

Market Intelligence: Where is it and how to get it

Getting Started Before You Leave

SMEs often lack accurate market intelligence and this adversely affects their export success. In China, foreign enterprises of all sizes consistently fail to do adequate market research, trying to market products or services that were never suitable for the Chinese market to begin with. Remember that Chinese consumer tastes, purchasing power, and values cannot be assumed to match those of Canadian households.

Complete as much market research as you can before you leave Canada. There is no single source of market information, so you will have to gather information from a wide variety of sources:

- What kind of questions should you be asking in order to assess whether China is the market for your product or service? Team Canada's website exportsource.gc.ca can help SMEs with their questions on determining market opportunities.
- DFAIT's *China and Hong Kong Trade Action Plan 1998* outlines possibilities in various sectors in China, including agriculture, food products and related sectors; electric power; environment; forestry; and information technologies and telecommunications. To obtain this publication, contact the InfoCentre.
- Experts at the Team Canada Market Research Centre have prepared a number of market reports on China. See the website www.infoexport.gc.ca for these or contact InfoCentre.
- Industry Canada provides links to various sources of market information through their website strategis.ic.gc.ca. Using the search engine in this website, you can also access a list of many different publications available on market conditions in China, Canadians in the Chinese market place and other useful subjects.
- A number of private sector organizations based in Canada and China can conduct market research on your behalf. The Canada China Business Council (CCBC), and consultants recommended by the CCBC can help you do the market research that you may not have the resources to do yourself.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit has a number of research reports on China, including investment guides to various cities and regions of China and sectoral studies in such areas as healthcare. The cost of these publications tends to be quite high, but they are an excellent source of up-to-date market information.