

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Opportunity

Mexico offers excellent opportunities for Canadian exporters. Trade has increased steadily since Mexico implemented a sweeping series of economic reforms in the mid-1980s. Decades-old protectionist regulations were abandoned and parallel policies of privatization and deregulation have contributed to a massive restructuring of the economy. This created unprecedented demand for various kinds of goods, services and technologies. As a result, Mexican imports from Canada more than tripled during the five years ending in 1995.

The Challenge

The rapid increase in the number of Canadian companies exporting to Mexico, or considering doing so, has placed considerable strain on the government's ability to support exporters. The Trade Action Plan for Mexico was developed to make more effective use of scarce resources.

The Team

The Team Canada concept, introduced by Prime Minister Chrétien in 1995, underlies this new approach to trade promotion. Canada's Trade Commissioner Service is the delivery arm for coordinated trade promotion efforts by various government departments and the private sector. The InfoCentre in Ottawa and regional International Trade Centres provide local service to businesses located in all parts of the country.

The Plan

The Trade Action Plan provides integrated market information in Canada so that businesses can prepare their export strategies at home. Armed with this information, they will be equipped to take full advantage of the knowledge and skills of the trade commissioners in Mexico.

The Plan distinguishes between market information and market intelligence, and delivers these products through different means. It shifts emphasis from event-driven programs towards information-driven activities. And it places greater emphasis on helping small- to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to become export-ready before they leave Canada.

Sectors of Opportunity

Opportunities for Canadians are concentrated in particular sectors. In order to maximize trade promotion efforts, the Trade Action Plan identifies five priority sectors. These sectors offer substantial — but largely untapped — opportunities in areas where major demands are expected to develop over the medium term.