
In discussions with Canadian industry, some firms have mentioned the fact that the scientific/academic route has played an integral role in helping them penetrate the U.S. environmental market. Firms with a substantial scientific/research element may wish to investigate opportunities with appropriate U.S. academic contacts. Generally, these institutions are open to working together with Canadian or American industries (provided industry money is invested) on environmental matters.

12.2.4 Municipalities

Given the use of local engineering firms for such work, it is unlikely that Canadian firms will find this to be a profitable route, unless they bring unique or innovative approaches.

In discussing optimal entry strategies, one municipal official expressed the view that "large, entrenched companies are very greedy" and that Canadian firms should approach small/medium sized firms to match Canadian strengths with weaknesses of the potential partner.

12.2.5 State Governments

As indicated in other sections of this report, states are an active purchaser of environmental goods and services. While the responsible parties are required to hire the individuals to do the cleanup, the state government in question may hire an "oversight contractor" to follow the progress of the cleanup. States generally will use out-of-state companies but, as expressed by an official in the Utah state government, "they encourage a local presence or sub-contractor".

State governments do not provide formal recommendations to private companies regarding the relative quality of potential environmental service firms. Most states appear to maintain a list of suppliers "that anyone can join and that is of limited usefulness". It should be noted, however, that we also spoke with private sector representatives and manufacturers who suggested that the opinions of state officials regarding possible suppliers are offered, at least indirectly, and that they are quite important. Thus, Canadian firms should bring their capabilities to the attention of the appropriate state officials.

In our discussions with them, state officials also reiterated a point that we have attempted to make throughout this report. "Most firms learn about potential environmental service firms through word-of-mouth and industry associations". This suggests that Canadian firms must do their homework and develop as broad a contact base as possible.