

Criteria in Identifying Our Clients

(Date Modified: 2010-11-17)

Demonstrated capacity for and commitment to internationalization

You can determine if a potential client demonstrates capacity for and commitment to internationalization by considering several key factors.

Your potential client will have done the following:

- conducted research on foreign markets and opportunities. This will be apparent from their verbal or written communication with you regarding markets and opportunities in those markets;
- appointed resources (human, materiel, time and financial) dedicated to internationalization. This will be apparent from their verbal or written communication with you regarding their organization, its structure, organizational chart and international marketing budget; and
- developed a credible business plan. This will be apparent from the content of the business plan (or portions of it), communicated to you in writing or verbally. The proposed approach to international markets and objectives should make sense and be realistic.

It is important to determine whether or not your potential client has taken these important steps as this will enable you to gauge their capacity for and commitment to internationalization.

Meaningful economic ties to Canada

Having meaningful economic ties includes, among other things, maintaining established offices, a subsidiary, a plant, a research and development establishment or a joint venture in Canada.

Having a mailing address in Canada and/or being listed on a Canadian stock exchange is not sufficient to qualify an organization as a Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) client.

Companies that are registered in Canada but conduct all their business activities outside Canada do not qualify as clients. For example, many mining companies have offices in Toronto because they are listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange. However, as these companies conduct all other business activities outside Canada, they would not qualify for TCS service. That being said, maintaining a relationship with these companies can be beneficial, as a potential source of market intelligence and in terms of understanding and encouraging the company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plans.

Foreign companies with meaningful economic ties to Canada qualify for TCS service whenever they request services that will directly maintain, strengthen or contribute to economic ties and benefits to Canada. A foreign-based organization that has no links to Canada other than its being owned by one or more Canadians does not qualify as a TCS client, e.g., a hotel in the Caribbean or a sawmill in Eastern Europe that is owned by Canadians but has no other economic links to Canada. Paying taxes in Canada does not qualify a company for TCS service.

Potential to contribute significantly to Canada's economic growth

There are no precise targets or thresholds for measuring potential to contribute significantly to Canada's economic growth. Generally, you can assess potential in terms of the positive impact that an organization's international activity will have on the Canadian economy. These benefits to Canada could take the form of increased exports of Canadian-made products or services, technology transfer, new job creation, increased research and development activity or increased production in Canada.

Note: In considering these criteria, the size of the company/organization should not be a deciding factor when determining your level of assistance. Firms that are small today may be the business giants of tomorrow. For example, Research In Motion was founded by two students from the