

Training and Consulting: The Polish demand for training is huge, especially training in western languages and business techniques. Several new business schools have been created, some of them by transforming the old state planning schools. Many of these initiatives involve cooperation between Polish institutions and western partners. The first graduates have already emerged from some of these programs, and it can be confidently predicted that the business skills of Polish managers will improve significantly in the near future.

A number of western companies have set up offices to provide technical consulting and training as part of their investment in Poland. An example is Groupe Bull of France, which will provide full informatic support for the Polish Treasury, as well as training its employees. The Centre de Formation Professionnelle Bancaire of France, in cooperation with the National Bank of Poland, will train approximately 5,000 bank employees a year at a centre in the city of Katowice. And IBM is setting up six information centres in Poland, including one at Warsaw University.

Most of the large international accounting firms have set up operations in Poland, to participate in the privatization drive. With some 7,000 enterprises to be assessed, evaluated, and packaged for sale, these firms have found a rich business opportunity.

Agency Representation: Business success requires a sensitivity to and knowledge of Polish business practices. Experienced firms can offer valuable practical advice about day-to-day business operations. For this reason, increasing numbers of consultants, lawyers, and agents are providing a wide range of services to foreign companies entering the Polish market. Some of these consulting firms already have several years of experience under their belts and have grown to a significant size. Others are strictly one-man operations with limited resources.

Polish citizens can now represent foreign companies in marketing and sales, following amendments to the law on economic activity, designed to permit such operations. Agents for foreign companies must register with the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations.

Private agencies are empowered to serve potential investors in a wide range of services, from preparing applications, performing feasibility studies and advising on technical and legal questions, to drafting joint

venture contracts. The agencies afford additional advantages to western investors besides providing the same services as government departments. Private agencies are smaller, and thus more cost-effective and less bureaucratic than their state-run counterparts. Moreover, they have more incentive to do a thorough job for their foreign clients.

Because this area of activity is relatively new, companies seeking such assistance should obtain appropriate references from other firms, from the Polish Foreign Investment Agency, or from Polish trade offices located in their home country. There are now many resources to choose among for such assistance, but the choice requires due care and deliberation.

Advertising: The advertising of foreign merchandise in Poland has been traditionally carried out by AGPOL, a foreign trade organization specializing in publicity and publishing. The company still handles advertising in the press, radio and television, outdoor advertising, organization of symposia and conferences and displays. Other agencies that handle advertising for foreign products include the Polish Advertising Agency (REKLAMA) and the Polish Radio and Television Advertising Agency (ARTEL).

With the opening to the west, numerous domestic advertising agencies have been created. Foreign firms have also become more active in the Polish market. The Saatchi & Saatchi Advertising Agency is opening an office in Warsaw in conjunction with the Polish firm Marco.

It is also possible for foreign companies to advertise their goods through the Polish firms which handle their imports. As trade opens up, it is becoming easier to advertise products in Poland.

Advertising practices in Poland are similar to those outlined in the Code of Advertising Ethics of the International Chamber of Commerce. Polish law generally forbids any advertising that exaggerates, misleads, makes fraudulent comparisons, offers goods that are not available, or offends public morals. Advertising may not encourage the consumption of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products or other items deemed harmful to health. The advertising of pharmaceutical products used as prescription drugs is also prohibited.