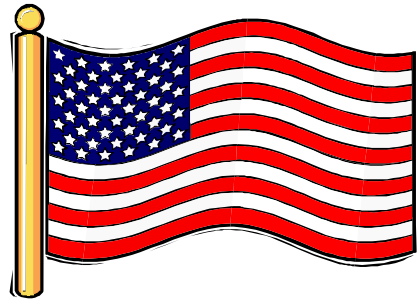
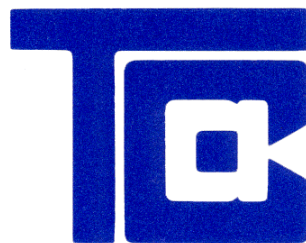


# A Guide to Exporting Products/Services to the U.S.A.



Brought to you by Toronto Construction Association's  
Manufacturers Supply & Service (MS&S) Division



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## **A GUIDE TO WORKING OR PROVIDING PRODUCTS OR SERVICES TO THE USA**

This guide for exporting products and services to the United States has been prepared by the Manufacturer, Supply and Services Committee of the Toronto Construction Association (TCA) for the benefit and assistance of TCA members who may want to consider expanding their businesses into the United States (U.S.). The information contained in this guide is intended to act as a general introduction to the U.S. market. You should seek professional assistance in your endeavour before implementing any plans and suggest using other TCA members with experience in exporting whenever possible.

Members of the Toronto Construction Association, for the most part, operate within the Greater Toronto Area. Some of our members already sell their products and services into the United States and/or around the world. This guide is intended to provide a starting point for those companies who may have thought about this type of expansion but do not know where to begin.

The Manufacturer, Supply and Services Committee with the support of the TCA have prepared this guide so those members interested in exporting to the United States will have a resource of contacts and sources of information with which to start. The guide provides information on only those states neighbouring Ontario in what is generally referred to as the Great Lakes Region. Once you have gone through this guide we feel you will know how to find information for any location you may want to do business throughout North America.

This guide is intended to guide you through the export process. We have provided a brief outline of the NAFTA Agreement and a "How To Start" guide of considerations for several areas such as Construction services, Material and Product Sales and where to find out about financial support for your endeavors. The reference section includes contact names, phone numbers and/or web sites. The guide is not intended to provide actual information but instead, to act as a source for your information needs. It includes key industry contacts such as local construction associations, contract-tendering sites and industry related publications. The section on "Export Strategy" offers a guideline on getting started. There are several government web sites that offer substantial information on export statistics and opportunities available in various areas. The sections on getting started and frequently asked questions should give you a sense of whether or not this is a viable option for your company to pursue.

The Toronto Construction Association and the Manufacturer, Supply and Services committee would like to extend an expression of gratitude to all those who generously provided their time for the development of this document. If you have any comments or information you would like to add, please submit to TCA for possible inclusion in a later edition.

Good luck.

TCA has provided the information as a service to our members and is accurate to the best of our knowledge, however TCA shall not be held responsible for any errors or omissions. Any omissions/inaccuracies should be directed to TCA.

## 1. DEVELOPING AN EXPORT STRATEGY

In order to determine whether exporting is a viable business option for your company, you must develop an export strategy and an export plan. Elements to consider:

- Know Your Strengths
- Set Objectives
- Identify Target Markets
- Plan Delivery
- Strategic Marketing
- Financing
- Risk Assessment

If you choose to export directly, a detailed and thorough strategy and business plan should be developed. Steps in developing such a strategy include:

- Evaluate your product's export potential
- Are you committed to international markets - is your company "export-ready"
- Determine a need for your products and services through market research and analysis
- Evaluate and establish promotional programs and distribution networks
- Determine appropriate pricing, payment terms, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with shipping methods and export documentation procedures and requirements
- Ensure that your firm is financially sound

There are several documents available that can walk a company step-by-step through the export process. Their websites have extensive information on planning and implementing an export strategy. The contact information for many of these organizations is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 1.

## 2. CODES AND SPECIFICATIONS

There are a number of organizations in the United States, which are responsible for producing codes and specification governing various aspects of construction, e.g. masonry, concrete, highways etc. These documents are generally "model" documents and only become law when legislation is enacted at the state, county or city level, or referenced by the specifying authority.

**Building Code.** The new 2000 International Building Code (IBC) and its companion, the 2000 International Residential Code, were introduced in Spring 2000. These codes were developed by the International Code Council (ICC). These codes were introduced as "model codes" and are to replace the existing codes:

- Standard Building Code (SBC), which covers the southern states and was published by the Southern Building Code Congress International (SBCCI)
- National Building Code (NBC), which covers the northern states east of the Mississippi River and was published by the Building Officials Administrators International (BOCA)

- Uniform Building Code (UBC), which includes the states west of the Mississippi River to the west coast, and was published by the International Conference of Building Officials (ICBO)
- CBAO One-and-Two Family Dwelling Code

The contact information for many of these organizations is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 2.

