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Strategic Alliance: It May Be Your Gateway to the U.S.

When it comes to exporting, your company may be in a better position to find clients and fulfil contracts in tandem with another firm, either Canadian or American, rather than attempting to go it alone. For the small to mid-sized company, co-operative ventures or strategic partnerships may be the only way to beat the competition on a global scale.

A strategic alliance, or strategic partnership, is a formal relationship established between two companies that have common goals and economic interests. While remaining distinctly separate businesses, the partners pool their resources, promoting growth through options such as licensing agreements, technology transfer, increased investment

in equipment, more funding for research and development, sales or service support or shared distribution channels.

The greatest number of opportunities for this matchmaking activity in the United States are in the biotechnology and information technology (IT) areas, although demand is by no means limited to these sectors.

How the Canadian trade offices can help
Officers at the Canadian posts in the United States are aware of the potential for partnerships in many industries. They can provide names of U.S. companies looking for alliances and recommend approaches and follow-up techniques.

Before approaching a post, however, you should have as complete a picture as possible of your area of interest; make sure you do your research and check the DFAIT *ExportSource* Web site for trade information such as sector reports and market studies.

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What Would You Like to Ask Canadian Ambassadors about Asian Markets?

The Canadian business community is being given a timely opportunity to question Canadian heads of missions about market opportunities in Asia Pacific.

As many as 25 Canadian heads of missions from the Asia-Pacific region will be participating in the Cross-Canada Outreach Program, March 9-17, 1998.

Building on the links made through Canada's Year of Asia Pacific and the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC), the program will play a crucial role in disseminating information about the Asia-Pacific markets.

The ambassadors will be meeting with business people, non-governmental and academic groups, the media and government representatives at a variety of events and forums, including roundtables, "Night of the Ambassadors" evenings, and a University of British Columbia conference entitled "Building on Canada's Year of Asia Pacific: Evaluation and Strategic Directions."

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