
Building Awareness and Market Knowledge

A number of federal and provincial government agencies can support the efforts of Canadian companies to become parts suppliers to Japanese buyers. In addition, the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association (APMA), which has 400 members, is well-positioned to help Canadian industry secure an increased market share by conducting "how-to" business seminars, leading trade missions to Japan, conducting high-level business conferences and meetings with Japanese industry and government officials, and participating in trade shows and technical seminars.

On the Japanese side, Pacific Automotive Co-operation Inc. (PAC) is financed and supported by the Japanese assemblers. PAC, which maintains an office in Toronto, works closely with the APMA and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) toward greater co-operation and information exchange. PAC and JETRO assist with the "awareness" activities of the Action Plan for Japan.

In recent years, seminars organized by the APMA and PAC, with the full support of the federal and provincial governments, have provided practical advice to Canadian companies interested in supplying Japanese assemblers, and have complemented the "awareness" aspect of the Action Plan activities.

2. *Adapting the Product for the Marketplace*

Product design or adaptation is one of the key elements for success in achieving supplier status. Canadian companies are taking the necessary steps to convince Japanese buyers that design activities can be done in Canada but there is a continuing need to educate both sides. APMA/PAC seminars have proven successful in this process, and should be continued.

3. *Promoting the Product in the Marketplace*

One of the APMA's leading roles is to *promote* the attributes of the Canadian auto parts industry, specifically its ability to design/develop new products, to achieve and maintain very high standards of quality control, to become "just-in-time" suppliers, to introduce QC concepts and the *kaizen* methodology.

The federal government organized a major promotion of the Canadian auto parts industry capabilities at the Tokyo Motor Show in October/November 1993. Activities included a Canada Stand (displaying Chrysler's LH automobile and a number of parts suppliers), an APMA-led mission to the Show and related techni-