### **3. MATERIAL AND PRODUCT SALES**

American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) is the foremost developer and provider of voluntary consensus standards and related technical information. There is an ASTM standard for most commonly used products and all products shipped to the United States should comply with the relevant standard.

Where new and innovative products or systems are to be used, which are not covered by an ASTM standard, they should be evaluated by the Underwriters Laboratory (UL) or the International Code Council (ICC). Both organizations offer the construction industry a national evaluation service for all types of innovative materials, products, systems and services. This evaluation, based on solid technical criteria and rigorous testing, is an impartial judgement on the suitability of a material for its intended use, frequently with respect to codes and standards.

UL and ICC will provide technical evaluation of commercial or residential building materials, processes or systems for manufacturers, distributors or suppliers that require an evaluation number that they can use as a promotional tool. UL evaluations are recognized throughout United States by various state and municipal Commissions on Building Standards, construction government authorities and industry associations.

Note that the ICC evaluation service is a consolidation of the evaluation services currently carried out by BOCA, ICBO, SBCCI and NES. This consolidation should be in effect by January 1, 2003.

Contact information for both ASTM and Underwriters Laboratory is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 2.

U.S. Customs are responsible for ensuring that products brought into the United States comply with the stated properties, do not infringe copyright, trademarks or intellectual property rights, are not hazardous, are within quota limits (if such exist) and are not "dumped" at below cost. U.S. Customs have a number of laboratories, which are used to test products to verify their stated properties.

Under the NAFTA agreement, if a product is transported across an international border (Canada/USA), the information on the packaging must be in all three official languages, English, French and Spanish.

More information on custom requirements can be obtained from the Department of Treasury; The United States Customs Service at [www.customs.ustreas.gov](http://www.customs.ustreas.gov)

#### 4. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The United States government is the single biggest organization working on environmental issues. But figuring out which part of the government works on which problem can be a puzzle even for the most knowledgeable people.

There are three branches in the federal government: The legislative branch, Congress, which makes the laws, the judicial branch which includes the U.S. Supreme Court and all other federal courts, and the executive, or presidential branch. Researchers in the legislative and judicial branches work on environmental issues when necessary, but most of the ongoing environmental work done by the U.S. government takes place in the executive branch.

Picture the executive branch as a pyramid with the president at the very top. Directly below is the Cabinet. The president's Cabinet is made up of the heads of 14 departments. These departments deal with issues that are particularly important for the welfare of the country such as war, money matters and law enforcement. The Cabinet is the group of presidential advisers whose job it is to discuss the most important issues facing the president and to recommend action. Among the 14 departments are the Energy Department, the Defense Department, the Interior Department and the State Department. The person in charge of each of each of these departments is called a Secretary.

Each department has its own responsibilities. For example, the State Department focuses on foreign affairs and international laws. The Interior Department works on domestic issues. These categories are so big that each department divides up the responsibilities again, assigning the responsibilities to different offices, often called bureaus, agencies or services.

While many government departments, bureaus and agencies work on environmental issues, this has not always been the case. Often in American history, environmental issues - such as hazardous-waste dumps - have been addressed after they've already become serious problems, instead of before hand. Sometimes it is unclear which department or agency should be in charge of a particular issue. Even people within one agency cannot always agree about how some natural resources should be used, protected and conserved.

##### The Environmental Protection Agency

In addition to the 14 departments and their agencies, the United States has one independent agency with major environmental responsibilities- the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Established in 1970, it is the only agency devoted entirely to the environment. The agency is responsible for the enforcement of most of the environmental laws that have been passed by Congress, including the Clean Air Act, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (a.k.a. the Clean Water Act), the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). While the EPA is not a sub-agency of any department, it is also not part of the Cabinet. The director reports directly to the President. Consideration is being given to changing the EPA to a Cabinet-Level department. This would give the EPA more importance.

## 1) Federal Environmental Statutes

The Clean Air Act governs the discharge of pollutants into the air from mobile and stationary sources (examples: motor vehicles and manufacturing facilities). The EPA sets air quality standards and imposes restrictions through permitting systems on air emissions sources.

The Clean Water Act regulates the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the U.S.A. All pollutant discharges into the U.S. waters must be permitted by the EPA or the appropriate state environmental agency.

CERCLA regulates clean up of hazardous waste sites. Under CERCLA, both public and private funds are used to pay for hazardous waste clean up.

RCRA regulates the generation, storage, transportation, treatment and disposal of hazardous waste. EPA regulates waste under RCRA "from cradle to grave"., in other words, from creation to disposal. Any person generating or transporting hazardous waste, or the owner or operator of a hazardous waste treatment, transportation or storage facility, must apply for a permit and comply with applicable conditions and requirements.

