



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE ANY BEST PRACTICES THAT WORK FOR YOU?

Simon (London): My number one tip for best practices is simple — don't switch on the computer for the first hour of the day. People become reactive to the computer. The best hour of the day is the first, when the mind is most alert, receptive and creative. So, I try never to switch on the computer during that hour.

Thawee (Bangkok): We have organized various training programs in co-operation with Thai government agencies and the private sector on the safe and responsible use of asbestos fibre in the work place. This program has proved very workable and well-suited to this market.

WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS TO A SUCCESSFUL MARKETING STRATEGY FOR PENETRATING YOUR MARKET? AND WHAT DO COMPANIES THAT SUCCEED IN YOUR MARKET HAVE IN COMMON?

Simon (London): In the U.K., being successful is more about attracting investment and promoting your stock rather than actually selling mining equipment products to the U.K. market. Here, investment promotion is a skilled, niche kind of talent, and a successful marketing strategy involves honing these skills. Often, a company will hire a professional road show organizer to set up meetings with important U.K. analysts in the investment community. To compete, many companies have developed slick 20-minute presentations to promote themselves. This is where I see Canadian companies being particularly successful.

Thawee (Bangkok): Thailand is a very complicated market, so it's imperative that Canadian companies understand the structure of Thai business. Moreover, I always encourage companies to visit the market regularly and — most importantly — to establish a good relationship with a Thai distributor or agent. Companies that succeed here most often have a representative in Bangkok or in another Asian city.

WHAT IS YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE, OR THE FUNNIEST THING THAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU?

Simon (London): At a trade show, I saw a booth for the Polish Diamond Company. It caught my eye because my family origins are from Poland. So I asked the fellow, "What part of Poland are you from?" His expression went blank. So I said slowly, "You've got Polish in the company name, so I presume you're from Poland?" With a bemused look and a very English accent he replied, "No mate. It's not Polish. It's polish. I sell jewellery polish." Then he asked, "And what do you do?" "I work at the American Embassy," I said, and left in a hurry.

Thawee (Bangkok): Perhaps it is something I eat before going to bed, but I often wake up in the middle of the night convinced that I haven't made arrangements for a client coming to see me the next day. I arrive at the office the next day to find that everything is taken care of.