

## CHAPTER

# 2 INTRODUCTION

## A. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

### i. Purpose of the Study

- The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) developed a website – InfoExport – to assist Canadian exporters and to communicate the help and support available from the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service.
- This qualitative study was undertaken to get first-hand feedback from some Canadian exporters about the InfoExport website -- in terms of its accessibility, ease of use, and relevance of content – to help improve and fine-tune it to the needs of potential users.
- It was hoped that by understanding how exporters perceived and used the Internet as an information tool, by determining their needs from a website aimed at exporters, and by discovering their awareness and perception of InfoExport and the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, the site's usefulness and relevance to the Canadian exporting community could be maximized.
- Participants were invited to evaluate the InfoExport site in terms of both content and presentation, including:
  - perceived strengths and weaknesses
  - comprehension, relevance and adequacy of content -- if it met their needs as exporters
  - visual environment, such as colours and images
  - various aspects of the architecture, including content presentation, the entry and home pages, the navigation bar, etc.
  - functionality and ease of use
  - ideas for improvement
  - intention to use the site.