## 2) State Environmental Requirements

Many states have adopted statutes or regulations requiring that exposure to hazardous substances be disclosed to the state or a potential purchaser prior to the closure, sale, or transfer of property. Failure to comply with notice or clean up requirements result in severe penalties for the seller.

## 3) Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Disclosure Requirements

The SEC requires corporations to identify and report contingent environmental liabilities. Companies must evaluate their environmental exposure and develop reasonable estimates of compliance costs and any associated insurance coverage that might help to reduce these contingent liabilities.

## 4) United States Common Law

Parties may be held responsible for activities resulting in environmental harm under U.S. common law theories of nuisance, trespass, negligence and strict liability. Most actions brought under these common law theories are adjudicated in individual state courts.

## The EPA Carrying Out the Law

Among the environmental laws enacted by Congress through which the EPA carries out these efforts are:

1948 Federal Water Pollution Control Act (also known as the Clean Water Act)  
1955 Clean Air Act  
1965 Solid Waste Disposal Act  
1970 National Environmental Policy Act  
1970 Pollution Prevention Packaging Act  
1970 Resource Recovery Act  
1974 Safe Drinking Act  
1974 Shoreline Erosion Control Demonstration Act  
1975 Hazardous Materials Transportation Act  
1976 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act  
1976 Toxic Substances Control Act  
1980 Asbestos School Hazard Detection and Control Act  
1984 Asbestos School Hazard Abatement Act  
1986 Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act  
1988 In-Door Radon Abatement Act  
1988 Lead Contamination Control Act  
1988 Shore Protection Act  
1990 National Environmental Education Act

For more information contact the EPA directly.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 3.

## **5. HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE UNITED STATES**

### **The Department of Labor, OSHA and NIOSH**

The Department of Labour is an executive department of the United States government that works to promote the welfare of wage earners. The department seeks to improve the economic position of workers in the United States, to better their working conditions and to advance their opportunities for employment. The Secretary of Labour, a member of the president's Cabinet, heads the department. The president appoints the Secretary subject to the approval of the U.S. Senate.

### **Functions**

The Department of Labour administers federal laws on minimum wages, overtime, and child labour and migrant workers and determines wage rates for work done under government contracts. A Labour Department agency called the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) develops and enforces job safety and health standards for most U.S. industries.

OSHA's mission is to ensure safe and healthful workplaces throughout the United States. Since the agency was created in 1971, workplace fatalities have been cut in

half and occupational injury and illness rates have declined 40 percent. At the same time, U.S. employment has nearly doubled from 56 million workers at 3.5 million worksites to 105 million workers at nearly 6.9 million sites. In fiscal year 2001, OSHA has a staff of 2,370 including 1,170 inspectors and a budget of \$426 million. Sharing the responsibility for oversight of workplace safety and health are 26 states that run their own OSHA programs with 2,948 employees including 1,275 inspectors.

## **NIOSH and OSHA**

### **Different Organizations with Distinct Missions**

The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, which also established the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), established NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Although the same Act of Congress created NIOSH and OSHA, they are two distinct agencies with separate responsibilities. NIOSH is in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is a research agency. OSHA, as mentioned above, is in the U.S. Department of Labour and is responsible for creating and enforcing workplace safety and health regulations. NIOSH and OSHA often work together toward the common goal of protecting worker safety and health.

NIOSH is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The agency is responsible for conducting research on the full scope of occupational disease and injury ranging from lung disease in miners to carpal tunnel syndrome in computer users. In addition to conduction & research, NIOSH investigates potentially hazardous working conditions when requested by employers or employees. It makes recommendations and disseminates information on preventing workplace disease, injury and disability; and NIOSH provides training to occupational safety and health professionals.

On A Purely Construction-related Level:

There are associations and organizations throughout the United States, which cover every aspect of construction and all of the construction divisions from 01 thru to 19.

As an example, under Division 08 (Thermal & Moisture Protection), the list of associations in "The Blue Book of Building and Construction" looks like this:

- Adhesive & Sealant Council (ASC)
- Blow in Blanket Contactors Association (BIBCA)
- Cedar Shake and Shingle Bureau
- EIFS Industry Members Association (EIMA)
- Exterior Insulation Manufacturers Association (EIMA)
- Firestop Contractors International Association (FCIA)
- Insulation Contractors Association of America
- National Association of Waterproofing Contractors (NAWC)

- National Insulation Association
- National Roofing Contractors Association (NRCA)
- North American Insulation Manufacturers Association (NAIMA)
- Polyisocyanurate Insulation Manufacturers Association (PIMA)
- Roof Coating Manufacturers Association (RCMA)
- Roof Consultants Institute (RCI)
- Sealant, Waterproofing & Restoration Institute (SWRI)
- Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Contractors National Association
- Sheet Metal Workers International Association (SMWIA)
- Single-Ply Roofing Institute (SPRI)
- Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE)
- Structured Insulation Panel Association

These associations are charged with advancing the professionalism and competence of their members and to provide the construction industry as a whole with the highest level of workmanship, manufacturing and service.

