

Reciprocal Visits

Many buying organizations check out new suppliers' facilities personally before placing continuing business. If they do not come as a matter of course, it is a good sales strategy to invite them anyway.

What to Do with an Inquiry

Suppose you receive an inquiry from a U.S. firm about your product. What action should you take? Follow this checklist.

- 1) When an inquiry is received:
 - a) check for the correct address of the U.S. firm (don't discard the envelope until you are sure the complete address appears on the firm's letterhead);
 - b) check the nature of the inquiry to make sure it is clearly understood;
 - c) check the type of quotation desired.
- 2) Acknowledge inquiry if quotation cannot be sent immediately.
- 3) Compute price according to the terms of the quotation and check the credit and reputation of the customer.
- 4) When an order is received:
 - a) check order to verify your ability to comply with the terms of the order;
 - b) acknowledge the order and stipulate any deviations or corrections;
 - c) make sure all personnel involved with processing the order fully understand their part;
 - d) if payment is by letter of credit, check the terms carefully and, if you cannot comply, request a change immediately.
- 5) Prepare the order for shipment.
- 6) When the date the order is ready for shipment is known:
 - a) contact the freight forwarder and arrange shipping schedule;
 - b) make sure the necessary shipping instructions and documents are completed correctly and distributed on time;
 - c) contact a customs broker at border point if clearance charges are for the exporter's account.
- 7) Prepare and submit all collection documents to receive payment.