

Strategic Considerations

Market intelligence and information

In 1993, a survey of the Canadian business community indicated that the most useful service provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) was market intelligence and information (MI/I). The latter is the information that will help people in international business develop a business strategy. The former is up to the minute information on specific projects or opportunities that will help them carry out that strategy and win business.

DFAIT's personnel in Canada and in Germany are committed to provide timely, accurate and reliable MI/I. This material is easily accessible from a number of sources and at no cost. Business people may obtain this information by telephoning the Trade InfoCentre, using Faxlink or the Internet or by contacting the Central Europe Division in Ottawa. In Germany, enquiries may be addressed to any post. See the last section for exact addresses.

Whenever the information required is not readily available, companies can write to the post responsible for the sector and request custom-made MI/I.

As of 31 March 1997, the following topics are covered by market reports:

- *Aboriginal arts and crafts*
- *Agriculture machinery and equipment*
- *Airbus procurement*
- *Apparel and footwear- Berlin and New Federal States (NFS)*
- *Automotive industry*
- *Computer-based education training*
- *Cosmetics, toiletry and fragrance - Berlin/NFS*
- *Dental products and equipment*
- *Education*
- *Environment protection*
- *Fisheries and seafood (in preparation)*
- *Food retailers - Berlin/NFS*
- *Forest products*
- *Furniture retailers - Berlin/NFS*
- *Geophysical instruments*
- *Global positioning systems (in preparation)*
- *High fidelity equipment - Berlin/ NFS*
- *Hospital and laboratory supplies*
- *Laser and opto-electronics*
- *Medical technical equipment*
- *Pet food and accessories*
- *Pharmaceutical products*
- *Plastics and rubber making machinery*
- *Prefab housing, doors, windows and kitchen cabinets*
- *Packaging machinery*
- *Printing machinery*
- *Processed food*

- *Rail transportation equipment*
- *Security equipment*
- *Sensors*
- *Sporting goods*
- *Stationery - Berlin/NFS*

German base, european and world market place

Many Canadian firms have found that a German focal point is ideal for their marketing strategy. This is particularly the case since Germany is the largest market in the EU. Whether it is simply exploiting International Trade Fairs, establishing representation and distribution, or setting up a subsidiary or joint venture, Germany plays a central role as a gateway to international business.

The central geographic location and superb infrastructure recommend Germany as a marketing and distribution centre. Not only is Germany itself a major market, but shipping and communications to all parts of Europe are excellent. Representatives based in Germany can easily visit customers throughout Europe and provide after-sales service and technical advice. Such operations may also be in a good position to pursue business in areas not far removed from the EU, such as the Middle East.

Probably the single most important competitive advantage Germany has to offer is its many international trade fairs. No other country has the number and quality of internationally recognized trade fairs catering to the world. Four out of five of the largest trade fairs in the world are in Germany. There are several major centres, all offering a variety of trade fairs for virtually every segment of the market. Whether fashion goods in Düsseldorf or software in Hannover, Germany has the right forum for nearly every product and service. Many major shows go beyond the European market and are truly world shows that attract, literally, all important world players.

The Confederation of German Trade Fair and Exhibition Industries (AUMA) has members in 22 cities, most of them represented in Canada and available to supply full information. In many cases they will undertake virtually anything an exhibitor may desire, from stand erection to transportation and accommodation.

Canada participates at many important German trade fairs. Since 1996, the organization of most of the fairs has been transferred to industry

"Germany's central location and superb infrastructure make it an ideal European marketing base."

