

Rather, the tendency of most exporters when negotiating CAs is to strictly interpret their linked obligation only as a way to create foreign exchange flows for the customer through CT, rather than as an opportunity to reduce the client's net hard currency exposure through creative approaches (e.g., sourcing of supplies in countries whose currencies or regional trade relations favor the customer).

Although the responsibilities which currently prevail in most in-house CA units relate to important and needed functions, I believe that an additional equally important, yet still mostly neglected function of these units, lies in assisting the company's product division with both transaction structuring and with their long-range marketing strategy plans.

A necessary and required activity of the CA unit in the discharge of its activities related to the disposal of CT goods is the collection of varied information. This information gathering requires continuous involvement with everchanging markets and products, varied sources of information and databases, many types of domestic and foreign trade-related organizations, as well as a generalist's perspective on business techniques.

Adapting data flows from established or new sources, and transforming such information into intelligence appropriate to the company's marketing aims, is both within the capability and a logical ulterior step best vested in the CA unit. Thus, the access to information flows from multiple sources and the marketing-support orientation of the CA unit, if supplemented by the expertise in converting data bases into intelligence, make the CA unit a valuable asset for long-range marketing planning.