



## Step 2: Identify your Companies

Once you have identified the target markets that have the greatest likelihood of achieving the desired results in Step 1 above, it is time to translate those into specific characteristics of companies, and then to use the databases and tools at your disposal to identify companies and contacts. **It is this step which will require the most effort**, as effective targeting of high-potential companies at the contact stage will yield the best results down the road.

### 2.1 The Virtual Trade Commissioner in Action

The Virtual Trade Commissioner (VTC), and its counterparts, TRIO and HorizonsVTC are vital tools at your disposal to conduct this task.

As of late 2005, 14,308 Canadian companies had registered to the VTC, with an average of 249 new monthly registrations. The regional offices are now accessible through the VTC, further strengthening their link with posts.

The VTC provides you with the opportunity to target and contact Canadian clients. A CAI can extract and use this information on a personalized, one-on-one basis. You are also encouraged to use the VTC monthly e-mail notification process both at the beginning to identify contacts, as well as on an on-going basis to provide you with new potential contacts as your project continues.

Whenever a Canadian company registers to the VTC, the information submitted is transmitted directly to TRIO. The monthly notification will provide the names of new registrants who are active, or show an interest, in your market.

Through TRIO, you can identify Canadian companies which meet a series of criteria, such as:

- ◆ markets in which the company is active, such as your market, or neighbouring markets;
- ◆ markets in which the company is interested but not active;
- ◆ company sectors;
- ◆ product information;
- ◆ market strategies;
- ◆ links to company websites, with full company and product information.

As you can see from the successful practice example on the previous page, the post chose not to target by priority sector, since to do so may have excluded companies with good potential, and the number of companies (60), was considered to be manageable. Your particular experience in post will dictate to what degree you should expand or relax the individual criteria. **Remember that each company requires a personalized approach to be successful**, so you may wish to use more restrictive criteria first and expand until you have a number of companies you and your officers will be comfortable with.