The associations are responsible for training new workers through apprentice programs and they set standards for worker safety.

Product and installation specifications, standards, testing and government and laboratory approvals also fall under the responsibilities of these groups.

It is safe to say that from the foregoing information on government agencies and trade associations, the United States will continue to be one of the biggest players on the environment, health and safety field.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 4.

## **6. CONSTRUCTION SERVICES**

In order to offer your company's services in any area of the United States there are some issues that require particular investigation. We strongly suggest a call or visit to the local construction association offices could provide you with valuable insight into the local market. The assumption is that the scope of work targeted is of a reasonable size in order to produce a reasonable return on your investment and your efforts.

One of the larger issues is labour. Do the construction projects you are considering require Union labour? What rules guide the labour forces in the area? What are local hourly rates for labour and what expectation can you have for hours of work? Can you bring in your own work force, and if not, is there a guideline for supervisory staff or a percentage of the work force that can be brought in from outside the area? Contact the Department of Labor for more information at [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov).

As an employer you should ensure that your employees are adequately covered for potential medical expenses that may not be covered by OHIP or other Canadian domestic coverage. Currently a worker who is an Ontario resident, and whose usual place of employment is in Ontario, is automatically covered for up to six months while temporarily working outside Ontario. Coverage may be extended on application from the employer. The time limits for coverage may change in the near future. For up to date information visit the WSIB website at [www.wsib.on.ca](http://www.wsib.on.ca).

Another issue is the tendering or bidding process. Most likely the local association is knowledgeable of, or perhaps even involved in, the tender/bidding process. In some states you will need a local license and this may require not only an application but also taking a test to ensure knowledge and competency. Don't be surprised if there is a requirement for any bid deposits or bonding to be issued from an American financial institution. Contact Associated General Contractors of America for contact information for local associations.

Further information on tendering is available from various government websites as listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 5.

Permits, their costs and how they are acquired, again will change from state to state. The time it will take to submit, process and issue an application, not to mention what is required in order to submit the application in the first place, should be carefully investigated prior to the decision to enter a market. *The Permit Place* gives all the sources for those who issue permits by state, county and local jurisdictions - see [www.permitplace.com](http://www.permitplace.com).

Another consideration is to build a file of sub-contractors and suppliers. These contacts and accounts need to be at least investigated prior to bidding any work. What are their payment terms? What can you expect in terms of delivery of product? In other areas, such as exporting products, much of the legwork can be done from Ontario. When you are providing services it is a good idea to spend some time in the area you are considering in order to better understand the local market, issues and regulations necessary to perform your service in the area.

There is a section in this document on Partnerships and Strategic Alliances. Those companies that already provide similar or complementary services could be invaluable to someone coming into the area. How long a project of a certain type would take to build in Ontario may be greatly different from the area you are considering. How does the climate; the temperature and rainfall, come into play? While investigating your potential sub-contractors and suppliers discuss working in the area and compare notes on similar projects that you are experienced in.

The contact information for many of these organizations are listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 5.

## 7. EXPORT FINANCING

Often the level of success a company may attain when entering into export transactions can be positively affected by financing the transactions. A number of factors need to be considered:

- Are credit facilities available to the buying customer?
- Are credit facilities available to the supplier/exporter?
- Relative interest rates for the different currencies
- Credit appetite of financial institutions

An exporter should know the different options available to them prior to implementing a marketing strategy. Being able to sell your product or service with credit terms available to your customer can provide a competitive advantage. Also, having credit facilities in place to finance the production of, and delivery of your product can allow you, the supplier, to expand in the export marketplace quicker, with less risk.

### **Financing Your Export** *(Forms of Financing Available to your Customer)*

#### **Short Term Financing:** (Less than 1 year)

- Letters of Credit
- Bills of Exchange
- Trade Acceptance Drafts
- Factoring
- Term Financing
- Open Account

**Letters of Credit:** L/C's are issued by a bank at the request of the importer, in favour of an exporter/supplier. The buyer's bank obligates itself to pay the supplier once the supplier has complied with all of the terms of the order. The bank has supplied the credit to the buyer and pays their obligations, thus eliminating the credit risk that would normally be incurred by the supplier.

**Bills of Exchange:** Issued by a buyer in favour of an exporter/supplier. Bill of Exchange is either payable on demand (sight draft) or has a future date of payment providing buyer with payment terms (time draft), but gives supplier comfort in knowing when payment will actually be made. In case of a time draft, supplier maintains credit risk, unless an allowance is made providing supplier the ability to sell the time draft to a third party, upon receipt, at a discount.

**Trade Acceptance Drafts (TAD™):** Trademarked instrument of Actrade Capital Canada Inc. Issued by a buyer in favour of an exporter/supplier. TADs also have a future date of payment providing buyer with payment terms, but Supplier knows that TADs have been issued against a credit facility granted by Actrade, and that Actrade will purchase the TADs that have been issued, thus providing supplier with immediate payment. This option eliminates credit risk.

