
Introduction

Canadian industries are looking increasingly to outside markets in which to sell their products and services. With the signing of the Canada-US (FTA) and North American Free Trade Agreements (NAFTA), international business opportunities are growing rapidly. To meet the need for training in these new export markets, governments, educational facilities and professional associations have developed not only various courses but a network of export support programs. Whether it is classes, computer software or counselling that is needed, there is something for everyone.

This handbook is designed to highlight sources of export training that are available to Canadians and Canadian companies.

The first section offers an overview of two programs that provide both a comprehensive overview of the international marketplace and the specific skills needed to prepare for successful exporting. Targetting small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), these programs offer intensive, step-by-step instruction from assessing a company's export potential to drawing up a business plan and establishing specific country or industry links. Both programs tailor their content to the businesses involved and include extensive industry contacts.

The second section highlights Canadian universities and colleges that also offer international business training. Their courses generally stress fundamental business management and administration skills with a focus on the global marketplace. With a huge variety of approaches, formats and prerequisites, these programs can provide either an introduction to exporting or a full degree, encompassing exports plus a range of other international business courses.

The third section outlines two association courses offering extended export training. Both freight forwarding and customs brokerage firms provide front-line services for the export market and have developed specific courses to meet these growing needs. Although only two programs are detailed here, many other associations run training workshops on an as-required basis, so contact your local association for more information.

Finally, recognizing the wealth of additional non-training sources, the key contacts section lists a variety of private- and public-sector organizations that provide export support. From tax information to regional initiatives and financial assistance, these groups can help answer questions on a wide range of topics.