

Republic of Ireland

Sectors with Good Potential for Canadian Firms

The attractiveness of Ireland for Canadian firms to develop international marketing strategies is underlined by the successful experience of the 400 North American firms located in the country. In addition, the presence of 33 North American firms based in the border counties highlights the potential of the region as a manufacturing and sales base. Ireland has a very strong and extensive sub-supply sector which is focussed on the needs of incoming projects. Currently, \$1.4 billion is spent on local sub-supply by overseas companies in Ireland.

Software

Ireland's software industry is worth more than \$4 billion in revenues to the Irish economy. This is due mainly to the arrival of a large number of multinational companies that have established subsidiaries to undertake product development, fulfilment, localization, translation and related support services. Exports (mainly into the EU) account for some \$3.7 billion.

The actual Irish market for software is approximately \$200 million, with support services of a similar order. The market for hardware is some \$500 million.

Canadian software firms seeking to penetrate the lucrative European software market (forecast to be worth \$155 billion in 1996) are entering into joint venture/licensing agreements with Irish firms that have the experience of exporting to EU markets. Local Irish software firms engaging in exporting are interested in matching up with Canadian software firms.

Canadian software firms continue to succeed both in direct sales and in licensing and distribution agreements in Ireland.

Recent successes include GWN (Edmonton) and Axses (Halifax), geographic information systems; and Q.W. Page (Toronto), accounting software.

On the direct investment front, QC Data (Calgary), a forerunner in geographic information systems, established its European base in Cork in 1990.

Montreal-based Eicon Technology, in 1992, opened a software manufacturing and development centre in Dublin that employs 30 people and exports throughout Europe. In 1993, Corel Corp. (Ottawa) opened, also in Dublin, its worldwide graphics software translation, manufacturing and distribution centre.

A study completed for the Canadian Embassy in March 1995 has identified the primary markets and prospects for software. Copies can be obtained by contacting Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Ottawa, Fax: 613-995-6319.

Telecommunications

Good opportunities exist for Canadian exports of telecommunications equipment, as the Irish market is growing with a wider range of commercialized high-value telecommunications products.

Environment

Major investments in waste and wastewater treatment present opportunities for Canadian environmental consultants and equipment.

Agri-food

Ireland's large agri-food sector is modernizing, with opportunities for Canadian suppliers of breeding stock, value-added meat processing technology and equipment, biotechnology, pack-

aging equipment, and merchandising know-how.

Forest Products

Ireland will be a net exporter of forest products by 2000, but needs investment capital to develop harvesting and sawmilling. There are opportunities for Canadian technology and equipment for value-added wood products, including furniture manufacturing.

Transportation

The transportation sector offers excellent opportunities for Canadian suppliers. The Irish government's Transport Operations Programme will result in expenditures of some \$2 million per day during 1994-99. The rail segment of this program will allow for nearly \$600 million on upgrading the main line rail network, plus approximately \$430 million on a proposed Light Rail System for Dublin which will link with the existing DART suburban electric rail system. Other elements will include advanced signalling and continuous welded rail.

Automotive

Ireland has developed a very strong automotive components industry which currently exports in excess of \$400 million annually to European car manufacturers. These include General Motors/ Adam Opel, Mercedes-Benz, Ford, Audi, BMW, and Renault.

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