously. Use the exact legal name.

Mistake 2: Using a personal address instead of the legal address. For sole proprietors (FOP/IP) who work from home this is normal, but make sure the address matches the one in the registration documents.

Mistake 3: Creating a duplicate number. If a DUNS number already exists for your company, creating a second one is not only pointless but can cause confusion. D&B tries to prevent duplicates, but they do happen.

Mistake 4: Paying intermediaries to "get" a DUNS number. A number of companies offer "help getting a DUNS number" for substantial sums. The number itself is free. You can pay for help preparing documents, but make sure you understand exactly what you are paying for.

Mistake 5: Ignoring the profile after you get the number. A DUNS number without a current profile has minimal value. If the profile has no data on revenue, employees, and payment history, no Paydex credit score is generated.

2.5 Cost: What Is Free and What Is Paid

Chapter 3: An Important Update for the US Market—The Shift to UEI and SAM.gov

This chapter covers a critical change that took place in the United States in 2022, one that many books and online resources still do not describe correctly.

3.1 What Changed and Why

In April 2022 the US government completed its move from the DUNS number to a new identifier, the **UEI (Unique Entity Identifier)**. The change affected every organization that works with federal contracts, grants, and other forms of federal funding.

Important: the UEI replaced DUNS **only in the context of US federal procurement**. In the corporate sector, for credit scoring, in international tenders, and in the Apple Developer Program requirements, DUNS is still relevant.

Until 2022, registering in SAM.gov (System for Award Management), the central registry of suppliers to the US federal government, required a DUNS number. D&B was the official partner for assigning DUNS numbers for this purpose.

In 2019 the US Congress decided to move to its own identification system, to reduce dependence on a private company (D&B) and simplify the procedure. The new system was developed by the General Services Administration (GSA) and integrated directly into SAM.gov.

3.2 What the UEI Is

The UEI is a 12-character alphanumeric identifier assigned to organizations when they register or update their data in SAM.gov. The UEI is generated automatically by the SAM.gov system and replaces DUNS in the following contexts:

- All federal contracts (FAR, the Federal Acquisition Regulation)
- Federal grants and subsidies
- Registration in SAM.gov
- Federal reporting (FFATA, USASpending.gov)

Organizations that had a DUNS number before April 2022 automatically received a UEI the last time they updated their data in SAM.gov. New organizations receive a UEI when they first register.

3.3 Step-by-Step Instructions for Working with SAM.gov (UEI)

If your company plans to work with the US federal government (contracts, grants, subsidies), you need a UEI, not a DUNS number.

Step 1: Go to SAM.gov

Address: https://sam.gov

Create an account (or sign in through Login.gov, the single authentication system for US government services).

Step 2: Start the entity registration

Select “Register your Entity.” For most suppliers the “Business or Organization” type is the right one.

Step 3: Enter the organization’s details

You will need:

• Legal name and address

• Country of registration

• Tax identifier (an EIN for US companies; for foreign organizations, see Section 3.5)

• Type of organization

• NAICS and PSC industry codes (for providers of services and goods)

Step 4: Get your UEI

The UEI is assigned automatically during registration. It will appear in your SAM.gov profile.

Step 5: Complete the full registration (if you want contracts)

To take part in procurement you need more than an “entity registration”; you also need a full registration as a supplier. This

includes entering financial data, selecting industry codes, agreeing to policies, and renewing every year.

Important: A SAM.gov registration must be renewed every year. If it lapses, the organization in effect drops out of the registry of active suppliers.

3.4 DUNS and UEI Side by Side

3.5 Foreign Companies and SAM.gov

Companies registered outside the United States can also register in SAM.gov to receive federal contracts or grants. This is technically possible, but the process is more complicated:

• Foreign companies use a foreign tax identifier instead of an EIN

• Some types of contracts are restricted for foreign contractors (ITAR, BAA restrictions, and so on)

• You must provide bank details to receive payments

If your company is based in, say, Ukraine or the EU but wants to work with American federal agencies, registering in SAM.gov is both necessary and possible.

3.6 What to Do If You Already Had a DUNS Number for SAM.gov

If your organization was registered in SAM.gov before April 2022:

• Sign in to SAM.gov and update your profile

• The system will automatically assign or display your UEI

• Make sure your DUNS number also stays current in the D&B database if you use it for other purposes

Chapter 4: How DUNS Affects International Operations

4.1 DUNS as a Business Verification Tool

When a company enters an international market, it faces a basic problem: foreign partners do not know its history. At home you have a reputation, established relationships, and a customer base. Abroad you are a stranger.

A DUNS number does not solve this problem completely, but it creates an entry point for verification. A potential partner can enter your DUNS number in D&B Hoovers or other databases and get basic information about the company: date of founding, size, industry. If your company has a payment history in the D&B database, they will also see your Paydex credit score.

This is not a substitute for reputation, but it is documented data. In B2B trade, documented data is the currency of trust.

4.2 The Role of DUNS in International Tenders

Government procurement in most developed countries involves a standardized supplier registration procedure. DUNS is one of the most widely used identifiers in these systems.

European Union. EU funding programs (Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, LIFE, the structural fund programs) use the PIC (Participant Identification Code) system, which is issued by the European Commission. When you register in the EU Funding and Tenders Portal (https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders), a DUNS number is accepted as one way to verify the organization, but it is not the only mandatory identifier.

United Kingdom. Most public procurement in the United Kingdom goes through the Find a Tender (FTS) system. DUNS was traditionally used for supplier registration, but the UK government

is introducing its own identification system. Even so, having a DUNS number remains useful for commercial contracts.

Canada. Suppliers to the Canadian federal government register in SAP Ariba. The DUNS number is used as one of the identifiers during registration.

Australia. The AusTender system uses the ABN (Australian Business Number) as its main identifier, but a DUNS number may be requested when you deal with international partners.

4.3 DUNS and Corporate Supply Chains

Large corporations (Fortune 500, FTSE 100, and similar) have standardized processes for onboarding new suppliers. Most use one of the following platforms: SAP Ariba, Coupa, Jaggaer, Oracle Procurement Cloud.

When you register on any of these platforms, the DUNS number is a standard field. Having one speeds up due diligence, the check a corporation runs before approving a new supplier.

Without a DUNS number, your application often stalls at the “additional verification required” stage, which can stretch the process by weeks or even months.

4.4 DUNS in International Financing

Financial institutions increasingly use D&B data when making credit decisions. This is especially relevant for trade finance: letters of credit, factoring, and bank guarantees.

If a bank or a factoring company sees your DUNS number and a D&B profile with a positive payment history, it lowers the perceived risk and can affect the financing terms.

It is important to understand the mechanism: better financing is an indirect result of actively using DUNS. Having the number alone, without a current profile and a payment history, does not affect credit terms.

