



and Communication (ICT) Sector



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liberalization and privatization of the telecommunications industry by 2006.

Thailand is a technology-receptive market, and businesses now recognize ICT investment as a necessity to remain competitive. Although the ICT industry in Thailand suffered a financial setback in the 1997 economic crisis, the potential of the industry remains forward-looking and sound.

Opportunities

Opportunities for Canadian companies exist in software, computers and peripherals, Internet and web-based services, wireless technologies, business systems integration, and human resource training. The most active clients will continue to be small and medium-sized enterprises attempting to cash in on the current technology drive, but new larger clients will become increasingly available as privatization progresses.

Sub-Sectors of Opportunity

- **Software:** Although software piracy is a serious problem, packaged software sales reached \$250 million in 1999, and are expected to grow to more than \$2 billion by 2004. Educational software — an estimated US\$100 million market — will be in high demand as the Thai government implements mandatory 12-year education as a basic right for every citizen. Opportunities also exist in multi-lingual, e-commerce, multimedia, operations platforms, business



supply chain software, electronic data interchange, management information systems, and training and consulting.

- **Internet and web-based services:**

E-commerce is growing at a tremendous rate and Thai consumers and businesses alike are quickly jumping on the Internet bandwagon to keep pace with their Southeast Asian neighbours. Opportunities are available in Web site development, real-time financial data procurement, security software, e-banking services, on-line trading, business-to-business development, and real-time supply and delivery mechanisms, training, logistics, and system-wide consulting and support.

- **Computers and peripherals:**

Major computer retailers forecasted a 10-30% rise in sales in 2000. Thai business culture is also encouraging further investment in high-end computers, scanners, monitors, and a growing PC aftermarket.

- **Wireless technologies:**

Manufacturers and distributors of wireless products such as mobile phones and hand-held computers with Internet access are expected to grow significantly.

- **Investment:**

Opportunities are

arising as a result of the privatization and liberalization of the telecommunications industry.

In January 2000, the Thai government eliminated the tariff on 157 types of computer and electronic equipment, making imported goods more competitive within the market. As well, lower capital costs and labour make Thailand a good locale for parts manufacturing, assembly and chip production.

See potential?

To learn more about this market, please read the full report, *Information and Communication Technologies Sector Strategy in Thailand*. The report, prepared by the Trade Commissioner Service in Bangkok-Thailand, is available on-line at www.infoexport.gc.ca

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