

Do you have an office in the U.S. currently?

"Our unofficial partner has a space where I can base my operations when I am in the Columbus area. Other than that I have friends in U.S. cities that I will stay with."

Have you encountered any border difficulties?

"I have found that as volume increases it gets easier to cross the border. Customs is very cooperative with Auty because we put proper marking on every box. Because Auty is a regular exporter and always provides correct documentation, customs has provided us with a line item release form. This allows rapid expedition and virtually no delays. To do this you need to have the proper volumes, which would be about one truck a week (transport size truck). The truck doesn't have to be full, but you should have 5 to 15 thousand pounds on the truck to justify the line item release form."

How are you making it easy for customs?

"We have a U.S. customs broker which tells us exactly what customs will require and we follow their instructions exactly. In addition, we always use the same port and the same initial destination: Columbus, Ohio. One truck a week costs approximately \$200 dollars a skid to send and the skid has approximately \$25,000 in product all pre-labeled and packaged for UPS shipment. It is all very transparent and using the same border crossing cuts down delays and problems."

How do you save shipping costs?

"Canadian freight rates are outrageous. To ship one pound to the United States expect to pay about \$35 (Canadian) dollars. However, if you ship to a United States destination by truck first, you would only pay about \$3 dollars to ship the same package. It costs about \$5 dollars a pound to ship from Toronto to Columbus on our own truck so the total is about \$8 dollars a pound. We prepackage all our shipments for secondary shipment by UPS once it is unloaded in Columbus."

How did you create the partnership with Advanced Screen Printing (A.S.P.) in Columbus (later Auty Printing, U.S.A.)?

"Five years ago, the Canadian dollar was increasing rapidly and free trade had been initiated. I knew that U.S. competition was coming so I sought to expand and export. Initially, I contacted my suppliers in the United States to discuss my plans. I chose Columbus because I thought it would be an excellent U.S. base for operations: they have a large industrial base and they are close to my Canadian operations (it takes about 6 hours to ship from plant to plant). When I told my U.S. suppliers about my plans they told me about one of their clients in Columbus who did similar work. Another golf game ensued with the owner of A.S.P. and a joint venture evolved."

What happened after the partnership was created?

"The partnership was sort of one-sided. Most of the work was being done by Auty, Canada. In terms of size, Auty, U.S.A. had revenues of \$360 thousand dollars and 5 years later their revenues were almost 2 million dollars. The partnership worked great for both