

The criteria used in making purchase decisions vary among the hospitals as can easily be seen from the benefit segments discussed earlier.

7. Problems and Opportunities

When asked what factors could simplify and improve their purchase operations, the respondents suggested the following: (1) improve red tape/paperwork, (2) improve relations among vendors, staff, and purchasers, and (3) leave more photos and information to permit more extensive evaluation of equipment.

Respondents were also asked what advice they would give to new manufacturers to increase their chances of selling. The most frequently mentioned advice was: (1) leave more photos/information to permit more extensive evaluation of equipment, (2) offer a new and better product with competitive prices, and (3) improve relations among vendors, staff, and purchasers. Respondents said their advice would not differ if the firms were Canadian.

8. Attitudes of Hospital Personnel

- Seventy-three percent of all respondents indicated that they are very satisfied with their current suppliers. This percentage was highest in the Pro U.S. segment (100%) and lowest in the Quality segment (67%).
- More than half (56%) of respondents have a strong preference for known distributors and about one in four prefer group buying.
- Forty-two percent have both a strong preference for local firms and a strong preference for U.S. firms. These preferences are especially strong in the Pro U.S. segment. Only a small percentage of the respondents perceive foreign products to be as good as U.S. ones -- 17% for Canadian, 14% for European and 12% for Japanese.
- Respondents in the Pro U.S. segment have a high propensity of claiming that their hospitals' decision making is highly centralized (67%) relative to those in the Quality segment (20%).
- About two-thirds of the hospitals expect their hospital to be more cost conscious in the near future.
- The quality and price/quality segments perceive themselves as considerably more innovative hospitals than the Pro U.S. segment.