

Following Up the Initial Call

American buyers expect to be called upon more frequently than their Canadian counterparts. That may be as often as every two weeks during some periods of the buying year. Although some Canadian companies may lack the sales force, the problem can be overcome by appointing a manufacturer's representative or selling through brokers, jobbers or distributors as warranted.

Price Quotations

Quotations should be submitted both on a laid-down basis, buyer's warehouse, factory or an American port of entry; and on an f.o.b. Canadian plant basis exclusive of Canadian sales tax and excise taxes. Unless specifically requested otherwise, always quote in U.S. funds. The landed price should include transportation charges, U.S. customs duties if applicable, brokerage fees, and insurance. The quotation should compare in format to quotations from United States sources. Buyers cannot be expected to understand customs duties or other matters peculiar to international transactions. This is the sole responsibility of the Canadian exporter and a "cost" of international business.

Canadian exporters may not be granted the same opportunities for renegotiating initial quotations as they have been accustomed to in Canada. This is because U.S. buyers, who often work to tighter purchasing deadlines and target prices, must accept the first bid as final.

The Manufacturer's Representative

American businessmen rely to a greater extent than their Canadian counterparts on the use of commission agents or manufacturers' representatives. The better "reps" are highly qualified by education, training and experience. They know their customers and call on them regularly — not only the buyers but also engineering, design and quality-control personnel. The advantages of this technique include economy, closer (sometimes social) contact with buyers, and representation close to the seat of possible problems. The Canadian Consulate General in Philadelphia keeps ongoing files on most manufacturers' representatives operating in its market territory and can often make suitable suggestions for Canadian manufacturers.