

potential buyer encountered in initial contacts with confidence in the exporting company's capabilities. The next step will be to make contacts and begin the process of building relationships with clients, distributors and other industry players, designing and pricing the product for the target market. Finally the process of selling and delivering on client expectations will begin, and only then can an exporter expect to begin to see a return on his time, money and effort.

Exporting companies will increase their likelihood of success if they have made a clear assessment of internal capabilities including:

- Have a clear, precise product definition.
- Know their capabilities. Avoid the mistake of attempting to enter a larger market that cannot be adequately serviced. Decide how much time, effort and money they are willing to dedicate to developing an export market. Designate the export manager, provide the necessary resources and responsibility.
- A company must know its strengths and weaknesses. It must have a very clear definition of the product it plans to export.
- Develop a detailed marketing strategy with defined resources to be allocated, activities, expected results and time horizons. This should be revised as required as the exporter gains knowledge and circumstances change.
- Take advantage of all assistance available that is consistent with their export strategy.

Thorough market research before actually making a trip to the market will save time, money and unnecessary discouragement.

- Exporters must learn all they can about potential markets before they make their initial contacts. Seek information from FAIT, trade associations, Chamber of Commerce, etc.

Companies hoping to be successful in export marketing must be willing to reformulate, adapt packaging, change sizes, reposition product to meet the needs and expectations of buyers in the export market. Exporters must actively solicit information on market requirements and find a way to meet them.

- Emphasis must be placed on seeking markets that match the Canadian exporter's supply capacity.
- Choose appropriate distribution channels - HRI and/or retail.