

times and a major supplier to Japan whose good fortunes started in 1986 with the explosion of Japanese imports. The same holds true for the ninth place holder, Hong Kong.

Europe is not, however, the formidable competitor it seems to be. At least not for Canadian exporters trying to sell to the U.S. or Japan. Of their billion dollar business in bottled water, over \$700 million were sales to themselves, between members countries of the European pact. France sold bottled water to the U.S. worth \$75 million, and we have already seen what that represents in terms of market share in the United States. The remaining \$225 million is made up mostly of sales to former colonies and other neighbouring European countries. In addition, some of this trade seems to be nothing more than double reporting. According to the data, France has a negligible trade with Martinique and Guadeloupe. Sales in those two French possessions are made mostly by the Netherlands who also supplies its own former West Indies colonies and other Islands. Yet, French brands are said to dominated the store shelves in those two islands. What seems to be happening is that French water is sent to the West Indies by Dutch ships; the sales are recorded by France as sales to the Netherlands and by the Netherlands as imports from France and exports to the West Indies.

For Canadian producers, the European market is probably best left alone for the time being. Trying to get the French to switch from Evian, Perrier or Vichy to a Canadian brand is something like trying to get Canadians to switch from Kellogg's corn flakes to croissants for breakfast, only worst. Some people will do it, but most won't. And the few that do will have to be cajoled into doing it by a barrage of advertising; and within a few years they will have switched back to the old brands. We must remember that Europeans have been drinking bottled water for a long time, that the practice started as, and for a lot of Europeans still is, a medical related practice. Each brand is purported to have special characteristics and properties that make it desirable in some cases and not others, depending on the presence of some mineral or other. Doctors prescribe, or at least recommend certain brands to their patients. Most brands in Europe are associated with health resorts. Even the North American generic term of these establishments, Spa, is the name of one health establishment in Belgium particularly popular with the British. Competing with in this type of business environment is very much a case of paddling against the current. Why do it if you don't have to. And with the U.S. market next door, Canadians probably don't have to.

10. DOs AND DON'Ts

The standard advice given any exporter applies to exporting bottled water: do your home work. In addition, as we have noted in the section on Japan, Canadians wishing to do business in that country should avail themselves of the services of External Affairs and International Trade Canada in Japan or in Ottawa. While the Japanese market is particularly interesting to Canadian bottled water producers because it offers excellent potential for sales at this time and in the future, doing business in Japan is very different from doing business in either North America or