Chapter 5: Step-by-Step Guides by Country

5.1 Ukraine: Registering a DUNS Number for Ukrainian Companies

Ukraine has a well-developed system of state business registration (the Unified State Register, USR), which makes DUNS registration relatively straightforward, because D&B has access to the public USR data for verification.

Ukrainian companies that export or receive funding from international organizations (the EU, USAID, EBRD, IFC) regularly need a DUNS number. Ukrainian IT companies that want to publish apps in the App Store under the organization's brand need one as well.

You will need:

• The EDRPOU code (the Unified State Register of Enterprises and Organizations of Ukraine), which is your main identifier for verification

• The full official company name in Ukrainian (as in the USR)

• The legal address (as in the USR)

• Contact details of the responsible person

• The primary line of business (KVED code)

Recommendation: get a current extract from the USR (available at https://usr.minjust.gov.ua/). The data in your application must match the data in the registry.

Use the international portal: https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html

At the time of writing there is no separate national D&B portal for Ukraine, so registration goes through the main site in English.

Tip: Fill in the form in English, which is the standard for an international profile. If the registry lists the company name only in Ukrainian, enter it in transliteration. For example, “TOV Alfa Tekhnolodzhis” becomes “TOV Alpha Technologies” (though you can give both versions).

Key fields:

• **Company Name**: the official name (transliteration or English translation)

• **Country**: Ukraine

• **Physical Address**: the exact address from the USR

• **Phone**: a Ukrainian number in international format (+380...)

• **Number of Employees**: give a range (1–4, 5–9, 10–19, and so on)

• **Primary Business Activity**: the main line of business

The **Ownership** field is especially important: state the ownership structure (private, state-owned, foreign founders, if applicable). Concealing information about foreign founders can cause problems during verification.

After you submit the application, D&B may call the phone number you provided to confirm the data. Make sure the person listed as the contact is expecting the call and speaks English (or arrange for an interpreter).

The typical timeline for Ukraine is 10–20 business days.

Once you have the DUNS number:

• Record it in your corporate documents

• Add it to the company website (in the “About us” or “Company details” section)

• Include it in the standard document package for tender applications

• If applicable, add it to your Prozorro profile (the Ukrainian public procurement system) for international partners

Wartime and registration: Since February 2022 a number of Ukrainian companies have been operating under force majeure conditions, with changes of legal address or reorganizations. D&B takes this context into account during verification. If the data in the USR differs from the actual situation for objective reasons (the war, temporary occupation of territory), explain this in a cover letter.

International grants: Ukrainian organizations that receive funding from the EU, USAID, EBRD, or UNDP are, as a rule, required to have a DUNS number. This requirement is checked when the grant agreement is signed. It is best to get a DUNS number well in advance rather than at the moment the documents are signed.

IT companies and Apple: Many Ukrainian IT companies develop apps for the App Store. To publish under a corporate account, the Apple Developer Program requires a DUNS number. More in Chapter 6.

5.2 United States: DUNS, UEI, and SAM.gov—The Full Context

As covered in detail in Chapter 3, the United States has two parallel systems for identifying organizations, depending on the context:

• **UEI (SAM.gov)**—for federal contracts, grants, and subsidies

• **DUNS (D&B)**—for the corporate sector, credit scoring, and the Apple Developer Program

An American company often needs both identifiers.

For American companies, DUNS registration goes through https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html. The process is identical to the general algorithm in Chapter 2, with one addition: American

companies usually provide their EIN (Employer Identification Number, the tax ID), which speeds up verification considerably.

Timeline: Standard is 5–10 business days. Expedited processing (5 business days) is available for a fee.

Step 1. Get or confirm your EIN. Without an EIN, registration in SAM.gov is not possible for American companies.

Step 2. Go to https://sam.gov and create an account through Login.gov.

Step 3. Select "Register your Entity" → "Business or Organization."

Step 4. Enter your EIN and company name. SAM.gov will check the data against the IRS (the US tax authority) database.

Step 5. Fill in the profile: address, contact details, bank details (to receive payments from the federal government), NAICS codes, and certifications of compliance with requirements.

Step 6. Get your UEI. It will appear in your SAM.gov profile.

Step 7. Renew the registration every year. SAM.gov will automatically notify you as the expiration date approaches.

The US Small Business Administration (SBA) runs its own small business support programs (8(a), HUBZone, WOSB, and others). These programs are integrated with SAM.gov and use the UEI. A DUNS number is no longer required to register in SBA programs.

In the US private sector, DUNS remains an important tool:

• **Business credit score:** American Express, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, and other banks use D&B data when assessing the creditworthiness of legal entities. The Paydex score (see Chapter 7) is built on DUNS data.

• **Corporate suppliers:** Amazon Business, Walmart, Home Depot, and thousands of other large companies use DUNS when registering suppliers in their systems.

• **Apple Developer Program:** For companies registered in the United States, DUNS is used for verification in the Apple Developer Program.

5.3 European Union: Working Within a Multilayer System

The European Union has no single business identifier on the level of DUNS. Instead there is a patchwork of systems:

• **PIC (Participant Identification Code)**—for EU programs (EU Funding & Tenders Portal)

• **VAT number**—for tax purposes

• **LEI (Legal Entity Identifier)**—for the financial sector

• **EORI**—for customs

• **National registries**—each member state keeps its own business registry

DUNS occupies a special place in this system: it is the only identifier that lets you link all of this data through the global D&B database.

EU grants: When you register in the EU Funding and Tenders Portal (https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/), the system accepts DUNS as one of the identifiers for verification. However, since 2019 the EU also accepts data from national registries directly, through the VIES (VAT Information Exchange System) and other sources.

Large corporate tenders: The European divisions of global companies (Siemens, BASF, Airbus, BP, and others) routinely require a DUNS number when registering suppliers.

Credit scoring: D&B is active in Europe, and Paydex scores are used in the EU corporate sector.

Step 1: Go to the local D&B portal for your country

D&B has national offices and portals in many EU countries:

• Germany: https://www.dnb.com/de-de/ (also through its affiliate Creditreform)

• France: https://www.dnb.com/fr-fr/

• Poland: https://www.dnb.com/pl-pl/

• Netherlands: https://www.dnb.com/nl-nl/

• All other countries: use the main portal https://www.dnb.com/

For countries without a national portal, registration is available through the international portal.

Step 2: Prepare the data from your national registry

In the EU, verifying companies is easier because most national registries are public:

• Germany: Handelsregister (handelsregister.de)

• France: RCS through Infogreffe (infogreffe.fr)

• Poland: KRS through strona.ekrs.ms.gov.pl

• Netherlands: KVK (kvk.nl)

D&B may request an extract from your country's registry as part of verification.

Step 3: Fill in the form

The standard process is described in Chapter 2. Provide your VAT number, which will speed up verification considerably.

