

# Tips for Your Trip

## Promotional Literature and Advertising

Promotional literature and advertising play a central role in the success of a product overseas. Without this support the product, in its alien environment, may soon fade away and die. The smaller company entering a new market should not, however, commit itself to an elaborate advertising plan without having first ascertained that a market does in fact exist for that product in that territory. It is far preferable to establish some sales in the market before launching into an advertising campaign. Sales promotion literature, however, is an entirely different matter.

As an exporter, you should, from the outset, pay special attention to the promotional literature that supports and accompanies your product.

- Examine your existing product literature to see if it can be adapted to suit both your domestic and export needs. Many companies have spared themselves the expense of developing separate export catalogues and sales literature by having all copy in the three major export languages (English, French and Spanish). In this way, the same promotional materials can be used for the product in Canada and abroad.
- Your sales brochures and catalogues should be in colour. Include photographs of your product, showing how it is used and what it does. Highlight its special features and include price information wherever possible. In addition, include background information on your firm, giving a general idea of its size, scope of activities, etc.
- When preparing your catalogues, you should be aware of local tastes and preferences. In some countries, certain colours carry negative connotations. In parts of Africa, for example, the colour purple is associated with witchcraft.
- Pay special attention to the "copy" of your promotional materials. It should

either be multilingual — English, French and Spanish — or it should include the language of the market you are selling in. In the latter case, you would be wise to use a local firm for translating your copy into that language. Ask the Trade Commissioner Service to recommend suitable translators. You should also be aware of the fact that the same copy in two languages can be of varying lengths. Make allowances for this in planning your brochures or product instructional literature.

- The package in which your product is contained can be a terrific salesman! Make sure it is eye-catching, attractive, convenient and informative. Here again, the copy describing use and maintenance of the product should be comprehensive, clear and to the point. As well, you should use the package to inform the consumer of the special features of your product.
- All promotional material should be prepared with the user in mind. Who is he likely to be? What is his level of education? If you are selling to countries with a low level of literacy, your promotional and instructional materials should be largely pictorial.
- Do not forget metric is the most widely used system of measurement. Your product descriptions should state metric sizes.
- If yours is a consumer product, consider point-of-purchase advertising. This could be a simple cardboard display with colour photographs of your products being used. Point-of-purchase advertising has the advantage of ensuring good shelf space for your products in stores.

Once you have made some sales in your overseas market, you should work out an advertising and sales promotion plan with your agent. The types of advertising you choose will be dictated by your product and the tastes of local consumers. Here, you should ask and heed your agent's advice. However, you will need to work out a firm advertising plan with him. Where possible, the amount of monies allocated to sales promotion/advertising should be based upon total annual sales — perhaps three to five per cent. Ideally, your agent or