

we don't profess to have international trade experts. When an exporter comes in here looking for assistance, our main job is to make sure that they get "pathfound" to the correct organization. For example, one of my people is not going to tell someone all about the market potential for their furniture at the Highpoint show in North Carolina. They are going to refer him to Rick Stephenson at the ITC down the street. As for posts, we do refer people to posts, but on a very limited basis. We are very conscious of what posts get overloaded with, so we don't want "untried exporters" to get in direct touch with them. So 99 percent of our international trade referrals are either to the ITC, the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC), Western Economic Diversification or to the provincial trade office.

TCS: How does your background as a TC lend to working in a CBSC?

CK: In any of the CBSCs, especially in a province like BC where 70 percent of the gross domestic product is dependent on exports, some-

one looking for information on starting a business, in all likelihood, is going to end up being involved in exports at some point, or being targeted toward exports. I am the first TC coming into a job at a CBSC; it's felt that a TC could bring a lot of expertise on the international side. The centres are domestically focussed, and the management wants to ensure that there is more integration so the domestic and the international part of the network work together. Like the 1-888 line for Team Canada Inc, it's one of many steps toward integration.

TCS: What type of clients should a post refer to a CBSC?

CK: Considering the Performance Measurement Initiative that we are now going through, posts are trying to focus on what they do best and where they can provide the best value-added service. When I was in Seattle, I sat down with my Business Development Officers four months ago, and said: "I know you've been doing A, B and C for the last 15 years, but you are not going to do it

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Best Practice - Commercial Section Snapshot

In various mission audit reports, the Auditor General has recommended that posts establish a short report that will provide information on upcoming events and activities, and the status of key Canadian clients in the marketplace with which the program is involved.

This report, already used by several posts in various forms, requires a minimum of effort to keep current. Located on the i: drive, where anybody from the trade section can make changes, it must be a WordPerfect file, which officers should update on a biweekly basis, or anytime they see fit.

It is a management tool that provides a "snapshot" of where the program is targeting its efforts and resources. It also benefits the Program Manager, the Head of Mission, and headquarters (the latter two get an updated copy every month).

To be useful, this report must be updated and "cleaned" regularly. We have turned this recommendation into a best practice (see sample report on pages 6-7) with the hope that you will find it useful enough to emulate. Contact TCS for more details.

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In theory, there is no difference between theory and practice. But in practice, there is.

— Jan L.A. van de Snepscheut