

whether it is worthwhile to pursue business there, and suggest the steps they should take to move forward.”

International Datacasting Corporation (IDC) is an award-winning Canadian firm that has benefited from this service. With its successful broadband technology, the Ottawa-based company is doing business in over 35 countries.

“The first call we make in a new market is usually to the Trade Commissioner Service office,” says IDC’s Diana Cantø. “TCS is outstanding. We have found them useful as ears to the ground, helping make the right contacts and troubleshooting. They also serve as an ideal sounding board for brainstorming and new ideas.”

Networking

Once a company decides to explore and develop a chosen market, it needs to make contacts and enter into business relations. TCS officers can help by supplying names of potential buyers, distributors, partners or other people who are important to know in a specific market.

TCS officer Joanne Smith, based in Rome, cites a recent example of how this type of service can pay off: “We helped a leading aviation software and training provider find local representation in Italy, and the company—Quebec-based Adacel Inc.—won its first contract in Italy in July 2002. Adacel first approached TCS in 2000 for assistance to expand into Italy. We provided it with a list of suitable,

expert aerospace agents, and from that list it found a local representative well connected in the industry. Adacel went on to beat out stiff Italian competition to win a \$3.2 million contract to supply its Air Traffic Control Tower Simulators to the Italian Air Traffic Control Authority.”

A firm may also receive an unsolicited business offer. Before responding, it’s vital to find out as much as possible about the potential partner—what it does and what it offers. TCS helps with its third core service: up-to-date, reliable information on local market organizations or companies.

At the trade office in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Francis Uy has seen how this service can yield tangible results: “We’ve been working with Quebec-based Gepay International over the past year to help it pursue opportunities for vocational training in the Vietnamese welding industry,” says Uy. “The demand for qualified welders in Vietnam is especially high for oil and gas, shipbuilding, industrial and civil construction firms. But local training institutes are ill-equipped and do not have the resources to provide this specialized training, thereby creating a demand for Gepay’s expertise. We arranged for Gepay to meet with representatives of local technical and vocational institutions, as well as oil and gas companies. As a result, Gepay is now negotiating an agreement with a number of local training centres in Vietnam.”

Specialized visit information

Clients also turn to TCS when they are about to visit a market that interests them. “If they ask their TCS officer for information about a locale, she or he can tell them when it’s appropriate to make a trip and how to organize it,” says Gero. Officers can advise on such matters as national customs, local transportation, business support services, local interpreters and translators, and accommodation. During a visit, it’s

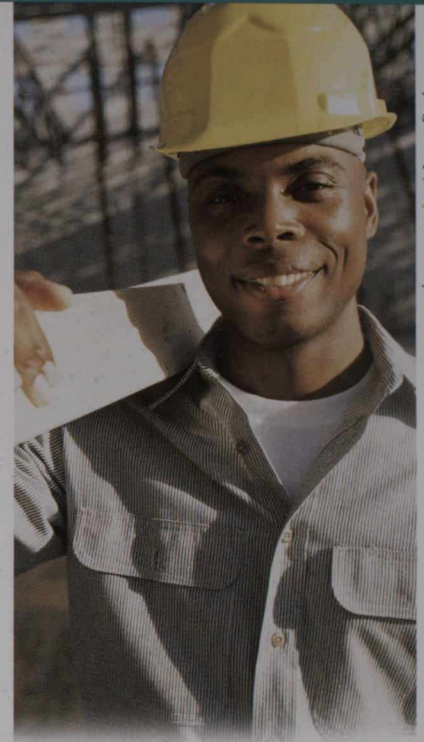


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a must for company representatives to meet with TCS officers in order to explain their needs and obtain information on recent developments in the target market.

As CEO of Cubex Limited of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Hemant M. Shah is quick to credit the help he received from TCS. After settling in Canada in 1978, Shah immediately began to explore opportunities for exporting back to India. Almost from the start he received support from the International Trade Centre in Winnipeg. “The trade officers I came into contact with gave me guidance and moral support,” he says. Assistance came as well from Canadian trade officers based in Bombay (now Mumbai). Thanks to the networking channels developed in those early years, Shah has racked up one export success after another, including sales of agricultural equipment and dried peas.

In 1998 Shah launched a joint venture with a partner in the Indian city of Hyderabad; TCS had supplied the introduction. The original aim of KLR-Cubex International Ltd. was to develop an underground drilling machine tailored to India’s needs. Now the company has expanded its

Six core services of Canada’s Trade Commissioner Service

- Market prospect
- Key contacts search
- Local company information
- Visit information
- Face-to-face briefing
- Troubleshooting