

goods, services, expertise, technology, or franchises to Mexican customers. They can sell them directly or go through a variety of agents, distributors, or retailers. They can attempt to do their own marketing, or they can hire someone to do it for them. They can also enhance their exporting efforts through alternatives such as co-marketing, co-production, and even joint ventures. What is common to all of them, however, is the need to have good partners in Mexico and to demonstrate to these partners a commitment to doing business in this market. Approaching the Mexican market without first forming strong local contacts rarely results in sales. Even large companies cannot do it alone.

Your Mexican partner may be an agent, a distributor, a broker, or a retailer. It may be a company that has agreed to market your products. It may be a joint venture partner. It may even be someone willing to invest in your firm. Whatever the specifics of the business relationship, however, all of these forms of partnering depend on finding complementary capabilities, clearly defining common objectives and developing mutual confidence. Sometimes referred to as *strategic alliances*, partnering arrangements between Canadian and Mexican enterprises offer the best chance for Canadian business people to increase their exports and realize some of the vast potential inherent in the Mexican marketplace.

Mexico presents Canadians with a tremendous array of business opportunities. As with every opportunity there are also challenges. However, the Canadian firms who have made a commitment to the Mexican marketplace have been learning how to respond to these challenges and they are already reaping substantial rewards.

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MEXICO AND CANADA: PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS

External Affairs and International Trade Canada in conjunction with the Bank of Montreal and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency have commissioned a basic primer to assist Canadian firms pursue business in Mexico. *PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS* covers not only the opportunities, but the challenges associated with those opportunities. More specifically, it describes how to export to Mexico by providing information on how to develop an export strategy, how to find suitable contacts in Mexico, how to negotiate mutually advantageous agreements, and how to avoid common pitfalls. It also offers information on some of the Mexican laws and regulations that can affect exporting and the conduct of business with Mexican firms. To illustrate these points, the handbook includes a few brief profiles of just some of the many Canadian companies already operating in the Mexican market.

The handbook offers first a general overview of Mexico and the business opportunities and then tells you how best to pursue them.