

Virtually all consumer goods available in North America are also available in Saudi Arabia, apart from prohibited items (alcohol, pork). Most of the population lives in three major cities (Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam), so these are the main consumer markets as well. Women have considerable influence on consumer purchases.

Advertising

Although print advertising is well-established, television advertising is relatively new in the Kingdom, and is under very strict control as to possible offensive advertisements and violations of the Islamic code. Little research into Saudi consumer behaviour has been carried out and point-of-sale and direct-mail advertising remain very important. Leading local newspapers, periodicals and advertising agencies are listed in Section VII.

Regulations for Consulting Engineers

In general, Canadian consulting companies are advised to form a joint venture with an established Saudi consulting firm on a project-by-project basis.

Individual consultants or companies generally cannot practise without first obtaining a licence from the Ministry of Commerce. Licences are issued to non-Saudis only when no Saudi engineers are available.

The Government requires that companies applying for registration must have been continuously active for over 10 years. The licence is valid for two Hajira years and may be renewed for a similar period. As any disputes between or involving both foreign and Saudi consultants are settled in accordance with the Kingdom's laws and regulations, interested companies should contact a local legal firm for advice on how to proceed with regard to registration.