

EXPORT MYTH**Exporting is too complicated**

No, it's not, because you don't have to do everything yourself. Instead, you can use outside experts such as export management companies, overseas agents, foreign distributors and freight forwarders. While you're getting established as an exporter, they can represent you, find overseas customers, manage sales orders, handle paperwork and deliver the goods. Later, as you learn more about exporting, you can either hire experts of your own or continue to use intermediaries.

The elements of your export plan

An export plan is really just a business plan that focuses on international markets. It identifies your target market(s), export goals, necessary resources and anticipated results.

Your export plan should contain the following:

1. Introduction

- business history
- vision and mission statement
- purpose of the export plan
- organizational goals and objectives
- international market goals
- short and medium-term objectives for exporting
- location and facilities

2. Organizational issues

- ownership
- management
- staffing
- level of commitment by senior management
- relationship between exporting and other operations
- corporate experience and expertise in exporting
- strategic alliances
- labour market issues

3. Products and services

- description of products and services
- key features
- adaptation and redesign required for exporting
- production of products and services
- future products and services
- comparative advantage in production

TIP

Industry Canada's International Trade Centres, located in every province, offer advice and assistance at no cost, for small and medium sized companies. Call 1 888 811-1119 or visit itc-cci.gc.ca.