

systems, as well as space and remote sensing equipment.

4. Environment: This is a sector that has real potential for expansion in France as new national and EU regulations protecting the environment are implemented. Consequently, France is increasingly seeking partners to help French industry develop new technologies and services in the environmental field. France is also a source of technology transfer for Canadian firms, particularly in the area of water treatment, given the growing demands for urban water purification systems.

Canadian firms with a solid reputation in technologies and processes in the field of environmental protection should be focusing on four key growth areas in France: waste management, industrial waste-water management, and air and noise pollution controls.

5. Consumer Products: France is a major producer of, and market for, consumer goods, serving nearly 60 million domestic consumers and more than 60 million tourists annually. Although French consumers may buy less, they insist on high-quality, top-of-the-line or luxury products.

For Canadian exporters of consumer goods, sectors that hold the greatest prospects in France include toys, cultural products, native handicrafts, sporting goods (especially for winter sports), scents and perfumes, furniture, and fashion accessories.

6. Tourism: French tourism to Canada has been among the best-performing and most profitable sectors for the Canadian economy in recent years, generating jobs, tax revenues and economic growth. Over the past decade, for example, the number of French tourists visiting Canada every year has risen from 110,000 to 465,000 in 1996. This rate of growth is expected to slow down somewhat in the future because of increased competition, but we expect Canada to remain a prime destination (second only to the United States) for French tourists.

Canada's image as a "nature destination" is an increasingly important drawing card, as is the favourable attitude among the French, who increasingly view Canada as an alternative to their European ski vacations.



White-water rafting on Canada's Ottawa River.
Photo courtesy of Wilderness Tours.

