

FINDING AGENTS, PARTNERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

When a Canadian company has chosen a preferred distribution method, the next step is to identify candidates to fill the Mexican role and to negotiate an agreement with one of them. If distribution will be direct to an end user or retailer, this usually involves no more than agreeing on shipping methods and other logistics. But if a reseller or partner is involved, it will take time to identify and qualify a number of candidates and to firm up a deal.

TRADE SHOWS

Trade shows in Mexico have good participation from local distributors agents and manufacturers, and some of them also attend shows in other countries. Another source of information are the Market Profiles in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) Export *i* Mexico series, most of which identify the major trade shows per industry. Another approach is to contact the major industry associations.

Some visiting Canadian companies elect to participate as exhibitors. Others prefer to remain free to meet with prospective associates. At some major shows, the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City and the consulates in Monterrey and Guadalajara operate a Canada Booth, which Canadian companies can use as a base of operations, without the dedication of major resources for their own booth.

CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

The Economic and Commercial Division of the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City and the consulates in Monterrey and Guadalajara offer support services to visiting Canadian companies. Under recent policy changes, trade promotion activities in Mexico are moving away from event-driven activities such as trade shows, where most Canadian companies do not need assistance. Instead, the commercial officers will concentrate on gathering current market information and intelligence. They are prepared to advise Canadian companies on issues such as locating agents, but they expect the company to have first prepared an export strategy in Canada. Government assistance in Canada is available across the country, through the International Trade Centre offices.