

expense of separate publications in each language.

- Make liberal use of colour photographs and illustrations of the product/service and its application. This helps to avoid the need for lengthy textual descriptions (and their translation).
- Don't scrimp on translation costs. Hire the best translators you can find. Sloppy use of language can give rise to misunderstandings and to customer fears of potential sloppiness in your product or service.
- Check any translation done in Canada with an expert in the other country. Ensure that it reflects the latest language usage.
- Carefully examine the meaning and acceptability of a brand name or logo in the language of the country. Make sure it does not have negative or inadvertently humorous connotations.

*The path to success is paved with good intentions that were carried out.*

*Bob Edwards,  
Publisher of the Calgary Eye  
Opener from 1902 to 1922*

- Make sure the colours you use in your material conform to local tastes and preferences.

- Metric is the standard of measurement in many countries. Ensure your specifica-

tions are metric or that you provide metric equivalents.

### Scheduling your time

One of the most critical factors contributing to the success of your first overseas trip is how effective-

#### DOs

**Do** leave yourself a day or so at the start to get over your jet-lag. Use the time to check in with the trade commissioner and to wander about, looking, listening and generally getting a feel for the country.

**Do** plan to spend at least three days (or a week if it is a major market) in each place you visit. You'll learn as much about the country, its people and the market by osmosis as you would in a frantic round of back-to-back meetings.

**Do** get the most out of your trip by ensuring it does not coincide with traditional holiday periods. For example, not much work would be accomplished in Rio during Carnival.

**Do** write to the trade commissioner(s) you met on your visit. Let them know how your meetings went, who your agent is (if you appointed one) and what your future plans are. If you need any additional assistance or information, now's the time to ask for it. Keeping the trade commissioners fully in the picture lets them know you are serious and they can be on the look-out for other sales leads and opportunities for you.

Arrive early at airports. Allow up to two hours for a security check.

ly you organize your time. Here are some time-planning DOs and DON'Ts to keep in mind.

#### DON'Ts

**Don't** start out on a foreign marketing trip without preplanning and careful organizing.

**Don't** try to cram too much business or too many countries into your first trip. Two countries in two weeks are probably all you can effectively absorb in a single trip, particularly the first one.

**Don't** believe everything you've heard about relaxed attitudes to time. In most countries, punctuality is expected. Be sure to phone if you're going to be delayed. Check the local custom with the Canadian trade commissioner.

**Don't** show up at the office for business as usual at 9 a.m. on your first day back home. Take it easy. Get over your jet-lag and spend the time at home sorting out business cards and organizing lists of people to whom you should send follow-up letters. Jot a few words on the back of each business card describing the follow-up action required. Draft a general follow-up letter for your secretary and clear the backlog of items that piled up during your absence.