
4.3 Perseverance

Firms should count on a 2-3 year haul before securing significant work in the U.S.

Sources of market information on the eight niches have been described in this report. Other data sources are outlined in the bibliography. All of these documents or organizations have much to offer the Canadian architect that is serious about market research. Many of the groups contacted during this project are surprisingly open and forthright in dispensing information and insights to Canadians (sometimes overly so!).

Despite the abundance of published information, once a service sector and geographic location has been tentatively targetted, firms must do field research before mounting a promotional program. There is nothing more effective in targeting a market than getting a personal feeling for opportunities and potential problems.

Entry into foreign markets is rarely easy. Firms must persevere often for 2-3 years before the first export contract is obtained. However, as mentioned earlier, Canadians have a distinct advantage in entering the U.S. market over foreign competition because of our location and familiarity with business practices. Entry into offshore markets is comparatively difficult.

Canadian firms have long been aware of the overall decline in demand for architectural services in Canada. To survive in the long term, Canadian architects will have to address export markets.

But the net benefits could be substantial.

The United States represents a significant market opportunity in a number of niches. With precise market research, well-prepared promotional programs based on the most appropriate organizational mode, and perseverance in tracking clients and specific projects, Canadian firms can look to the United States for significant professional and financial benefits.