
II. *DOING BUSINESS WITH COLOMBIA*

Distribution

Although Colombian law does not make it mandatory to have a local agent, it is customary for foreign exporters to appoint local business agents to act not only as sales promoters but also to assist customers, service accounts, undertake repairs and servicing, and to secure prompt remittance of payment. It is mandatory, however, that foreign suppliers to the Colombian public sector be locally represented.

While many leading importers and agents have head offices in Bogotá, others are located in the important cities of Barranquilla, Cali and Medellín. Depending on the product, it is often necessary to visit one or more centres outside Bogotá to see potential agents and, in particular, to call on clients.

Agency Agreements

An agency agreement must be drafted in accordance with Colombian law and certified by a Colombian consulate in Canada.

Agents must be supplied with credentials in Spanish, issued by the Canadian firm and certified by a Colombian consulate.

Generally speaking, a Canadian company can terminate its agency agreement with a Colombian representative by providing three months' advance notice in writing to this effect.

Advertising

Colombia has a complete range of advertising facilities. An abundance of newspapers reaches a wide audience, as Bogotá has four main papers, and every town of importance usually has two — one for supporters of each of the two main political parties. Commercial radio stations reach an even larger portion of the population. The more affluent markets can be reached through television commercials or by short film clips in movie theatres.