

while overseas, obtain an international driver's licence.

- Make the car rental arrangements for your trip well in advance. Confirm these a few days before you leave.
- If you are planning to recruit your agent(s) on this trip, make sure you have narrowed your list of agents down to two to three likely prospects.
- If you belong to a service club that is worldwide (e.g. Rotary), enquire whether there are branches in any of the cities you will be visiting. Get their addresses, phone numbers and preferably the name of a contact person. Service clubs are excellent ways of making business contacts.
- Contact your bank manager and ask him to give you a letter of introduction to a bank in each city you plan to visit. This can be useful if you want to check references of a potential agent or customer, or if you run into unexpected financial problems.
- Ensure that the funds you carry are more than adequate for your expected needs and are readily convertible.
- Do some background reading on each of the countries you plan to visit: its history, economy, social scene. How do people live there? What is the dress code? How do you greet people? How do you address them? When is the dinner hour? Will people invite you to their homes? What is the national sport? A little reading before you leave will make your visit a smoother one. Besides, for a small effort, you will generate much goodwill in your host country.

A Checklist for Exhibiting Overseas

International trade fairs have come of age. Today they are both the shop windows of the world and its marketplace. For the exporter, exhibiting at international trade shows is a vital part of the total sales promotion campaign. The novice exporter especially has much to gain by participating in trade fairs. Quite apart from the prospect of on-the-spot sales, international

exhibitions offer the novice exporter the opportunity to test out the market, to assess the competition, to see firsthand his competitors' sales and promotion methods and to make business contacts. As well, the international trade fair is an excellent hunting ground for agents as it is the meeting place for buyers and sellers from all over the world. It is a good idea to arrive in the country a few days before the fair opens and to stay on a few days after it closes to develop and follow up your business contacts.

The Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce/Regional Economic Expansion has prepared a film entitled *Come to the Fair — Participez aux foires*. The film is an introduction to International Trade Fairs and provides very useful information for first-time exhibitors. The film may be borrowed, free of charge, from ITC/REE Regional Offices, or may be viewed there.

One Year in Advance

Select the fair you want to exhibit in. There are many publications listing the international trade shows, including an excellent booklet published by Lufthansa: *Calendar of Events — Trade Fairs and Exhibitions* which is available from the airline at no charge. Your best source of information on trade fairs however, is likely to be from the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service. Contact their offices in the country or region where important trade fairs are held and ask for their appraisal of that fair as a suitable place for exhibiting your product. Two good sources for obtaining information on International Trade Fairs are the Regional Offices of ITC/REE and the Fairs and Missions Divisions of External Affairs. Ask for literature on the fair, catalogues from previous years and the statistics from the last year. When you make your decision, consider the following:

- How large an area does the fair cover?
- What is the range of products displayed?
- How many visitors attended last year?
- How many countries did they come from?
- Is the trend in attendance going up or down? How many companies exhibited?