Step 4: Register in the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (if needed)

If your goal is to take part in EU programs, also register at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/myarea/organisation

This is where you get a PIC. DUNS and PIC are different identifiers used in different contexts. For EU grants you need a PIC; DUNS can help with the initial verification, but the PIC is

mandatory.

If your company works in the financial sector (banking, asset management, securities trading), you most likely need an **LEI (Legal Entity Identifier)**, an international standard supported by financial sector regulators. LEI and DUNS are different systems for different purposes. The LEI is governed by GLEIF (the Global Legal Entity Identifier Foundation), and you can get one through accredited LOUs (Local Operating Units).

5.4 United Kingdom: DUNS After Brexit

After the United Kingdom left the European Union, the country moved to its own public procurement system, governed by the Procurement Act 2023. This system is moving away from pan-European standards.

In the DUNS context, it is important to understand the following: DUNS is still used in the United Kingdom, especially in the corporate sector and in international operations, but the UK government is moving toward creating its own supplier identifier.

Crown Commercial Service (CCS) is the main public procurement body in the United Kingdom. Registering a supplier in the CCS system used to require a DUNS number. After the 2023–2024 procurement reform, the UK government began moving to the **UK Supplier ID** system, which is integrated with Companies House (the national company registry).

In practice the situation is this: for large government tenders, check the current requirements on the portal https://www.gov.uk/find-tender. For commercial procurement in the private sector, DUNS remains a standard requirement.

Step 1: Check your data in Companies House

D&B gets its data on British companies from Companies House (https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/).
Make sure the information in Companies House is current, because that is what D&B uses for verification.

Check:

• The official company name

• The registered address

• Directors and shareholders

• Company status (active/dormant)

Step 2: Go to the D&B portal for the United Kingdom

Address: https://www.dnb.com/en-gb/ or the main portal.

Step 3: Provide the Companies House Number (CHN)

This is your main national identifier in the United Kingdom. Providing it speeds up verification considerably.

Step 4: Fill in the form and wait for confirmation

The standard timeline for the United Kingdom is 5–10 business days.

In the United Kingdom, DUNS is most in demand in the following contexts:

Corporate sector: FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 companies routinely require a DUNS number when registering suppliers. The procurement portals of large British corporations (BP, AstraZeneca, HSBC, Vodafone, and others) have a field for DUNS.

International financing: British companies that receive funding from international organizations (the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the IFC, and so on) must have a DUNS number.

Apple Developer Program: Like companies from other countries, British developers need a DUNS number for corporate registration in the Apple Developer Program.

Credit history: D&B is active in the United Kingdom, and data on British companies is updated regularly. The Paydex score is used in corporate lending.

Chapter 6: DUNS and the Apple Developer Program

6.1 Why Apple Requires DUNS

For most entrepreneurs this is one of the most practical uses of DUNS, and at the same time one of the least obvious.

The Apple Developer Program comes in several variants:

• **Individual**—for private persons

• **Organization**—for companies and organizations

• **Enterprise**—for corporations that distribute apps only inside the company

When you register an **Organization** or **Enterprise** account for a company registered **outside the United States**, Apple requires proof that the organization legally exists. The verification tool is the DUNS number.

The reason is simple: Apple has no direct access to the legal entity registries of every country in the world, but it does have access to the global D&B database. DUNS provides a standardized way to verify without integrating with each national registry.

For American companies Apple also uses DUNS, but in addition to data from American registries.

6.2 Who Exactly Needs DUNS for Apple

You need DUNS for the Apple Developer Program if:

• You want to publish an app on behalf of a company (not a private individual) in the App Store or the Mac App Store

• You want to use the Apple Enterprise Program for internal distribution of apps

• Your company wants to distribute apps with the organization’s branding (not a personal developer profile)

• You use Apple Business Manager and plan to deploy apps inside the organization

Exception: If you register as an Individual (a private-person developer), no DUNS number is required. But an Individual account does not let you list a company name as the app publisher.

6.3 Step by Step: Getting a DUNS Number for Apple

Apple provides its own tool for checking and requesting a DUNS number, integrated with D&B.

Step 1: Go to the Apple Developer Program page

Address: https://developer.apple.com/programs/enroll/

Select the “Organization” account type.

Step 2: Use Apple’s tool to check for a DUNS number

Apple provides a dedicated DUNS lookup form at: https://developer.apple.com/enroll/duns-lookup/

Enter the company details: name, address, country. The system will show whether a DUNS number already exists for your company.

Step 3: If there is no DUNS number, request one through Apple

The lookup page has a “Request a D-U-N-S Number” function. This is an integrated request that Apple sends to D&B. You do not need to go to the D&B site separately, because Apple has automated this process for its partners.

Step 4: Wait for the number to be assigned

After you submit a request through the Apple form, D&B processes it. The timeline is usually 14 business days. Apple will notify you by email.

Step 5: Complete the developer account registration

After you receive the DUNS number, go back to https://developer.apple.com/programs/enroll/ and enter your DUNS number to complete the Organization account registration.

6.4 Common Problems When Registering with Apple Using DUNS

Problem 1: The company name does not match. Apple checks that the company name on your Apple ID account matches the name in the D&B profile. If there is a discrepancy (for example, an abbreviation or a different language), verification will fail. Make sure the data matches.

Problem 2: The DUNS number is registered to the wrong legal entity. If you have several legal entities (for example, a Ukrainian LLC and a Cypriot company), the DUNS number must be registered to the exact company you are using to register the developer account.

Problem 3: Delays verifying sole proprietors (FOP/IP). For individual entrepreneurs (FOPs in Ukraine, sole traders in the United Kingdom), verification through Apple can be harder because the line between the private person and the business is blurred. In these cases it is best to use an Individual Apple Developer account or to register a legal entity.

Problem 4: An expired or inactive DUNS number. D&B may mark a DUNS number as “out of business” or inactive if the data is out of date. Before you apply to Apple, make sure your DUNS profile is current.

6.5 Cost and Timelines

Chapter 7: The Paydex Scoring System—Your Business Credit Score

7.1 What Paydex Is

Paydex is a numeric credit score developed by Dun & Bradstreet specifically to assess companies' payment discipline. The score is calculated from historical data on how promptly a company has paid its suppliers and partners.

The Paydex scale runs from 1 to 100, where:

- **80–100**—high score (payment on time or early)
- **50–79**—medium score (payment with minor delays)
- **1–49**—low score (systematic payment delays)

A score of **80** means the company pays invoices exactly on time.

A score of **100** means the company regularly pays early.

7.2 How Paydex Is Calculated

D&B collects data on a company's payment history from several sources:

Voluntary supplier reports. Companies and organizations that do business with you can voluntarily send payment history data to D&B. This is the main source of data. If your suppliers do not send such data to D&B, no Paydex score is generated, even if you always pay on time.

Financial statements. In some jurisdictions D&B gets data from public financial reporting.

Direct reports from the company. Some D&B programs let the company itself provide data on its payment relationships.

