



Virtual Trade Commissioner
Access a World of Trade Knowledge

Habits of highly successful exporters

What habits are linked to export success? Is it all risk-taking and dynamic deal-making? How important is it to look before you leap? We interviewed three Canadian companies, and found they all place a high value on researching their target markets. And all three have tapped into a source of information specific to their sectors and markets through Canada's Market Research Centre to assist them in making informed decisions related to international business—a service available online via your Virtual Trade Commissioner.

For Vancouver-based **Falstaff Enterprises**, a consulting and communications services business, market research is not only key to the company's past success, it has become an integral part of owners Hendrik Slegtenhorst and Gloria Steel's strategy for the future.

The husband and wife team is carefully developing a comprehensive plan to export primarily artistic goods to target markets in Europe and the U.S. As with any owner starting a new venture, the accuracy and timeliness of their information sources is essential.

"The market reports I've downloaded have been thorough, current and of exceptional quality. One report in particular was right on the money. It helped me update and refine my research," says Slegtenhorst, who has configured his business profile within the Virtual Trade Commissioner to alert him to specific market overviews and briefs. "It would be nice to follow what the motivational speakers say—just think it and it will happen—but that's not realistic. You have to learn everything you can before you make your move."

Kevin Russell, Vice President of **Avcorp Industries Inc.**, which designs and builds aircraft structure assemblies for clients like Boeing, Cessna and Bombardier, knows he could search for similar market information elsewhere, but notes it would take more time and money. With 650 employees at its Delta, B.C. facility,

annual revenues of about \$100 million, and 50 years in the global aerospace industry, Avcorp didn't get this far without being careful as well as confident.

"If we can access credible market research in one place, we're there," says Russell. "These reports are part of the preliminary groundwork you've got to do, and we always do as much homework as possible before we enter a market."

WorleyParsons Komex, a mid-sized environmental consulting company with offices in Calgary and abroad, also follows a "leave no stone unturned" approach where market research is concerned.

"We've drawn a range of useful data from these reports: market dynamics, cultural aspects, business climate, key players and legislative frameworks, to name a few," says Roy Hunt, engineer and spokesperson for WorleyParsons Komex. "To evaluate a new market we'll look at all the available information from our various sources. However, these market reports in particular offer a credibility and a Canadian perspective that's not available elsewhere."

Judging by the feedback from these three companies, doing your research using trustworthy sources may be obvious advice, but it bears repeating. One company described exporting as a bit like skydiving—better to learn all you can before you make the jump.

The Trade Commissioner Service's Market Research Centre offers more than 900 market information products, available online via your Virtual Trade Commissioner. To register, go to:

www.infoexport.gc.ca

SUPPLEMENT
CANADEXPORT

MEXICO

A FULL
CONTINENTAL
PARTNER

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❖ The Canada-Mexico relationship is no longer just about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The unrivalled NAFTA success that has bound the two partners together since 1994 now underscores the even broader and deeper relationship of the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) and the Canada-Mexico Partnership (CMP). The future for this strategic partnership could not be more promising.

Inflation has been tamed in Mexico, declining from 9% in 2000 to nearly 3% in 2005, and the peso has performed with strength and stability. Growth in 2005 was 3.3 percent. Mexico's enthusiastic liberalization of its economy has led it to sign 12 free trade agreements with 43 countries, becoming the world's eighth-largest trader. These developments separate Mexico from most other emerging markets, promising continued security and dynamism in the face of global competition.

As the Mexican population increases to 130 million by 2030, growth will centre in urban areas, exerting pressure on infrastructure and services and increasing the demand for housing, furnishing, agri-foods and consumer goods.

Canada is Mexico's second-most important export market, while Mexico is now Canada's fifth-largest export destination. The past

decade has seen record growth in trade, two-way trade in 2005 was an estimated \$17.8 billion. This growth and success, complemented by the stabilization of Mexico's economic and financial prospects, will contribute to the future promise of opportunities south of the Rio Grande.

Mexican presidential and legislative elections will take place on July 2, 2006 and all major parties have expressed a desire to work closely with Canada.

International Trade Canada (ITC), in collaboration with other government departments, federal agencies, provincial governments, associations and other contacts, is developing a five-year commerce strategy for Mexico. The strategy, developed in partnership with our private sector and with Mexico, targets a 50% increase in bilateral trade and a doubling of bilateral investment by 2010.

