



## Step 4: Prepare the Pitch

A successful contact requires careful thought and preparation of :

- ◆ a strategy for initiating contact to maximize your chances of success (**the approach**);
- ◆ the key message you wish to deliver which will maximize interest in the market opportunity (**the “pitch”**).

One might wonder why this is not part of the higher level plan, and why we wait until now to conduct this step. The answer is: personalization. To succeed, the message must cater to each company's potential needs and must be as personalized and individual as possible, while still resting upon common themes (e.g. TCS six core services).

### 4.1. Determine the Approach

There is no one best way to approach companies, and there are several factors at play which you need to consider, including:

#### 4.1.1 Business practices in the sector

For example, depending on your market, e-mail may be the most appropriate for the ICT sector, whereas fax and phone may be more appropriate for construction and building materials in Canada.

#### 4.1.2 “The medium is the message”

This is a well-known dictum in communications and advertising. How you communicate the message often sends a message as important as the message itself. A simple e-mail may send the message that this is routine or business as usual; whereas, a voice-mail message or actual telephone call may send a much stronger message that you are making an effort to personalize the communication and meet individual needs.

Likewise, although fax may still be an important communication vehicle in your sector and /or territory, in general this may mean risking being seen as technologically behind (e.g. by sending a fax to a technology company).

#### Successful Practice Example:

One European post decided to use telephone, and thus created a very favorable impression among Canadian contacts for making that effort to personalize the approach.

#### 4.1.3 Time Zones

Distance of your market to Canada combined with other difficulties in communicating with Canada may provide opportunities (see insert). Whereas a personal approach via telephone may be warranted, calling from Asia may be extraordinarily difficult and Canadian companies may therefore be more sympathetic to an approach which is less interactive, e.g. e-mail, voice-mail, or fax.