

imported products in Mexico. Several factors have been responsible for this:

- Mexican consumers are very familiar with U.S.-made products, as noted above;
- Mexican retailers are familiar with doing business in the U.S. and many of them have exclusive representatives or distributors in the U.S. and in Asian countries, who supply them with the latest fashions, "hot" and promotional items;
- Geographical proximity with the U.S.;
- A longstanding relationship of local distributors with U.S. manufacturers and/or distributors in the U.S.;
- Asian country products are usually available at lower prices than any other items and often offer very attractive financing arrangements;
- Perceived high quality of European products and the presence in Mexico of several European-owned stores, in particular department stores;
- Little or no knowledge of Canadian products, both by retailers and consumers;
- Very little interest by Canadian manufacturers in marketing their products in Mexico, as perceived by retailers, who reported having received close to no catalogs, calls or visits by Canadian producers or traders.

There is presently a growing market for imported consumer products in Mexico and there is a potential for Canadian products in Mexico. Useful strategies for export to Mexico include:

- Participating in existing trade shows or staging an all-Canadian consumer products exhibition in Mexico. Among the most important consumer products show in Mexico is the annual ANTAD (National Association for Supermarkets and Department Stores) convention and trade show, since it attracts over 15,000 retail executives from the over 100 chain stores based in Mexico. The next show will be held in Guadalajara on March 21-24, 1992, but is staged annually. Other firms also organize periodical trade exhibitions, but these usually have a specific theme (apparel, footwear, textiles, electronics, home, etc.).
- Periodically visiting or corresponding with the top buyers of Mexico's largest chain stores. This is probably the most useful strategy, since much of business in Mexico is made through contacts. It is, nonetheless, more time consuming and expensive.
- Direct mail campaigns presenting catalogs and product lines to the top buyers, although this strategy would be more useful after a first visit and personal contact with these executives.
- Having a good representative or distributor in Mexico, with proven relationships with top retailers and maintaining a close supervision of the operation, at least during the initial period.