

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From February 7 to 15, 1989, a seminar on How to Sell to the US Government was held in ten major cities across Canada, attracting over 695 participants. The organizers, External Affairs and International Trade Canada and the Canadian Exporters' Association, undertook to inform Canadian exporters on the procedures involved when considering the US government procurement market. The Free Trade Agreement liberalized this market and created more opportunities for Canadian exporters.

To follow-up on the seminar, a telemarketing survey was conducted in October 1989 to determine whether the participants were actively pursuing this market and if any further assistance was in fact needed.

The survey found that the seminars were useful to the participants, who found the information very valuable. Many became more interested in that market as a result of attending the seminar. Among the potential exporters, the interest in the US government procurement market was as high as 72%. However, only a small group had actually initiated the process of getting into this market.

Some exporters are concerned with trading obstacles that affect their competitive position in the US government procurement market. Preferential purchasing practices, cumbersome administrative procedures and delays in obtaining GSA registration were noted as the main obstacles. Generally, exporters are aware of and have called upon the Canadian Embassy in Washington and the US Trade Division in Ottawa for more information and assistance in overcoming some of the obstacles.