

The players

A corporate decision to export, particularly if you have not been involved in exporting before, is a big one. After making the decision and after your adrenalin level returns to normal, a feeling of naked isolation is not uncommon. From the comfortable, familiar environment of your domestic market, you find yourself suddenly alone in the uncharted waters of a foreign market competing against entrenched competitors for customers who don't know you or your products.

It's a lonely feeling. But it needn't be because, in reality, you are not alone. Canadians are among the world's leading international traders. Literally thousands of Canadian companies have broadened their horizons and successfully incorporated profitable international sales into their domestic operations.

Each of these companies has developed strategies and techniques for selling abroad and most of them are willing to share their experience with first-time exporters in areas where they are not in direct competition. The experience of these companies, of Canadian industry, trade and professional associations, and of federal and provincial government export trade development programs forms a priceless network of proven, professional resources available to first-time exporters.

If you feel your time and financial resources are currently limited, you may also want to make use of Canadian trading houses to assist you or undertake exporting on your behalf.

These are the "players," the export trade professionals, whose advice and assistance are readily available to you every step of the way as you identify your exportable products and services, scout your export markets, design your marketing game plans, organize your banking and financing, and mount your sales campaigns.

These export trade professionals offer advice and assistance and are readily available to help you every step of the way.

The players are the invisible support members of your company's export team. The kind of assistance they can provide the first-time exporter is assistance that few companies, regardless of their size or financial strength, could maintain on staff. The initiative to put this team to work, however, rests with you, the exporter. You are the captain of the team and only you can call the signals.

Many of the players listed in this manual provide packages of related services while others concentrate on a single, specific area of export expertise. For easier identification and reference, the line-up of players is grouped here under three main headings: Marketing Information and Assistance, Financial Information and Assistance, and Documentation. The listings include a thumbnail sketch of each organization's role in export trade development and such vital statistics as addresses, telephone and telex numbers.

Marketing information and assistance

Info Export (BTCE)
Department of External Affairs
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2
Toll-free hotline: 1-800-267-8376
Ottawa callers: 993-6435

For most beginning and many veteran exporters, Info Export is the best starting point. The Department of External Affairs' export trade information centre, Info Export, is your instant guide to all of the export programs and services provided by the federal government. Info Export provides exporters with the general export overview. It assists in any export program or service by directing the company to organizations such as provincial governments and Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE) regional offices. Through it you can be plugged into the department's trade information network and get general information and advice on the best potential markets for your product. A broad selection of export trade literature including the *Canada-Export* newsletter and information kits published by the department is also available.

Geographic Information

In the Department of External Affairs, responsibility for trade promotion is organized on a geographic basis. For detailed information about foreign markets of interest, call Info Export and a trade officer will put you in touch with the appropriate geographic desk officer.