**Factoring:** A supplier invoices the customer under normal open account terms (see below). The supplier then sells the accounts receivable to independent third party finance company (a "factor"). The factor provides a portion of the debt (60% to 80%) as an advance and takes on collection responsibilities with the customer. The balance (less the factor's fee) is then paid when the customer pays the factor in full. In many cases, the supplier maintains credit risk until factor is paid in full.

**Term Financing:** Financial institution provides a specific credit facility to a buyer to be used to finance purchases from a specific supplier. Buyer agrees in to make required payments, under agreed upon payment terms, using this facility. Supplier maintains short-term credit risk, but is generally paid in a timely manner.

**Open Account:** The simplest form of financing. Upon delivery of goods or completion of services, supplier invoices customer with a stipulated payment period. Buyer agrees in principal to pay within this payment term, however this can be risky for the supplier, especially in international transactions. The exporting company is financing their customer and assuming all credit risk.

**Medium/Long Term Financing:**

(Medium term 1 to 5 year - Long term over 5 years)

- Forfeiting
- Project Financing
- Buyer Credits
- Purchase Order Financing
- EDC Financing

**Forfeiting:** Buying customers issue promissory notes to supplier with payment terms of 1 to 5 years. The supplier's bank agrees to purchase these notes, at a discount and non-recourse, thus providing immediate funds and eliminating credit risk.

**Project Financing:** A loan provided by banks through their international trade divisions. Supplier secures a payment or series of payments from the cash flow on a sale that is expected to be completed in the future. Banks need to be secure with the supplier's ability to complete the project, as well as the buyer's ability to pay once the project is completed.

**Buyer Credits:** Funds are loaned directly to the foreign buyer allowing them to issue periodic payments to the supplier. These are generally put in place on large turnkey projects or when financing purchase or large quantity of capital goods.

**Purchase Order Financing:** A financial institution will look at the strength of purchase orders issued to a supplier by a buyer and lend working capital to the supplier, as required, to complete the orders. However, in most cases suppliers are still responsible to collect from their customers directly and retain credit risk. Financial institution has merely provided the capital to allow the supplier to facilitate the orders.

**EDC Financing:** The Export Development Corporation has a mandate to promote Canadian exports. They provide credit insurance to exporters who wish to sell to their customers on an open account basis but need to reduce the associated credit risk. The

EDC may also entertain making guarantees to banks to support international trade, thus providing funds to foreign buyers of Canadian-made products and assuming repayment risks that may otherwise lay with the exporter.

### **Where to Find Financing**

**Chartered Banks (International Trade Divisions):** Letters of Credit, Bills of Exchange, Forfeiting, Project Financing and Buyer Credits.

**Export Development Corporation (EDC):** Accounts Receivable Insurance, plus many transaction specific trade finance products.

**Canadian Commercial Corporation:** Purchase Order Financing

**i-Trade Finance:** Bills of Exchange, Purchase Order Financing

**Actrade Capital Canada Inc.:** Trade Acceptance Draft (TADs), Bills of Exchange

**Northstar Trade Finance Inc.:** Term Financing (plus Floorplanning)

The contact information for many of these organizations is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 6.

### **Terms of Payment**

***(How and when do you want to be paid?)***

Producing and delivering your product or service is not the final step in evaluating export success. You need to be paid. There are factors that need to be considered when entering into export transactions that may not apply in domestic business. Being paid in a timely manner may affect your cash flow and credit risk, but may also affect the financing you; the exporter may have in place.

There are a number of methods of payment that can be utilized to complete export transactions:

- Cash in Advance (Prepayment)
- Letters of Credit
- Cash on Delivery (COD)
- Trade Acceptance Drafts
- Bills of Exchange
- Open Account
- Consignment
- Barter

**Cash in Advance:** Buyer provides supplier with full payment in advance of receipt of any goods or services delivered. No risk to supplier; immediate payment required from buyer.

**Letters of Credit:** Buyer receives payment in full from bank upon completion of delivery of goods or services. No risk to supplier, assuming delivery completed as agreed. Immediate payment required from buyer.

**Cash on Delivery:** Buyer provides supplier with full payment upon receipt of all goods or services delivered. Limited risk to supplier; immediate payment required from buyer.

**Trade Acceptance Drafts:** Buyer issues Trade Acceptance Draft(s), made payable to supplier, upon delivery of goods or services. Drafts are post-dated to future date buyer wished to actually pay current invoices. Supplier accepts drafts as payment in full and sells drafts to Actrade Capital Canada Inc. for immediate payment, at a COD discount. Limited risk to supplier. Credit terms granted to buyer (deferred payment).

