

company's ability to export, you should also look at opportunities in other export markets.

Planning and Preparation

Whether you export goods or services, many of the following preparatory steps will be similar.

- If you have decided to mount your trial run in the U.S., choose a specific regional market as your focus.
- Research the market by reviewing the information available from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade as well as looking at trade publications and magazines.
- Visit cities in the region, talk to potential buyers and intermediaries as well as your Canadian trade commissioner.
- Develop a network of contacts and potential partners. Find out who your competitors and potential allies are and who are the most important importers, distributors and agents for your product or service?
- If working through agents and distributors, make a short list of potential candidates and assess their qualifications and capabilities. Develop a profile of the ideal associate and then select the one whose skills and experience best complement your export objectives. If exporting a service, consider the possibility of finding a local partner to represent your interests.
- Put together a promotional package describing your company and its products or services.
- Identify and attend a regional trade fair, if possible. Do some preliminary promotion and establish contacts with potential buyers and associates.
- If selling directly to customers, place an ad in a U.S. trade magazine that is widely read by potential buyers.

The following steps can

lead to a successful
export effort:

- ▶ engaging the services of a freight forwarder
- ▶ developing a trial run
- ▶ finalizing the sale

- Make arrangements with key export service providers such as freight forwarders and trading houses.

Implementation

The following is a summary of the procedures involved in actually concluding a deal

and shipping goods to your buyers. It shows how the planning elements covered in *The Exporter's Guide* can be implemented in practice.

Service exporters will share certain steps (checking references, visiting prospects, finalizing terms, arranging for payment) but will not have to concern themselves with documentation, freight forwarding, shipping and Customs clearance.

Check References

- customer's credit rating;
- other exporters who have had dealings with the customer;
- solicit the opinions of your trade commissioner.

Whether you are dealing with end users, retailers or intermediaries, it is wise to check references. This is easy to do in the U.S. market by approaching other Canadian exporters, commercial banks, people in the industry, or your trade commissioner.

Visit Prospects

- gather insights into the customer's operations and requirements.

If exporting, visits to important customers in your market(s) are strongly recommended. A visit can give you useful insights into the operations and credibility, as well as the requirements, of potential customers.