

SHARING TRADE SECRETS

Cambridge Company Adds Mexico To Its Export Markets

After a solid foothold in the U.S., European and Far Eastern markets, ATS Automation Tooling Systems Inc. has decided to expand into Mexico.

The Cambridge, Ontario-headquartered manufacturer of large automated lines for small parts assembly in the automotive, appliance, and electronics industries, has two other plants in Canada and three in the U.S.A.

"As a matter of fact," says ATS Director of Sales and Marketing, Paul Patterson, "our largest market and some of our largest customers (Delphi, Ford, and Kelsey-Hayes) are south of the border."

So what prompted this 1,100 employee-strong company with annual sales approaching \$200 million — 85 per cent export-based — to look to Mexico?

"We hired an independent sales representative to cover Mexico some three years ago," says Patterson, "partly as a result of new opportunities we saw in that market after Mexico joined Canada and the U.S.A. to form the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)."

But at that time ATS was too focused on expanding the U.S. and

European markets, especially Germany, to really put much effort into Mexico... until last November.

That's when ATS participated in the Canadian Technology Showcase in Mexico City.

"I spent a week visiting some 20 prospective customers around Mexico City," admits Patterson, "and saw great promise in that market."

This led ATS to open an office there. As Patterson explains, "It made sense to pursue a NAFTA market in our sales strategy and we soon found that many of the European multinationals in Mexico are also encouraged to source equipment from NAFTA countries."

Patterson also saw other advantages to doing business in Mexico.

"Canadian companies are very well received there," he says. "As a matter of fact," advises Patterson, "Mexicans like doing business with Canada, and they have a similar sense of cultural independence to ours."

In addition to Mexico's relative

proximity to Canada, most Mexican manufacturing plants are in the Central Time Zone which, according to Patterson, is a plus for Ontario businesspeople.

For more information on ATS and its products, contact ATS Director of Sales and Marketing, Paul Patterson. Tel.: (519) 653-6500. Fax: (519) 653-6533.

CCC Assistance, Persistence Strike Jack Pot

Persistence — and assistance from the Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC) — have paid off handsomely for a Montreal, Quebec company.

Walsh Automation Inc. (WAI), through the CCC, has been awarded a contract to implement a US\$9,238,178 security and safety program at the La Paz and Santa Cruz airports in Bolivia.

The client is the Administracion de Aeropuertos y Servicios Auxiliares a la Navegacion Aerea (AASANA), the Government of Bolivia's aviation authority.

The CCC, WAI and CSP Inc, a Montreal-based security consulting firm working with WAI, first pursued this project in 1989; their efforts produced no concrete results. However, in April 1995, they updated

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