**Bills of Exchange:** Buyer issues a draft to supplier against current outstanding invoices. In case of a time draft, supplier holds notes until due date and cashes them at bank upon maturity. Supplier holds credit risks until draft is cashed, with buyer establishing payment terms. In case of a sight draft, note can be cashed upon receipt - thus reducing supplier's credit risk - with buyer giving up payment terms.

**Open Account:** Upon delivery of goods or services, supplier issues invoice to buyer with specified payment terms. Buyer pays supplier directly. Supplier maintains all credit risk and collection responsibility and finances their customer's purchase.

**Consignment:** Supplier (exporter) delivers goods to buyer. Buyer has acquired goods for resale to their customers. Exporter is not paid until buyer has completed their sale with their resulting customer.

**Barter:** A trade arrangement in which an exporter is not paid for goods or services delivered. Sale to buyer is conditional upon a reciprocal purchase by the exporter. Instead of being paid cash for the shipment, the exporter receives products or services in return from the customer.

### **Financing for the Exporter**

In addition to traditional bank financing, there are other specialty finance programs available to assist the exporter in getting their product or service to market.

#### **Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC):**

Owned and operated by the Canadian government, the CCC has a mandate to assist Canadian companies in expanding their export business.

The CCC provides Canadian exporters with a range of services, which expands their access to new opportunities and increases their ability to compete for and land export sales. For example, a Canadian company can bid for and land a purchase order for a large foreign order - an order that would normally be too large for the exporter to complete under their current cash flow. The CCC will look at the strength of the purchase order and, if acceptable, will provide a government guarantee for a loan to be made to the exporter to allow them to facilitate the order.

The contact information for many of these organizations is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 6.

## 8. THE NORTH AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (NAFTA)

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) entered into force in Canada, the United States and Mexico on January 1, 1994. Designed to foster increased trade and investment among the partners, the NAFTA contains an ambitious schedule for tariff elimination and reduction non-tariff barriers, as well as comprehensive provisions on the conduct of business in the free trade area. These include disciplines on the regulation of investments, services, intellectual property, competition and the temporary entry of businesspersons.

In the broad economic picture, Canadian producers are better able, under the NAFTA, to realize their full potential by operating in a larger, more integrated and efficient North American economy. Consumer's benefit from this heightened competition with better products, services and prices. While it is difficult to isolate the precise effects of any trade agreement on jobs and growth, it is clear that the NAFTA has had a significant positive impact on the Canadian economy. Trade and investment between Canada, Mexico and the United States has increased substantially since the NAFTA was implemented in 1994, with total merchandise trade across North America surpassing \$1,084 billion in 2000 (Source: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade). Canada's merchandise trade with its NAFTA partners has also risen sharply. In 2000, two-way trade in goods and services with the United States grew by 11.7% from \$626.7 billion in 1999 to \$700 billion in 2000. Approximately \$1.9 billion in goods and services cross the Canada/U.S. border each day. For more information visit: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/eet/state-of-trade-e.asp>

While the vast majority of trade and investment among the three NAFTA countries flows freely across borders, some disagreements are bound to arise in such a large and diverse trading relationship. The NAFTA created an impartial, rules-based system to resolve disputes between the partners. On the whole, these procedures have worked remarkably well, lending stability, predictability and clarity to the conduct of business across North America. Canada is making full use of these provisions, and took action or was a respondent in a number of cases involving NAFTA procedures in 1998.

In reality, NAFTA is a 2,000-page contract that lists in scrupulous detail the new conditions and requirements for trade in North America. Experts call it the "most comprehensive free trade pact (short of the common market) ever negotiated between regional trading partners, and the first reciprocal free trade pact between a developing country (Mexico) and industrial countries (the United States and Canada)". Far from a simple proclamation of "free" trade in North America, the NAFTA document and tariff schedules are an exhaustive contractual agreement organized into eight parts, each divided into chapters, articles and paragraphs.

- Part one outlines objectives and scope.
- Part two lists rules for goods trade in general and for agriculture, energy, textiles and apparel, and auto industry specifically.
- Part three addresses technical barriers to trade.
- Part four establishes guidelines for government procurement trade.
- Part five deals with cross-border trade in services and investment, outlines

- rules of competition for domestic industries and conditions for temporary entry by citizens conducting business.
- Part six tackles intellectual property, extending patent and other protections far beyond any previous bilateral or multilateral agreement.
  - Part seven contains institutional provisions for settling trade disputes between the three countries.
  - Part eight describes how other countries may become parties to NAFTA, and outlines administrative framework; it states that any country may withdraw from the agreement by providing six-month's notice.

NAFTA breaks new ground in services and investment trade. Essentially, North American providers and investors must receive the same treatment across borders as member nations' domestic firms would receive. Some exceptions are spelled out - for example, Mexico's energy sector and Canada's cultural industries - and NAFTA includes a transition period for liberalizing services and investment trade. But Canada and the United States have experienced strong service sector growth in recent years, and will move across borders as quickly as NAFTA allows. Access to federal government contracts in a three countries is also expanded.

