

You may have to tailor your message for different types of contacts. Once you have a lead statement — a statement of the main service you provide, you must address each contact's particular priorities. Here is an example of how to do this using a fictitious firm, XYZ Architects, that has been in business for 15 years and has not yet done work in the United States.

Opening statement for all contacts:

We design multi-unit urban residential facilities, fully accessible to the physically disabled.

U.S. contact	Since the contact can provide:	Then XYZ's next statement should be:
Professional association	Credibility and networking	All our architects are licensed in at least two provinces, and our major clients are _____.
Media	Coverage and credibility	We have developed innovative approaches to providing fully accessible housing at a moderate cost. For example, _____.
Influencers	Networking	We won the _____ Award in 19____ and are looking for a strategic partner in the Southwestern United States.
Government buyers	Potential customers	We have done two contracts for Supply and Services Canada and have completed contracts in Spain and Jamaica.
Architectural firms	Potential partners	We have 10 architects on staff specializing in _____ and we won the _____ Award in 19____.
Engineering firms	Potential partners or clients or referrals	We are experienced in joint ventures and our major clients are _____.
Universities/research firms	Potential partners or suppliers	We have 10 architects on staff specializing in _____ and we are looking for a strategic partner in the Southwestern United States.
Canadian Trade Officers	Major link with the U.S. market	We are experienced in joint ventures and seek a strategic partner in Southwestern United States.

What would you emphasize about your firm to each U.S. contact? _____

Your potential customers don't have a 'widget' to inspect, so they use your marketing tools to guess at the quality of service you are likely to offer. Therefore, you need to make sure that those tools create the impression you want. Below is a check list to help you ensure top quality marketing tools.

Marketing Tool	Desired Impression	Are Yours?
Business card	excellent quality	☐ easy to read ☐ in contemporary colours ☐ consistent across staff ☐ distinctive* ☐ informative**
Brochures	world class	☐ offset/laser printed ☐ easy to scan ☐ informative**
Customer lists	experienced	☐ comprehensive ☐ up-to-date ☐ grouped for scanning
Customer testimonials	highly recommended	☐ representative ☐ from top executives ☐ included in brochure
Media pieces	recognized leader	☐ quoted in brochure ☐ reproduced on letterhead ☐ displayed in office ☐ mailed out
Videos	sophisticated	☐ professionally produced ☐ feature and benefit oriented ☐ short ☐ easy to get
Diskettes	leading edge	☐ menu-driven ☐ easy to use ☐ short ☐ graphics oriented

* If you don't need the back of the business card for translation, consider using it to:

- help contacts remember the types of services you provide by listing your major services; or
- provide useful information (e.g., metric conversion) so that contacts keep your card handy.

**Check to make sure that the following items are not missing:

- area code in front of phone/fax numbers;
- fax number; and
- complete address, including province and country (Canada).