

THE
IMPORTANCE
OF A GOOD
EVENT
REPORT

By Brian Cox

You wipe the sweat off your brow and breathe a sigh of relief. At last, the big event is finally over, and all the exhibitors or mission participants have packed up and gone back to Canada. Time to start organizing the next event or catch up on the backlog, right? Wrong, at least, *not yet*. If you and your colleagues are going to get the most out of all your hard work and the useful information you've acquired, you have to share it! The *Guidelines on Event Reporting* (International Business Development Guideline 94-4) were developed to not only obtain your assessment of the effectiveness of the event, but to ensure that the market information obtained as a result of the event is reported and made available for the benefit of our clients.

MI/I Bulletin #9 (October 1994), reported on the use of event reporting guidelines and commented on how they had a significant impact on the quality and utility of promotional event reports (fairs, missions, conferences, seminars, etc.). Still, you may ask: "Why do I need guidelines?"

The most obvious answer is that guidelines cause you, the author, to think more about the results of the event as opposed to event activities. Traditionally (a sobering fact), reports concentrated purely on activities and were, unfortunately, of little use or interest to anyone. Conversely, results-oriented reports focus on the information of interest to our clients: market access issues, market trends, opportunities

and strategies, ie, in addition to the assessment of the event, the participants, and the Department's involvement - elements required for future planning.

The "Assessment of Effectiveness" section of your event report is especially important in a rotational environment to help your colleagues plan future events and recruit participants. As authors, you are encouraged to be rigorous in your assessment so that others may benefit from successes and learn from mistakes.

The guidelines also provide structure to the reporting process, making it easy to extract the Market Information section and making it available, virtually instantly, to our private sector clientele via the InfoCentre FaxLink and the IBB. Instead of disappearing into the infamous "black hole", these "mini-market studies" can be used by our clients to advance or redirect their marketing efforts. Publication of event reports on FaxLink and the IBB also provides visibility to the authoring post or division.

We hope you will take the extra time and let us know the results of all your hard work. In following the guidelines, you enable others to take advantage of valuable information, because information is most valuable when it is shared! If you don't already have a copy of the *Guidelines on Event Reporting* (IBDG 94-4), you can obtain one by contacting TOO.

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1995 Canada Export Award Program

The Canada Export Award Secretariat is seeking your nominations for the 1995 awards.

Applicants must be firms, or divisions of firms, resident in Canada that have been exporting goods or services for at least the three previous consecutive years (1992-1994 inclusive). This is an excellent opportunity for you to indicate to your client(s) that you are impressed with their performance. The secretariat contacts the nominated company(ies) on your behalf, asking them to complete a brief application. Past award winners have reported that the recognition they receive has been an important marketing tool, raising their profile at home and attracting new foreign customers.

Help us recognize and encourage new export growth! Send your nominations to TOO/Hexter by April 15 via E-mail or fax at (613) 996-8688.

