

Preface

It is difficult to open a newspaper or switch on a news program these days without being exposed to the subject of international trade and the competitiveness of Canadian firms in world markets. The story line that we read and hear is a consistent one: that international trade is an area of high priority and that Canadian firms must improve their penetration of foreign markets. Less agreement exists, however, on just how this improvement in performance is to be achieved.

As part of its ongoing evaluation of the Canada Export Award Program, the Department of External Affairs wished to see a study conducted on past award winners in order to assess factors that had contributed to these companies' export success, with a view to making this information available to a wide range of Canadian managers and entrepreneurs. Such a study was commissioned and is reported

here. This book describes the experiences of 27 of the companies that won the Canada Export Award in 1983 and 1984. The executives of this diverse group of star exporters tell how their success has been achieved, the problems they have faced in exporting and how these have been overcome, and how new exporters might best proceed. Their experiences and advice are both interesting and useful, and it is hoped that many Canadian companies will find the book of help to their exporting activities.