

Re-Engineering the Delivery of the Trade and Economic Program in Mexico

The business model described in this document reflects a fundamental understanding that market intelligence is at the heart of international trade today. New technologies are making general information about Mexican markets available from a distance. Companies can conduct basic evaluations of opportunities in Mexico without ever leaving Canada. And when they do travel to Mexico and contact members of the Trade Commissioner Service, they are more prepared than ever before. They are increasingly focused on gathering *intelligence* that is specific to their firm's unique products and services, which is in contrast to seeking *information* about the overall market.

The staff of the Trade and Economic Program in Mexico understand that their resources, skills and efforts must be mobilized to serve these changing needs. From the beginning, this essential principle was the driving force behind the effort to develop a new business model. The model was also heavily influenced by the Team Canada concept and the *Trade Action Plan for Mexico*, which was developed to implement that initiative within DFAIT.

The Shift Towards Market Intelligence

The new business model incorporates a fundamental shift away from market *information* and towards market *intelligence* as the key element in the trade promotion support provided to Canadian companies visiting Mexico. The expectation that this trend will continue is a crucial assumption underlying most of the ideas and advice in this guide.

Mexican market information provided by DFAIT, for example the Export *i* Mexico series, is usually organized into sectoral profiles. It includes analyses of industrial structure along with descriptions of customers, competitors and regulatory agencies. It incorporates an outlook of emerging market trends over the near-to-medium term. And it features lists of contacts and sources of additional information. This information is intended to help Canadian companies to evaluate the Mexican market in their sector before they develop their own market entry strategies. It is distributed in the form of printed handbooks as well as using electronic media such as FaxLink and CD-ROM. This frees the Trade Commissioner Service abroad to focus on providing market intelligence and counselling services to individual businesses.

Market intelligence differs from market information because it relates to the market position of an individual company or product rather than to the market as a whole. It typically involves specific information needed to implement a company's market entry strategy and is generally of a confidential nature. Intelligence is, therefore, not usually disseminated on