

The Canadian firm might also consider setting up its own facilities in Mexico, but this is not usually the preferred approach, particularly for new market entrants.

DIRECT SALES TO RETAILERS

Most larger Mexican retailers buy directly from manufacturers, especially where private labels are involved. Mexico's major retailers employ buyers who attend fashion shows and visit the key fashion marts in the United States and Europe. Participating in these shows is a good way for Canadian clothing manufacturers to make contacts and introduce their products. The most important opportunities are at the Dallas, Los Angeles and New York K marts. Increasingly, foreign manufacturers are also participating in trade shows in Mexico.

Mexican retail buyers also follow trade journals such as *Women's Wear Daily*, and its Mexican publication *Women's Wear Daily Fashion International*. Consumer publications such as *Vogue* are also sources of fashion information. There are several trade publications specific to the children's market, including *La Bobina*, *Textiles Panamericanos*, *K Kids*, *Tinta e Hilo*, *Enfant Children's Wear*, and *Bambini*.

BUYING AGENTS

Many of the larger specialized chains and the major department stores purchase imported goods through buying agents or groups. For example, *El Puerto de Liverpool* is a member of the Atkins buying group based in New York City and many of its purchases are made through that office. *El Palacio de Hierro* also has an association with Mercantile, another large New York City buying group.

European and American retailers and manufacturers make purchases in Mexico through two major buying groups: *OTC de México*, Overseas Trading Corporation and International Trading Service (ITS). Both companies have joint ventures with *Desarrollos Administrativos Integrados (DAI)*, buying agents and consultants specializing in textiles and apparel.

MANUFACTURER'S AGENTS

Most Mexican apparel manufacturers have exclusive sales agents who usually work as employees. In some cases, the manufacturer may fill out its product line by representing lines from other companies, including foreign manufacturers.

Manufacturer's agents tend to have a limited territory because of the need to be available to buyers, and to support merchandising in their stores. Manufacturers will often hire their own *demonstradores*, demonstrators, to sell their products in department stores, such as in a boutique within a store. This is similar to the way cosmetics are sold in many Canadian department stores.