

To identify new business opportunities, SNC has established a worldwide marketing organization, with local agents or representatives, and Montreal-based vice-presidents responsible for specific regions of the world. Competition from the United States, Europe and Japan is intense, with financing packages an increasingly important factor for projects in the developing world. For this reason, SNC works closely with the Export Development Corporation, the Canadian International Development Agency, and international lending agencies.

Considerable time and effort goes into securing a typical contract with sometimes as many as four years passing between the initial lead and final contract signing. Once a contract has been won, full-scale project teams are assembled from the various product and operations divisions, to be supported by corporate groups such as legal and finance. Naturally, upon project completion, new work must be found for the disbanding teams. Planning and organizing are, then, important activities for this multi-talented company. SNC must match projects with people (its prime assets) and maintain as lean an organization as possible, but retain enough flexibility to respond to new opportunities.

SNC is unashamedly Canadian in its project work, being constantly on the lookout for new Canadian sources of supply. By procuring goods and services from other Canadian companies for foreign projects, it has introduced many firms to overseas markets for the first time. As a result, more than 70 percent of its 1982 export figure was for Canadian goods and services procured by SNC Inc. for use overseas; the remainder was straight professional fees. As well as teaming-up with small firms, SNC joins with large Canadian and foreign companies where consortia seem advisable.

In two decades of export marketing, SNC has provided services in more than 100 countries. While certain common approaches are employed, as the group's chairman and chief executive officer Camille Dagenais points out, "There's no standard formula for success in exporting. But whatever the formula, its principal components will always be initiative, innovation, commitment . . . and a lot of sweat."