Paydex is calculated with a weighted formula: more recent payments carry more weight than older ones. The minimum number of reports needed to generate a score is, as a rule, three.

7.3 How Paydex Affects Your Business

Lending. American and international banks use Paydex when assessing corporate credit applications. A high Paydex score can lead to lower interest rates and better lending terms.

Working with suppliers. When large suppliers review a request for trade credit (invoice payment terms of 30, 60, or 90 days), they look at Paydex. A high score means longer payment terms, which means better cash flow.

Taking part in tenders. A number of procurement procedures include an automatic Paydex check as part of the qualification criteria.

Reputation. Potential partners can order a D&B Credit Report on your company. A high Paydex score signals reliability.

7.4 How to Improve Paydex

Strategy 1: Pay on time and early.

This is the foundation. Every on-time payment adds positive data to your history. Paying early (before the due date) gives a score above 80.

Strategy 2: Ask your suppliers to report to D&B.

If your key suppliers do not send data to D&B, find out whether they are willing to. Many large companies are already D&B partners. Some suppliers can be asked to submit a “Trade Reference” on you directly.

Strategy 3: Join the D&B Self-Reporting program.

D&B offers programs in which the company itself can provide data on its credit relationships. This is a paid service, but for new companies without a history it is a way to build a profile faster.

Strategy 4: Keep your D&B profile up to date.

A current profile (with real data on revenue, employees, and structure) raises the overall D&B Credit Score, which is used alongside Paydex.

Strategy 5: Check for errors and correct them.

D&B, like any database, can contain errors. Incorrect data on late payments can lower Paydex. Companies have the right to

dispute incorrect information in their profile.

7.5 Paydex vs. FICO and Other Scores

It is important to keep these apart:

• **Paydex**—D&B's business credit score, based solely on payment discipline

• **D&B Credit Score**—a broader D&B credit score that takes several factors into account

• **Experian Business Credit Score**—a similar score from Experian

• **FICO SBSS (Small Business Scoring Service)**—used by the SBA to assess small businesses; it also takes the owner's personal credit score into account

• **FICO Score**—the personal credit score of private individuals; not the same as a business score

For most small and medium-sized businesses, Paydex is the most practically significant business score, because corporate buyers and banks use it most widely.

Chapter 8: DUNS in a Comprehensive Business Strategy

8.1 DUNS as Part of Corporate Identity

Corporate identity is the set of verifiable attributes of an organization. In the international context it includes:

• Legal name and form of ownership

• Address and contact details

• Financial history

• Credit history

• Reputation among partners

A DUNS number with an active, current profile covers most of these elements. That is why integrating DUNS into corporate strategy is an investment in a verifiable identity rather than a bureaucratic requirement.

8.2 DUNS in Marketing Strategy

Placement on your website. Many international companies publish their DUNS number on an “About” or “Company details” page. It signals transparency to potential partners.

In tender applications. The DUNS number should be a standard element of your tender document package. Leaving it out when it is required is grounds for disqualifying the application.

In commercial proposals. When you work with large corporate clients, including the DUNS number in your proposal speeds up the process of registering you as a new supplier.

8.3 DUNS and Risk Management

One often overlooked aspect: DUNS works both ways. Just as you can give your DUNS number to a potential partner, you can request and check the DUNS numbers of your counterparties.

Before signing a major contract with an unfamiliar partner:

• Ask for their DUNS number

• Use D&B Hoovers or another service to get basic information about the company

• If needed, order a full D&B credit report

This is a basic due diligence procedure that can keep you from working with nonviable or unscrupulous counterparties.

8.4 Strategic Planning with DUNS in Mind

When you draw up an international expansion plan, DUNS should appear early:

Stage 1 (6–12 months before entering the market): Get the DUNS number and start building the profile and payment history. If the profile has only just been created, the real value of a Paydex score will appear after 12–18 months.

Stage 2 (3–6 months before entry): Verify that the data in the D&B profile is correct. Fix errors. Update the financial data.

Stage 3 (market entry): Use DUNS actively in tender applications, when registering as a supplier with corporate clients, and in financial transactions.

Stage 4 (ongoing): Update the profile every year. Monitor the Paydex score. Track changes in the requirements of your target markets.

Chapter 9: Advanced Uses of a DUNS Number

9.1 DUNS in the Ecosystem of International Organizations

Beyond commercial uses, DUNS opens access to a range of international programs and financial instruments.

The World Bank and IFC. Programs of the World Bank and its corporation, the IFC (International Finance Corporation), that finance projects in developing countries require contractors to be verified. DUNS is one of the accepted verification tools.

USAID. USAID programs for organizations outside the United States require registration in SAM.gov (with a UEI). This is part of the overall US policy on transparency in the use of federal funds.

UNDP. The United Nations Development Programme uses its own registry for contractors (UNGM, the UN Global Marketplace). When you register in UNGM (https://www.ungm.org), DUNS is one of the identifiers requested.

EBRD (the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development). EBRD projects in Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Africa routinely require a DUNS number to verify participants.

9.2 DUNS and the International Trade Ecosystem

Chambers of Commerce. Many chambers of commerce ask for a DUNS number to verify the exporter when they issue certificates of origin or other trade documents.

B2B trade platforms. Alibaba, Global Sources, ThomasNet, and other international B2B platforms accept DUNS as a way to verify a seller's reliability.

Customs and foreign trade. In a number of countries, trusted trader programs (AEO in the EU, C-TPAT in the United States) that grant pre-clearance in customs processing consider the presence of a DUNS number one factor in assessing a company's reliability.

9.3 DUNS and Digital Platforms

Besides the Apple Developer Program (Chapter 6), there are a number of other digital ecosystems where DUNS matters.

Microsoft Partner Network. To register as a Microsoft Partner, DUNS is used as one way to verify the legal entity.

Google Play (for organizations). When you register a corporate developer account, Google may ask for a DUNS number depending on the country of registration.

LinkedIn Company Pages. DUNS may be used when verifying LinkedIn company pages for some features (in particular, LinkedIn Sales Navigator for large companies).

Chapter 10: Practical Tips and Checklists

10.1 Checklist Before You Apply

- □ Confirmed that the company has no existing DUNS number
- □ Prepared the full legal name (exactly as in the registry)
- □ Prepared the legal address (exactly as in the registry)
- □ Identified the KVED/OKVED/NAICS code or equivalent
- □ Designated an English-speaking contact person (for the D&B call)
- □ Prepared an extract from the state registry (in case it is requested)
- □ Checked the contact details (phone, email)
- □ Defined the purpose of getting the DUNS number (Apple / tenders / credit / other)

10.2 Checklist After You Receive Your DUNS Number

- □ DUNS number saved in the corporate documentation
- □ DUNS added to the company details on the website
- □ DUNS included in the standard package for tender applications
- □ D&B profile updated (financial data, number of employees)
- □ Reminder set for the annual profile update
- □ (For the US) Registered in SAM.gov to get a UEI (if required)
- □ (For the EU) Registered in the EU Funding & Tenders Portal (if required)
- □ (For Apple) Used the DUNS number to complete registration in the Apple Developer Program

10.3 How to Choose a Consultant or a Law Firm

If you decide to use a professional consultant to get a DUNS number or related registrations (SAM.gov, Apple Developer, the EU Portal), look at the following criteria:

Experience in the specific market. A consultant who registers DUNS numbers for Ukrainian companies and a consultant who specializes in American federal contracting are different specialists. Ask exactly which markets they have worked with.

