

The Mexican government heavily supports the activities of museums, cultural festivals and performing arts concerts, although budgets are expected to contract during the next few years. Canadian theatre and contemporary dance continue to attract buyer interest in Mexico. This past year, Allegra Fulton has performed *Frida K!* and a Mexican theatre company has translated and will bring Brad Fraser's *Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love* to the Mexican stage. There is an active market for good Canadian plays, and interest in buying performance and translation rights.

Each year, government cultural buyers receive proposals from Mexican artists, foreign artists or their agents, and foreign governments. Mexico is thus a market driven as much by the tastes of promoters as by consumer demand.

The Embassy hosts one or two breakfasts every year where buyers from major festivals and performing centres can view the videotapes and CD-ROMs of Canadian artists.

Mexico provides varied settings and tax incentives to film producers. However, local production crews often lack the technical expertise to create world-class products. Television production is dominated by Televisa and TV Azteca, both of which co-produce with U.S. studios. Both Mexican studios have met with Canadian television producers and expressed interest in co-production projects. The success of the Mexican audiovisual mission to the Toronto Film Festival has put this festival on the map as a place where serious business can be done. The advent of direct-to-home television — Mexico's Televisa-Sky Television and Multivision-Direct TV are playing major roles in this evolving sector — has created a market for a broad range of niche television products, as has the expansion of educational television.

Music video and CD-ROM production in Mexico is a fragmented market, with dozens of small creative houses competing for its growing

returns. Technical expertise in both areas is in large demand and can be supplied in part by experienced Canadian production studios. The same technicians who produce films can also produce multimedia entertainment and educational products. Strategic partnerships can lead to greater penetration of not only the Latin American market but also the lucrative and growing Hispanic market in the United States.

Mexican interest in Canadian literature has grown during the past few years, increasing even more after Canada's successful showcase participation at the Guadalajara International Book Fair in November 1996. The huge success of the film *The English Patient* created a market for the Spanish version of the book and also helped place Canadian literature in the public eye.

Constraints

The principal obstacle to larger participation in these markets is the low profile of individual Canadian educational and cultural institutions. The main providers of information about Canadian universities complain that calendars and other literature are hard to get. (This issue is being addressed with the opening of the CEC in Mexico City.) Moreover, Canadian educational products and technological capabilities are hardly known in the Mexican market. Industry observers say that Canadian industrial trainers have been less adept than their American competitors in adapting their products and services to Mexican needs. Steps should be taken to assess the Canadian industry's interest in, and commitment to, penetrating the Mexican market. Publishing opportunities are primarily associated with co-publishing arrangements, since the market for English and French publications is small. Contacts with potential Mexican partners are therefore a critical market-entry strategy.

Strategy for Market Access

Canadian universities and colleges will find a receptive audience in Mexico if they are prepared to market their services aggressively.

A four-pronged marketing strategy includes i) contacting the Secretary of Education to register schools in the scholarship program; ii) supplying the Canadian Embassy and consulates with brochures; iii) sending literature to Mexico's private universities, whose student body can realistically afford to study in Canada; and iv) subscribing to the CEC in Mexico.

The major manufacturers and distributors of educational products should be identified. Canadian capabilities should be brought to the attention of users and government institutions, as well as private and public educational institutions.

Penetrating the Mexican market for Canadian literature requires a judicious mix of strategic marketing and cultural outreach — strategic marketing because the market is relatively undeveloped; cultural outreach because distributors and consumers must be exposed to Canadian cultural products before they commit to purchase.

Canadian artists are encouraged to pursue contracts proactively and to use new technologies to reach global decision makers effectively and efficiently.

Action Plan

Market Intelligence and Information

- Identify Canadian companies already in the market.
- Compile a database of Canadian capabilities, services and products.
- Research existing and evolving needs in the Mexican education market for inclusion in Export *i*.
- Develop a list of importers, distributors and representatives of educational products with help from contacts in the software, high-tech and cultural industries.

- Identify Canadian educational conferences, seminars and fairs for possible incoming missions combining government officials, representatives and users from Mexico.
- Monitor potential IADB and World Bank projects.
- Identify the demand in the Mexican market for i) delivery of custom-tailored corporate training by Canadian universities; ii) transfer of technology by Canadian universities beyond education-related technologies; iii) packaging of ESL/FSL with other services offered in Canada; iv) off-shore delivery of Canadian university programs in Mexico.

Trade Promotion

- Information booth at Expodidáctica 98 and Canadian Pavilion for Expodidáctica 99. This education fair includes products ranging from kindergarten materials to high tech. Also offered are technical conferences on software packages, new technologies and products.
- Guadalajara International Book Fair, organized by the Association for the Export of Canadian Books, November 1998.
- Incoming buyers' mission to Canada (education ministry and private sector) to introduce buyers to Canadian producers of textbooks and other educational books and products.
- Incoming audiovisual buyers' mission to coincide with the Toronto Film Festival, summer 1998.
- Incoming buyers' missions (public and private sectors) to:
 - Théâtre des Amériques, Quebec City, May 1998.
 - Festival de la Nouvelle Danse, Montreal, October 1998.
 - NICARS, Montreal, December 1998.