

Content and Format

Departmental publications are well-received with respect to content and format. Overall, respondents rated format elements higher than the information contents of the publications. Publications which provide potential sales leads and distributor contacts were rated as more "essential" to respondents than publications which provide analyses or background information on export markets.

Delivery Media

Respondents indicated a preference for more than one delivery vehicle, suggesting both hard copy and electronic media are required to meet user preferences. Those who indicated a preference for electronic formats preferred diskettes, Internet access or direct-dial BBS (in order of priority). However, some respondents who received diskette versions of Departmental publications said computer compatibility problems resulted in non-use.

Willingness to Pay

Most users of Departmental publications would be willing to pay to receive them. Overall, end-users would pay \$5 for publications in 81% of the cases. Respondents would pay \$10 for publications 70% of the time. Virtually all respondents who reported that the publications resulted in new export sales were willing to pay. On this basis, charging for Departmental publications would have little or no negative impact on the generation of export sales by Canadian firms. Charging for publications would also reduce superfluous distribution.

Service Delivery

Those respondents who contacted the InfoCentre to order publications expressed an extremely high level of satisfaction with the service they received. Of particular importance to overall satisfaction is the "helpfulness" of InfoCentre staff.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings of the research:

- Focus product development activities on the needs of small business and on providing information such as potential buyers, distributor contacts, and partnership opportunities that businesses can use directly to generate sales.