Transparency about free options. An honest consultant will tell you right away that a DUNS number is free. Its cost is your time and correctly completed documents. If you are asked to pay for "getting a DUNS number," ask exactly what that price includes.

Understanding of related systems. To work with US federal contracts you need SAM.gov and a UEI, not just DUNS. A consultant who does not know about the 2022 move to the UEI is not competent in this area.

Real cases. Ask them to describe specific companies (with those companies' consent) they have helped and what difficulties they ran into.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. How much does it cost to get a DUNS number?

Getting a DUNS number is completely free. Only additional services are paid: expedited processing, extended credit reports, and profile monitoring. With intermediaries, you may pay only for advice on preparing documents, not for the number itself.

2. How long does it take to get a DUNS number?

The standard timeline is 5 to 30 business days, depending on the country and how busy D&B is. For most European countries and Ukraine, the typical timeline is 10–20 business days. Expedited processing (for an additional fee) can cut it to 5–8 business days.

3. Do I need a separate DUNS number for each office or branch?

Every legally independent entity must have its own DUNS number. If your company has subsidiaries, each of them must register separately. Divisions or offices that are not separate legal entities can be linked to the company's main DUNS number through the D&B "Family Tree" structure.

4. Can an individual (FOP, IP, sole trader) get a DUNS number?

Yes. Individual entrepreneurs can get a DUNS number. To do so, give your details as a registered entrepreneur, not as a private person. This is especially relevant for the Apple Developer Program: an FOP can get a DUNS number and register an Organization account.

5. How do I check whether my company already has a DUNS number?

Use the search tool on the D&B site: https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html. It has a "Check for Existing D-U-N-S Number" function. Enter the company name and address.

6. What happens if I create a duplicate DUNS number?

D&B tries to prevent duplicates. If a second number was assigned to you by accident, contact D&B support and ask them to merge the profiles. Having two DUNS numbers for one company creates confusion and reduces the effectiveness of the profile.

7. Do I need to update my DUNS record when the company changes its address or name?

Yes, absolutely. When the legal address changes, the name changes, the company reorganizes, or the ownership structure changes significantly, you must update the data in the D&B profile. An outdated profile lowers counterparties' trust and can lead to tender applications being rejected.

8. Is a DUNS number valid indefinitely?

A DUNS number is assigned permanently. However, D&B may give a company the status “out of business” if no data about its activity has come in for a long time. To keep the status active, it is best to update the information in the profile every year.

9. How does DUNS differ from the UEI?

DUNS is a private identification system developed by Dun & Bradstreet and used in the international commercial context, in corporate procurement, and in credit scoring. The UEI is a US government identifier introduced in 2022 for use exclusively in the system of US federal procurement, grants, and subsidies through SAM.gov. If you want to work with the US federal government, you need a UEI. For all other purposes, you need DUNS.

10. Do I need DUNS to get European grants (Horizon Europe and so on)?

For EU grant programs the main identifier is the PIC (Participant Identification Code), which is issued through the EU Funding & Tenders Portal. DUNS can speed up the initial verification but is not mandatory. To register in the EU Portal you will need data from your country’s national registry.

11. What should I do if D&B refuses to register me or does not respond?

First, make sure that all the data in the application matches your country’s state registry exactly. The most common reason for rejection is a discrepancy in the name or address. Second, contact D&B support directly. For urgent cases (for example, you need a DUNS number to submit a tender application), phone support is available. If you need the number for the Apple Developer Program, use the request form on Apple’s site, which is sometimes faster.

12. Does DUNS affect taxation or regulation?

No. DUNS is a private identifier in a commercial company's database. It has no connection with tax authorities and carries no regulatory consequences. Having it or not having it does not change your tax obligations.

13. Can nonprofit organizations get a DUNS number?

Yes. Nonprofits, foundations, educational institutions, and government bodies can all get a DUNS number. For nonprofits this is especially important when receiving international grants, including from USAID, the EU, and the UN.

14. How long does it take to build a Paydex score?

To generate a basic Paydex score you need at least three payment history reports from your suppliers. If you actively work with several counterparties that send data to D&B, a Paydex score can form within 12–18 months of registering the DUNS number.

15. Can a subsidiary use its parent company's DUNS number?

No. Every legal entity must have its own DUNS number. Using one legal entity's DUNS number for another is improper and can cause problems during verification. D&B can link subsidiaries through the "Family Tree" structure, but each of them must have its own number.

16. What is a D&B Credit Report, and do I need one?

A D&B Credit Report is a paid document that you can order on any company in the D&B database. It contains detailed information on the company's credit history, financial indicators, payment discipline, and risk indexes. As a rule, you do not need to order one on your own company, but you can order one on potential partners to assess their reliability.

17. Do I need DUNS if I already work in the EU with a PIC?

PIC and DUNS complement each other rather than replace each other. The PIC is required for EU programs; DUNS is for corporate procurement, credit scoring, and international tenders outside the

EU. If you work only within EU programs, a PIC alone may be enough. If you plan broader international cooperation, it is best to have both.

18. Do I need DUNS to register in Google Play (Android development)?

As a rule, no. When you register an organization account, Google Play does not require DUNS as a mandatory item, unlike Apple. Google uses its own verification methods. Even so, a DUNS number may be requested under some Google corporate programs.

19. Can a DUNS number be private (confidential)?

The DUNS number itself is public; it can be found in the D&B database. However, how detailed the publicly available information is depends on what the company disclosed when it registered. Basic data (name, address, industry) is usually public. Financial indicators are disclosed only at the company's decision or from public sources.

20. What is the fastest way to get a DUNS number for an urgent tender application?

If you need a DUNS number urgently for a tender or another business transaction:

- Call D&B directly; phone support is available in most regions
- Ask for expedited processing (for an additional fee)
- For Apple-specific applications, use the request form in the Apple Developer Portal
- If your tender is funded by the US government, register in SAM.gov to get a UEI (this is a separate procedure that does not depend on D&B)

For the most urgent cases, D&B offers processing in 5 business days (usually for an additional fee). This is the minimum realistic timeline under standard circumstances.

Conclusion

Over the course of this book we have gone from a basic understanding of what a DUNS number is to concrete step-by-step instructions for four countries, a niche use in the Apple Developer Program, and the mechanics of the Paydex score.

