

CHAPTER**1****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY****A. FINDINGS****1. Background**

- This study, undertaken on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) was conducted to help evaluate the reaction of Canadian exporters to the InfoExport website which was designed to increase awareness of The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service and the assistance and support they provide to exporters.
- Accordingly, 2 focus groups (one anglophone, one francophone) were conducted at a cyber café in Montreal on February 2, 2000 with a total of 14 Canadian exporters.
 - Participants were all managers with various years experience in exporting within small to medium size companies drawn from the service and manufacturing sectors. All used the Internet in their work on a regular basis.
- Each 2-hour group had 3 main components – an introductory discussion, a 30-minute browsing segment including 15 minutes of free time and 15 minutes to search for 2 specific pieces of information, and a follow-up discussion. Clients were on-hand to observe and to provide assistance when necessary, and a technician was also available to provide technical support.
- Before browsing the InfoExport website, participants were queried about their information needs and sources, including the Internet. After browsing, they were probed for their reaction to the overall website, and to specific elements, such as content, visual presentation, the entry and home pages, architecture and the guided browse tasks.