### **General Provisions**

**Tariffs and Quotas (Market Access)** - The U.S., Canada and Mexico will eliminate tariffs and quotas on goods largely produced in North America with some tariffs removed immediately and others involving more sensitive goods phased out gradually, with tariffs eliminated by the end of fifteen years. At the time of NAFTA adoption, Mexican tariffs on U.S. goods averaged 10 percent compared to U.S. average on Mexican goods of 4 percent.

**Investment** - U.S./Canada/Mexico entities investing in any of the three countries will be treated no less favorably than domestic investors of any country, with some exceptions. This is referred to as "national treatment" for investors. The United States already was relatively open to foreign investors, prior to NAFTA, as was Canada, with a few more exceptions. NAFTA nations are prohibited from imposing "performance requirements" in connection with investments, including specified export levels, minimum domestic content, preferences for domestic sourcing and similar outside investment mandates.

**Cross-Border Services Trade** - North American countries are prohibited from discriminating against service providers from another NAFTA nation, with some exceptions. Countries are encouraged to adopt objective licensing criteria for service providers and to recognize licenses from other NAFTA countries.

**Product and Safety Standards** - NAFTA countries retain the right to adopt and enforce their own technical and safety standards, but are encouraged to use levels of protection reflecting the best available scientific information. Standards are not to be used as unnecessary obstacles to trade, and the three countries will work toward compatibility where possible.

**Government Procurement** - Specific dollar levels are set above which federal government procurements are open on a nondiscriminatory basis for companies from all three nations, exempting national security-related procurements and providing for

a ten-year phase out of Mexican restrictions on purchases by its government-owned energy industry.

**Temporary Entry** - While not creating a common market for the movement of labour between NAFTA nations, temporary entry for citizens of the three countries in doing business is provided, including business visitors, traders, intra-company transferees, and certain professionals.

**Dispute Settlement**- Each NAFTA country is given an equal voice in trade disputes; limiting unilateral action by any one country in response to perceived trade violations. Procedures are outlined to settle disputes by consultation, referral to the Free Trade Commission (comprised of each country's trade secretary or minister), or referral to bi-national or tri-national panels.

**Anti-dumping (AD) & Countervailing & (CV) Duty Matters** - NAFTA nations retain their AD and CV laws used in combating or offsetting undue imports resulting from below-cost pricing or export subsidies by another country. Bi-national panels must review actions proposed under these laws.

NAFTA is a "new, improved and expanded version" of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) adopted five years earlier. FTA provisions liberalizing trade and investment were carried forward to NAFTA, but the latter goes further, including protection of intellectual property and coverage of transportation services. NAFTA also pinpoints barriers that distort investment trade such as requirements for specific local inputs.

Envisioned under NAFTA is a three-nation, continental trading alliance that:

- Stretches from the Yukon to the Yucatan Peninsula
- Enables the freer cross-border exchange of goods and services produced throughout North America and of investment capital
- Signals increased cooperation and collaboration in other areas, including environmental protection, infrastructure development, labour relations and workplace standards - because as economic interdependency grows, so does the need for broader concurrence.

Advocates for NAFTA argue that it will provide an area for member-nation businesses to test their wings in the rapidly developing global economy; if they can compete with each other more directly, they might become more competitive in worldwide markets.

NAFTA, or Free Trade, does not mean that Canadian products can be used automatically in all U.S. and State Government projects. The "Buy America Act", which predates NAFTA, is still in force on many Federally funded projects. More information can be obtained at [www.canadianembassy.or21sell2us2ov/1ibrarv1construction.html](http://www.canadianembassy.or21sell2us2ov/1ibrarv1construction.html).

For more information about NAFTA contact the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table One - Section Seven.

## 9. STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Companies new to exporting, as well as established exporters, can take advantage of new markets and achieve business goals through Strategic Alliances. The advantages are generally shorter lead-times, shared risks and resources, and drawing on expertise of organizations familiar with the targeted geographic areas. But in exploring the Strategic Alliance business model, several questions must be considered:

- Define a "Strategic Alliance"
- Why form an Alliance
- Is there assistance in finding Alliance partners?

**Define a Strategic Alliance** - Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) defines a Strategic Alliance as "a formal, mutually agreed upon, commercial collaboration between companies. While partners of the Alliance pool exchange and/or integrate selected business resources for mutual benefit, they remain separate, entirely independent businesses."

There are many questions to be considered when contemplating a Strategic Alliance. They take many forms and are sometimes very complex. They can involve everything from simple joint-marketing programs to joint-equity ventures.

The biggest challenge in forming a strong alliance is finding and selecting the right partner. For assistance, the best resources are the websites for the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) and Ontario Exports Inc.

The contact information for these organizations is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 8.

