

8.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presents key conclusions and recommendations based on the results of the survey.

8.1 Reception and Usage

Overall, recall and usage rates indicate that distribution of Departmental publications could be better targeted to ensure a greater likelihood that those who receive publications use them.

Neither InfoCentre nor targeted distribution appeared to be more effective in delivering publications to clients who use them. Results from the survey indicate that smaller businesses (under \$5 million in revenues) with some export activities should be a focus of distribution activities.

8.2 Content, Format and Delivery Media

Departmental publications are well-received with respect to content and format. Overall, format elements such as lay-out, organization, appearance and writing were rated more favourably than the importance of the information. Analysis of survey results and previous qualitative research suggests that information which provides sales leads, distributor contacts and competitive intelligence is more likely to be considered essential. As a result, the Department should ensure that its publications provide as complete, accurate and up-to-date contacts as possible.

Respondents indicated preferences for more than one delivery vehicle, most frequently mentioning hard copy and electronic diskettes as preferred media. This corresponds with the usage patterns whereby publications are used for several purposes. While hard copy publications lend themselves to use as reference tools, the capabilities of electronic formats allow contact lists to be sorted for mailing lists. Therefore, the Department may consider making publications available in both paper and electronic diskette versions. As many recipients who received diskette publications indicated compatibility problems, the Department should consider pursuing this to determine the technical nature of this problem.

8.3 Utility and Impact

Departmental publications are rated highly in terms of their overall utility as information tools. Overall, end-users find those publications which focus on providing contact and sales lead information more useful than those publications which provide in-depth analyses of export markets and background information. Because small and medium-