Here are a few key takeaways to carry away from this book.

First: DUNS is a tool, not a goal. The number by itself gives no advantages. The value comes from a current profile, a payment history, and consistent use of the number in your business.

Second: the system is not static. In 2022 the United States carried out a significant reform, the move to the UEI for federal procurement. Similar changes are happening in other jurisdictions. Before submitting any tender or grant application, check the current requirements.

Third: country specifics matter. What works for a Ukrainian company may not meet the requirements of the British registry or the Apple Developer Program procedure. The step-by-step instructions in Chapter 5 were written precisely to account for these specifics.

Fourth: start early. If you plan to enter an international market, take part in a tender, or win a grant, start the DUNS process at least 30–60 days ahead. Processing takes time, and at the last minute you may not have it.

Fifth: Paydex is built over years. A credit score is not something you can get quickly. Start building your payment history as early as you can.

The main point I wanted to make in this book is that a company's international identity is a resource you can manage. You can work actively to make your company verifiable, reliable, and open to international cooperation. The DUNS number is one of the tools that helps you do it.

I wish you success in your international business.

Maksym Stepanenko

Managing Partner, Innova Consulting Group

Appendices and Resources

Official registration portals

D&B (main international portal):

https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html

SAM.gov (United States, for UEI and federal procurement):

https://sam.gov

EU Funding & Tenders Portal (EU grants, PIC):

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/

Apple Developer Program (DUNS for the App Store):

https://developer.apple.com/programs/enroll/

Apple DUNS Lookup:

https://developer.apple.com/enroll/duns-lookup/

UK Find a Tender:

https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/

UN Global Marketplace (UNGM):

https://www.ungm.org

State registries for verifying your data before you apply

Ukraine (USR): https://usr.minjust.gov.ua/

United Kingdom (Companies House): https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/

Germany (Handelsregister): https://www.handelsregister.de/

France (Infogreffe): https://www.infogreffe.fr/

Netherlands (KVK): https://www.kvk.nl/

Poland (KRS): https://ekrs.ms.gov.pl/

Additional identification systems

LEI (for the financial sector): https://www.gleif.org/

EORI (for EU customs): through the customs authorities of an EU member state

PIC (for EU grants): through the EU Funding & Tenders Portal

Further reading

- **"The Global Manager's Guide to Procurement"**—an overview of international procurement systems
- **"International Business: Competing in the Global Marketplace,"** Charles W.L. Hill—an academic textbook on international business
- **"Financing International Trade,"** Gary Collyer—a practical guide to trade finance
- Official D&B documentation: https://www.dnb.com/business-credit.html
- SAM.gov documentation: https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration
- Apple Developer Documentation: https://developer.apple.com/documentation/

Additional Chapters: A Deeper Dive

Chapter 11: DUNS and International Trade Finance

11.1 What Trade Finance Is and Why It Matters

Trade finance is a set of financial instruments that lets companies carry out international trade transactions while minimizing the risk of nonpayment and providing cash flow for both parties to the deal.

The main trade finance instruments:

Letter of Credit (L/C). The buyer's bank guarantees payment to the seller on condition that documents confirming shipment of the goods are presented. A letter of credit protects both sides: the seller knows they will get paid, and the buyer knows payment will happen only after the goods have actually shipped.

Bank guarantee. One party's bank issues a document guaranteeing that its client will fulfill its obligations. It is used in tenders (a bid bond), when contracts are signed (a performance guarantee), and with advance payments (an advance payment guarantee).

Factoring. A company sells its accounts receivable (unpaid invoices) to a factoring company in exchange for immediate

payment of most of the amount (usually 70–90%). The factoring company then collects the full amount from the debtor. This lets the seller avoid waiting 30–90 days for payment.

Forfaiting. Similar to factoring, but used for large, long-term trade deals, and it involves a full transfer of risk to the financing party.

11.2 The Role of DUNS in Obtaining Trade Finance

When dealing with international letters of credit and bank guarantees, banks run due diligence on both parties to the deal. As part of this check they often use D&B databases to get the counterparty's credit profile.

For the exporter: A DUNS profile with a positive payment history (a high Paydex score) lowers the perceived risk and can speed up the review of a factoring or trade credit application. Factoring companies are more willing to work with clients whose receivables are well verified.

For the importer: When a letter of credit is requested, the bank assesses the importer's creditworthiness. A DUNS profile with a good Paydex score helps the bank get objective data quickly instead of requesting a large volume of financial documents.

For the factoring company: When analyzing the buyer (the debtor), the factoring company wants to know how likely it is that the buyer will pay. The D&B Credit Report is one of the standard assessment tools.

11.3 A Practical Example: How DUNS Affects Factoring Terms

Consider a hypothetical scenario: a Ukrainian IT company provided services to a German client worth €120 000, with payment due in 60 days. The company wants to get the money

immediately through international factoring.

The factoring company checks the German client through D&B. If the client has a DUNS profile with a Paydex of 78+ and a good credit score, the factoring company will very likely approve the deal and offer good terms (an advance of 85–90% and a low fee). If the profile is missing or the Paydex is low, the terms will be worse or the deal will be turned down.

Takeaway: Having a DUNS profile matters for getting trade finance, and not only for your own company but also for your key clients and partners.

11.4 Export Credit and Risk Insurance

Most countries have government export support agencies (Export Credit Agencies, ECAs). They provide export risk insurance and lending for companies operating in international markets.

Ukraine: The Export Credit Agency (ECA of Ukraine) provides insurance coverage and financing for Ukrainian exporters. When reviewing an application, the ECA assesses the foreign buyer, and a DUNS profile can be used as one source of data.

United States: The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM Bank) is the largest ECA in the world. It finances American exporters. Registering with EXIM Bank routinely requires an EIN (the tax ID), and D&B data is used in the analysis.

EU: In Europe, ECAs operate in each country (Euler Hermes in Germany, Bpifrance in France, UK Export Finance in the United Kingdom). All of them use D&B data to some degree to assess foreign buyers.

Chapter 12: Additional National Identification Systems and Their Link to DUNS

12.1 An Overview of the Global Ecosystem of Business Identifiers

There are several dozen different systems in the world for identifying legal entities. Understanding how they relate to each other helps you build the right registration strategy for your company.

By geographic scope:

Global systems:

• DUNS (D&B)—the commercial global standard

• LEI (Legal Entity Identifier)—the financial sector, the global GLEIF standard

• GS1 GLN (Global Location Number)—for retail supply chains

Regional systems:

• UEI (SAM.gov)—United States, federal procurement

• PIC (EU Funding Portal)—EU, grants and programs

• UK Supplier ID—United Kingdom, public procurement

National systems:

• EIN/TIN—United States, tax numbers

• EDRPOU—Ukraine

• SIREN/SIRET—France

• HRB-Nummer—Germany

• CIF/NIF—Spain

• VAT numbers—all of Europe

By area of use:

• Taxation: EIN, VAT, INN

• Trade and procurement: DUNS, UEI, EORI

• Finance: LEI

- EU grants: PIC
- Logistics: GLN

12.2 Canada: DUNS and the BN (Business Number)

Canada uses a two-level business identification system:

The Business Number (BN) is a nine-digit number issued by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). It is used for taxation, HST/GST registration, and dealing with federal programs.

