



TESTtalk

By Marcel Laneville

The Trade Enquiries Sourcing Team, or TEST as many of you have come to know us, is celebrating its first year of operation in September.

To date, more than ninety posts have sent us well over 1200 enquiries. In responding to these enquiries, TEST has contacted more than 9000 companies to identify the ones interested in responding.

In the past few months, we have also started to follow-up on your enquiries. So far, over 50% of companies contacted advised that they had some contact with the foreign buyer: some had visited the buyer while the buyer had visited others; some were negotiating contracts; and yes, some have signed contracts. Confirmed sales or signed contracts are as broad as the type of enquiry received: from the sale of Canadiana picture books to Eastern Europe to the engineering for a new ice skating arena in Japan.

How Can You Help Us?

Over the year we have found that the more information we receive from post, the easier it is to respond to the enquiry and to follow-up on the enquiry. It is particularly important that we know the name of the foreign buyer. Canadian companies are more likely to respond to our queries if they know who is the potential client. It is also easier to follow-up on enquiries when the Canadian company can identify the enquiry with a specific buyer, and not with some enquiry received from some government office.

Another bit of information which is very important to our successfully sourcing your

requests is the product/service description. The more precise you are with your product/ service description, the better the chance of our successfully identifying companies willing to and capable of responding to the foreign buyer.

Finally, we would ask that you please use the TEST macro format which was sent to all posts last February. If you are having difficulties in installing or running the macro, your systems administrator can be of assistance or you can contact TEST directly (Marcel Laneville / 944-6001). If, for some reason, you cannot find the TEST

macro package, please advise us so that we can send you a copy.

CELEBRATING OUR FIRST YEAR OF OPERATION!

Over the year we have found that the more information we receive from post, the easier it is to respond to the enquiry and to follow-up on the enquiry.

Where Do We Go From Here?

One of the recommendations in the International Business Memorandum to Cabinet, approved by Cabinet in June, was the formal establishment of a permanent interdepartmental sourcing unit. We are consequently transforming TEST into an interdepartmental Team Canada Sourcing Centre to better serve you. We will better equip the expanded team to answer all of your trade-related enquiries, from hot opportunities to company bona fides. You will hear more from us soon.

Please don't forget that we appreciate your feedback. Your comments help us refine the sourcing process and improve our service to you. Let us know of any sales results from any of the enquiries we have helped you on. Not only does it makes us feel a part of the action, but we could report on the good news in future articles on TESTtalk.

Marcel Laneville is a member of the Sectoral Liaison Secretariat (TOS).