
VI. THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

General Information

Whether it is the stylized star on the hood of a Mercedes, the word LEICA engraved on a 35 mm camera or simply the words "Made in Germany" printed on a package of Bayer medicine, German products are internationally recognized for their high quality and dependability. To a consumer, these attributes are normally associated solely with product itself.

Germany (F.R.G.) is the second largest trading nation in the world because of a reputation for delivering on schedule, meeting contracted standards of quality and ensuring quick, efficient after-sales service.

It is not surprising that German buyers expect these same attributes to be associated with goods offered from abroad. Between the broad German industrial base and the wide spectrum of freely imported goods, Germany is a buyer's market. While such a degree of competition may discourage many suppliers, a market for imported goods in excess of \$270 billion (currently Europe's largest import market) makes the effort worthwhile.

Preparations. The exporter needs to be very well prepared before attempting to launch a product into the German market. As a first step, exporters should contact one of the Canadian trade offices in Germany. This can best be done by sending detailed literature including all relevant pricing information for redistribution, and permitting sufficient time for the trade commissioner to canvass the market. Where feasible, literature should be printed in German and measurement given in metric units.

Whom to Contact. In order to give exporters a comprehensive market overview without having to contact three different posts, the trade offices in Germany have adopted the "Prime Post" system in which each office has overall responsibility for particular products. The following should be used as a guide in determining the initial contact point.