DUNS is used in Canada in the corporate context and when registering suppliers for the federal government. The procurement.canada.ca site accepts DUNS at registration.

PSPC (Public Services and Procurement Canada) is the body responsible for Canadian federal procurement. When a supplier registers in SAP Ariba (used by the Canadian government), DUNS is a standard identifier.

To get a DUNS number in Canada, use the standard D&B portal: https://www.dnb.com/duns-number.html. Canadian companies are advised to provide their Business Number at registration, which speeds up verification.

12.3 Australia and the Asia-Pacific Region

Australia. The main business identifier is the ABN (Australian Business Number). DUNS is used when dealing with international partners and in corporate procurement. The AusTender system (government procurement) mostly uses the ABN, but international suppliers can use DUNS.

Singapore. The UEN (Unique Entity Number) is the national identifier. DUNS is widely used by Singaporean companies for international trade. Singapore is one of Asia’s biggest trading hubs, and many large corporations require DUNS when registering

a supplier.

Japan. Japanese companies actively use DUNS for international operations. D&B Japan (a subsidiary) has an extensive database of Japanese companies.

China. Chinese companies increasingly use DUNS to enter international markets. D&B China works with the State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR) to verify data.

12.4 The Middle East

The UAE. DUNS is widely used in Dubai and Abu Dhabi, the region's two largest business centers. When bidding in tenders of ADNOC (Abu Dhabi National Oil Company), Dubai Municipality, and other large entities, DUNS is a standard requirement.

Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Vision 2030 program attracts significant foreign investment. When working with Saudi Aramco, SABIC, and other large companies, DUNS is a standard requirement for suppliers.

Israel. Israeli technology companies that work actively with the United States and Europe usually have a DUNS number. When working with American corporations or taking part in American accelerators (Y Combinator, Techstars), having a DUNS number speeds up corporate verification.

Chapter 13: Building a Corporate Credit History from Scratch

13.1 Why Credit History Matters for a Business

In personal finance, your credit history determines whether you get a mortgage and at what interest rate. In business the logic is similar, but the scale and the consequences are much greater.

A business credit history affects:

• The terms of trade credit from suppliers (how long a payment deferral they will give you)

• Interest rates on corporate loans

• Your ability to get bank guarantees without collateral

• Insurance terms

• Corporate clients' decisions about working with you (some companies automatically check the credit score of new suppliers)

An important difference between business credit and personal credit: a business credit history is not created automatically. If you do not take active steps to build one, you will not have one, even if your business has run flawlessly for many years.

13.2 Three Business Credit Scoring Systems

In the United States and in the international context there are three main business credit scoring agencies:

Dun & Bradstreet (D&B): Paydex, D&B Viability Rating, D&B Delinquency Predictor Score. The most widely used international system.

Experian Business: Intelliscore Plus (0–100), Business Credit Score. Widely used in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Equifax Business: Business Credit Risk Score, Business Failure Score. Common in the United States.

For an international business, D&B is the most relevant, precisely because DUNS is the international standard and Paydex is recognized all over the world.

13.3 A Step-by-Step Strategy for Building Credit History

Step 1: Register the company as a legal entity

A business credit history is always tied to a legal entity, not a private person. A sole proprietor (FOP/IP) can have a DUNS number, but a sole proprietor's business credit often gets mixed with the owner's personal credit. If possible, register an LLC or a similar form that clearly separates personal finances from corporate ones.

Step 2: Open a corporate bank account

Use the corporate account only for business operations. Never mix personal and corporate finances. This is not only an accounting problem but a credit scoring problem as well.

Step 3: Get a DUNS number

This is the entry point to the D&B system. Without DUNS, no Paydex score is generated.

Step 4: Open trade credit lines

Agree with suppliers to work on Net-30 (payment within 30 days), Net-60, or Net-90 terms. Every supplier that reports to D&B will contribute to your Paydex.

The best supplier categories for building an initial history:

- Stationery and office equipment
- Telecommunications providers
- IT services and cloud services (some report to D&B)
- Insurance companies

Step 5: Pay early

Remember that Paydex is highest when you pay early. Even if you have 30 days, pay invoices after 10–15 days. This not only builds your score but also strengthens relationships with suppliers.

Step 6: Use a corporate credit card

Some corporate card issuers (American Express Business in particular) report to the business credit bureaus. Regular use and paying the balance in full builds a credit history.

Step 7: Monitor your profile

Subscribe to D&B Credit Monitor (a paid service) or request your credit report periodically. Errors in reports happen, and they need to be corrected.

13.4 Typical Mistakes When Building Credit History

Mistake 1: Mixing personal and corporate finances. This is the most common small business mistake. The consequence is that you cannot clearly separate business credit from personal credit.

Mistake 2: Late payments in the first months. Early data carries less weight over time, but the first late payments signal problems. Start with impeccable payment discipline.

Mistake 3: Not checking whether the supplier reports to D&B. If your supplier does not send data to D&B, your prompt payments have no effect on Paydex. Ask your suppliers whether they are D&B partners.

Mistake 4: Not using the D&B CreditBuilder program. D&B offers a paid program that lets you submit data on your own trade relationships. For new companies without a history, this can be a useful accelerator.

Chapter 14: DUNS and Sustainable Business Development—The ESG Context

14.1 ESG and International Verification Standards

ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) is a set of criteria that investors, corporate buyers, and regulators use to assess a business’s sustainability. Over the last decade, ESG disclosure requirements have grown substantially, especially in the EU and the United States.

Dun & Bradstreet has developed several products that link the DUNS profile with ESG assessments:

• **D&B ESG Intelligence**—an assessment of companies on environmental and social indicators

• **ESG Supplier Intelligence**—a tool for corporate buyers that lets them evaluate suppliers against ESG criteria

For companies that work with European corporate clients, an ESG score in the D&B profile is becoming more and more significant. The EU's CSRD (Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive), which takes effect in phases from 2024 to 2026, obliges large European companies to disclose information on the sustainability of their supply chains. This means your European clients will increasingly check the ESG indicators of their suppliers, including through D&B.

14.2 How the DUNS Profile Fits into an ESG Strategy

If your company has an active ESG strategy (reducing its carbon footprint, social programs, transparent corporate governance), it makes sense to reflect this in the D&B profile:

Update the financial data. Transparency in financial indicators is part of the Governance criterion in ESG.

Consider joining the D&B ESG Intelligence program. If you sell to large European or American corporations, they may request your ESG score through D&B.

