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bined to create an unprecedented need for skills upgrading, especially in the areas of management and technical training. More and more, Mexican companies are turning to international suppliers that offer low-cost packaged courseware in these areas.

Domestic Education

The 'domestic' adult education market in Mexico is large and growing, but highly competitive. At least four million people are enrolled in some form of adult education, and some estimates are much higher. These programs include training in computers, languages and literacy as well as secretarial and business skills. Domestic education programs are seen by many as a means of individual improvement, potentially leading to career advancement. As a result, enrollment by individuals in work-related adult education programs has more than tripled over the past decade.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

Purchases by the public school system tend to be politically driven and are dominated by large established Mexican firms. Central purchasing is practiced through government agencies, particularly for books. In general, the public schools are poorly funded, and offer only limited short-term opportunities to Canadian companies. There is some potential, however, for companies offering innovative products that respond to a growing need for cost effectiveness as enrollments continue to grow and limited resources are stretched. These opportunities are expected to improve as the school system in Mexico is decentralized. Canadian companies with experience in this area say that the opportunities hinge on the recognition by Mexican authorities of the need for improvement.

PUBLIC EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

Exemplary Consultants Ltd, of London Ontario, offers education management and consulting services including human resource development, staff supervision, curriculum development and designs for school construction. Their "Bermuda Model" for education renewal and development has been a major success. It provides a plan for rebuilding an education system from pre-school to post-secondary levels.

Exemplary Consultants has been exploring the Mexican market for the past two years, and hopes to do business there in the future. They have completed a market study and have established a relationship with a Mexican agent. In order to develop contacts in Mexico, the company has used the resources of both the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Canadian Embassy in Mexico.

F. Stewart Toll, the Chief Executive Officer of Exemplary Consultants, says that there are many opportunities in Mexican education for Canadian companies but he is quick to add that there is much groundwork to be done first. In his experience, personal and professional linkages with Mexican government educational agencies and/or a Mexican partner are critical to success.

Exemplary Consultants has established a relationship with *Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo (CONAFE)*, the implementation agency of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública*. CONAFE's mandate is to upgrade education for the ten poorest provinces. Mr. Toll says that so far, these efforts have been impeded by a lack of strong commitment for educational upgrading on the part of Mexican authorities.

Through the Ontario International Corporation, they are now following up on earlier discussions with CONAFE. Mr. Toll says that Exemplary Consultants will continue to pursue the opportunity in Mexico, but he feels that it will be a slow process requiring the commitment of substantial resources.

Employer education and training offers better opportunities, especially for companies with specialized programs oriented towards management

practices or new technology. Many companies lack the internal resources for such programs and are interested in purchasing packaged courseware. Nonetheless, registered courses are

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Danatec Educational Services Ltd., of Calgary Alberta, is a specialist in the handling of hazardous materials. Their services include consulting, training and publications. Their expertise in this area includes transportation, occupational safety and environmental issues.

Their field-tested publications include instructor manuals, employer guides, student handbooks and self-teaching programs. Some of Danatec's publications are now being sold in Mexico and the company would like to expand its exports to include consulting services.

The company thinks that market opportunities for its training services will be stimulated by the Mexican government's commitment to cleaning up the environment combined with the requirements of the NAFTA environmental agreement. Danatec participated in Globe '94 in Vancouver, and met with the Mexican delegation who expressed an interest in their products. Danatec is now exploring the leads obtained from this event.

Ron Martin, one of the principals of Danatec, says that the company considers a partnership with a local training company to be the most effective approach to penetrating the Mexican market.

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