
IV. DOING BUSINESS IN SAUDI ARABIA

Making Contacts

The businessperson hoping to be successful in Saudi Arabia should be aware from the outset that repeated personal visits to the market are essential. Correspondence is not always followed up and contracts are rarely signed before personal contact is established with the customer or the exporter's appointed agent (see below). Exporters should attempt to arrange appointments prior to arrival in Saudi Arabia, especially if government officials are involved. They should also be aware that appointments are not always kept. Marketing in Saudi Arabia is a time consuming process. Exporters should allow sufficient time for their visits to be as productive as possible, and plan on making many follow-up trips.

Representation in the market

The Commercial Division of the Canadian Embassy in Riyadh can assist Canadians wishing to export to Saudi Arabia. The Embassy can make a preliminary investigation as to the acceptability of a firm's products or services and will help to establish initial contacts. It will also provide information and advice on local agents and brief exporters on local customs and on travel and visa requirements.

Employing a local agent is essential to success in the Saudi Arabian market. Besides direct marketing activities, an agent can arrange for entrance and exit visas, make airline reservations and other local transportation arrangements, reserve hotel accom-