The ISO 14001 standard and DUNS. Companies certified to ISO 14001 (environmental management), ISO 45001 (occupational health and safety), or ISO 26000 (social responsibility) can list this in the D&B profile as additional indicators of reliability.

Chapter 15: Stories of Real DUNS Use—Industry Scenarios

15.1 The IT Sector and Software Development

IT companies are one of the most active groups of DUNS users, for several reasons.

Entering the global freelance and outsourcing market. When a Ukrainian, Polish, or Indian IT company starts working with American or European clients, its typical problem is proving that it is a reliable, verifiable organization. DUNS becomes one of the key ways to get through a corporate client's due diligence.

Taking part in corporate tenders. When choosing IT partners, large corporations (Fortune 500) routinely require a DUNS number for registration in their procurement systems. For an IT company aiming to work with banks, insurance companies, or industrial corporations, DUNS is a required attribute.

Apple Developer Program. As described in detail in Chapter 6, for IT companies that develop iOS/macOS apps on behalf of an organization, DUNS is a mandatory Apple requirement.

Government IT contracts. IT contracts for government bodies (in the United States, the EU, the United Kingdom, and other countries) require DUNS as part of the standard document package.

15.2 The Manufacturing Sector

Manufacturing companies, especially in mechanical engineering, chemicals, and electronics, face strict supplier verification requirements from large corporations.

The automotive sector. Suppliers to automotive companies (Tier 1, Tier 2) must be registered in Covisint or similar systems, which use DUNS for identification.

Aerospace and defense. DUNS is a standard requirement in aerospace and defense supply chains. The AS9100 program (a

quality system for aerospace) calls for documented identification of suppliers.

Pharmaceuticals. When working with suppliers of raw materials, components, and services, pharmaceutical companies routinely check DUNS as part of GMP qualification of the supplier.

15.3 Nonprofit Organizations

International nonprofits, foundations, and civil society organizations often work with grant programs that require DUNS.

USAID. Grants and subsidies from USAID for foreign organizations require registration in SAM.gov (with a UEI). However, DUNS is also used as a supporting identifier.

The Gates Foundation. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, one of the world's largest charitable foundations, uses DUNS to verify grantees when it funds international organizations.

UNDP. When you register in the UN Global Marketplace (UNGM) to supply goods and services to the UN, DUNS is a standard field.

15.4 Educational Institutions

Universities and research institutes often take part in international grant programs (Horizon Europe, NIH, NSF) and joint research projects.

Horizon Europe. One of the largest research grant funds in the world. When applying as a consortium partner, Ukrainian, British, and other non-EU universities use DUNS or other identifiers for verification through the EU Funding Portal.

NIH (National Institutes of Health, United States). American research grants require UEI/SAM.gov registration for American organizations. Foreign partners use DUNS.

Chapter 16: How to Maintain and Update a DUNS Profile

16.1 Why a Current Profile Is Critical

Getting a DUNS number starts a long-term relationship with the D&B database; it is more than a one-time event. An outdated profile is worse than none: it gives a false impression of the state of your company.

Consequences of an outdated profile:

• A counterparty sees an old address and assumes the company moved without notice (this lowers trust)

• Data on revenue and employees does not match reality (this affects the credit score)

• The company's status may be marked "out of business" or "inactive" after a long period without updates

• The Paydex score may degrade without fresh data on payment history

16.2 When to Update the Profile

Required when:

• The legal address changes

• The company name changes (rebranding, reorganization)

• Headcount changes significantly (by more than 30%)

• There is a reorganization (merger, acquisition, split)

• Subsidiaries appear or the company joins a parent structure

• You start working in new countries or industries

Recommended every year:

• Update the financial data (revenue for the last year)

- Confirm the contact information
- Check the accuracy of the data on primary lines of business

16.3 How to Update Data in the D&B Profile

There are several ways to update data in D&B:

Online through the D&B site. Go to dnb.com and sign in to your profile. Some changes (for example, a change of address or name) may require additional verification.

Through the D&B Business Credit program. Subscribers to paid D&B programs have broader profile management options.

By phone or email. D&B support accepts requests to update data. For changes that require documentary proof (a change of company name), you need to provide the relevant documents.

Through accredited D&B partners. In a number of countries there are authorized partners who help with updating and managing profiles.

16.4 Profile Monitoring and Alerts

D&B offers a paid profile monitoring service (D&B Credit Monitor). It lets you receive notifications of changes to your profile, whether you initiated them or D&B made them based on public data.

This matters for several reasons:

- D&B may update your profile based on public data (court rulings, press publications, registry changes), and not always accurately
- If someone tries to alter your profile fraudulently, monitoring lets you detect it
- You will know when someone orders a credit report on your company

Chapter 17: Case Studies from International Expansion

17.1 A Small IT Company from Kharkiv: The Path to a First American Contract

Note: the following example is illustrative.

A small team of developers from Kharkiv, specializing in mobile app development, received its first inquiry from an American insurance company. The prospect was significant: a long-term contract to develop a client app.

However, the American company's procurement department asked for several documents, including a DUNS number for registration in SAP Ariba. The Ukrainian team did not have one.

The team went through the standard registration procedure at dnb.com. After 15 business days they received a DUNS number. But when they tried to enter it in SAP Ariba, a different problem appeared: the D&B profile was extremely thin, with only a name and an address, and no financial data or payment history.

The American company's procurement manager ordered a D&B Credit Report and saw a DN1 rating (the lowest, meaning "insufficient data to assess"). That turned out not to be enough for automatic supplier approval.

The solution came through a direct conversation: the IT company provided its financial statements directly, along with letters of recommendation from two European clients. After 3 weeks the contract was signed. In parallel, the team began actively building up the D&B profile: it updated the financial data and asked one European supplier to send payment history data to D&B.

Key lesson: A DUNS number starts out as an empty container that you have to fill with data before it becomes a real profile.

17.2 A Polish Manufacturer and a German Automaker

Note: the following example is illustrative.

A Polish maker of metal components got a chance to become a Tier 2 supplier to a German automaker. The supplier requirements included:

• Registration in Covisint (the automotive industry portal)

• IATF 16949 certification (the automotive quality system)

• A DUNS number with a Paydex of at least 70

The Polish company had a DUNS number and a Paydex of 66, just below the required threshold. The analysis showed the reason: the company had several invoices paid 5–10 days late. Not egregious lateness, but enough to lower the score.

The team took the following steps:

• Ran an internal audit of its payment processes

• Set up automatic payment reminders 10 days before the due date

• Switched to early payment for key suppliers that report to D&B

After 8 months the Paydex rose to 74. The German automaker accepted their application, and the contract was signed.

Key lesson: Paydex is a manageable metric. Payment discipline converts directly into growth opportunities.

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What next

Thank you for reading “How to Get a DUNS Number: A Step-by-Step Guide”.

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