

## MEXICO'S TOP TEN CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

Rank (US \$ millions)	Company	1992 Revenue	Main Location	No. of employees
1	Empresas ICA Sociedad Controladora	1,600	Mexico City	38,000
2	Bufete Industrial Construcciones	340	Mexico City	10,600
3	Compañía Contratista Nacional	160	Mexico City	4,200
4	Grupo Contelmex	94	Mexico City	600
5	Desarrollo Monarca	93	Mexico City	1,100
6	Construcciones y Canalizaciones	68	State of Mexico	1,760
7	Grupo Calpan	53	Mexico City	—
8	Constructor y Perforadora Latina	51	Mexico City	439
9	Ingenieros y Contratistas	48	Mexico City	2,500
10	FYPASA Construcciones	48	Mexico City	490

Source: Obras. Industry Survey. Mexico City, September 1993.

The top ten Mexican construction companies are shown in an accompanying table. Other important construction companies include *GUTSA Construcciones*, *Tribasa*, *Grupo Mexicano de Desarrollo*, and *Grupo Protexa*.

Alternative building systems that combine non-traditional materials and concrete are considered to have good potential in Mexico's housing sector. There have been a number of demonstration projects in recent years using PVC plastic combined with concrete. Homes built from these components are relatively inexpensive and also allow very fast construction, reducing financing costs. According to industry experts, these building systems face considerable obstacles. Mexicans are reluctant to use plastic because it does not look substantial. PVC parts must be imported, which takes time, and creates problems for replacement parts. Also, Mexican workers do not usually know how to use PVC technology and few are interested in learning.

For cultural reasons, Mexicans are strongly attached to traditional construction techniques, such as stucco and plaster over masonry. Notwithstanding these objections, Mexico's acute housing shortage will eventually force a change in consumer attitudes. According to some estimates, the nation requires an additional six million housing units, just to adequately house the current population. The vast majority of Mexican homes cost less than US \$20,000 at pre-devaluation exchange rates, and plastic building products can be competitive in this price range.