

THE NETHERLANDS

OVERVIEW

Market Size: the Dutch office furniture market is estimated to be about C\$ 500 million in 1993 down sharply from C\$ 820 million in 1992. This decline is due largely to a downturn in the economy which is not expected to turn around until the end of 1994.

Many companies have been forced to lay off employees, and competition has resulted in companies selling at or below cost for certain products.

Due to current economic conditions and competition only competitively priced furniture of revolutionary design might stand a chance. A strong emphasis is placed on ergonomics. There may be possibilities for technology transfer.

SOURCES OF SUPPLY

This year imports have fallen to 30% of the total furniture market from 40% last year, coming mostly out of France, Germany, and Italy. Canadian companies are not presently exporting furniture to the Netherlands, and only two non-European manufacturers have significantly penetrated the Dutch import market.

Until recently, a small local company manufactured under license work stations of Canadian design. Unfortunately, the Dutch partner folded last year and the Canadian manufacturer is also no longer active.

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

The leading Dutch trade shows are **Efficiency** (office equipment, systems and furniture) held in Amsterdam in the odd years; and **InterOffice**, an annual exhibition for better quality office and contract furniture held in Utrecht. Dutch buyers also attend other European trade fairs: **ORGATECH**, Cologne; **EIMU**, Milan.

Posts Overall Opinion: *This is not a good time to consider the Dutch market.*