Government representatives have the international contacts, knowledge, and information on how to locate and evaluate potential agents and distributors in export markets. Foreign representation such as agents and distributors should be carefully screened and interviewed. But remember they are also reviewing you and your product line. Here is a list of what each is looking for.

What should you expect from a potential Alliance partner?

- Strong market knowledge, local, national, variations
- Import knowledge of your product type
- No competitive products
- Ability to cover territory - urban or rural
- Timely payment as per agreements
- Adequate warehousing capabilities
- Strong Administration support
- Ability to prepare marketing plans and sales forecasts
- Market research and competitive analysis - SWOT
- Verify pricing assumptions and calculations
- Prepare advertising and promotional campaigns
- Clear understanding of any termination clauses in contract

- Visits to production facilities for product updates
- Capable of providing accurate verbal and written translations

What will potential Alliance partner expect from you?

- Exclusivity in writing
- Legal representation for patent and trademark protection
- Top quality, trouble free, warranted goods
- Shipping services - packaging, labels, documents
- Competitive Pricing
- Payment terms - establish credit rating
- Advertising and promotional literature
- New and modified products
- Training materials - manuals, videos, slides
- Timely updates, announcements, newsletters
- Periodic visits from senior company executives
- Sales conference attendance

## 10. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BUSINESS SIDE OF EXPORTING

### **Business Number - Importer/Exporter Account Number**

All Canadian businesses exporting on a commercial basis must obtain a business number in order to account for their goods. Canada Customs and Revenue Agency uses this number to identify a business and to process Customs accounting documents. Application forms are available from all Canada Customs and Revenue Agency Customs offices that clear commercial shipments, and from Business Window sites, where you may also submit completed forms. For further information, visit Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's web site or contact the nearest Canada Customs and Revenue Agency Business Window Office.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 9.

### **Automated Customs Information Service (ACIS)**

ACIS is an automated telephone service providing information on customs-related topics such as: personal importing; travellers' exemptions; Visitor Rebate Program - Export Validation; commercial importing and exporting; currency exchange rates; postal importing and refunds; CANPASS; Free Trade Agreements (North American, Israel, and Chile); customs news and current events specific to each calling area. Callers can access ACIS or for further information, visit Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's web site.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 9.

### **Reporting of Exports**

Using Form B13A, Export Declaration, exporters must report commercial shipments valued at \$2,000 or more that are shipped to a foreign country other than the United States, as well as any goods being shipped through the United States to another country. Exporters must also submit a permit or certificate when shipping controlled,

regulated or prohibited goods, see the following information on Exports of Prohibited and Controlled Goods below. For further information on reporting of exports, contact your nearest Canada Customs and Revenue Agency Trade Administration Services Office, or visit Statistics Canada's Canadian Automated Export Declaration web site.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 9.

### **Requirements for Imports and Exports of Prohibited and Controlled Goods**

Some government departments prohibit certain goods from entering or leaving Canada. Certain other goods are controlled, meaning that permits, certificates, labeling or authorizations from a federal department are needed before the goods can be released by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, which holds them until the importer or exporter meets all the requirements. For more information, you may visit the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's Internet site to download and consult a partial list of the D19 series of Customs Memorandums.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 9.

### **Export Permits**

Export Permits are required when the destination is a country on the Area Control List or when the goods are on the Export Control List. The Export Controls Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade provides assistance to exporters in determining if export permits are required and publishes brochures and Notices to Exporters that are freely available on request.

For further information, contact the Export Controls Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 9.

### **For more in-depth information about the Business of Exporting please visit:**

Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre (COBSC)

COBSC is the information gateway for Ontario business to access federal and provincial programs and services for business, they can help you find answers to your business start-up, business growth, and exporting questions in several ways.

The contact information is listed in the Reference chapter - Table 1 - Section 9.

## 11. REFERENCES

### Table One - Listing of Resources Useful to Exporters

#### Section One - Export Strategies

**Export Source:** Team Canada Trade Network **Website:** [www.exportsource.gc.ca](http://www.exportsource.gc.ca)

**Ontario Exports Inc.:** Export agency of the Ontario Provincial Government  
**Website:** [www.ontario-canada.com](http://www.ontario-canada.com)

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT):**  
**Website:** [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

#### Section Two - Codes and Standards

List of organizations responsible for Codes and Standards used in the construction industry:

Organization	State	Tel	Fax	
International Code Council- ICC	Virginia	(703) 931-4533	(703) 379-1546	<a href="http://www.intl.org">www.intl.org</a>
Building Officials and Code Administrators - BOCA	Illinois	(800) 214-4321	(800) 214-7167	<a href="http://www.bocai.org">www.bocai.org</a>
International Conference of Building Officials - ICBO	California	(800) 284-4406	(888) 329-4226	
Southern Building Code Congress International - SBCCI	Alabama	(205) 591-1853	(205) 591-0775	
American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers - ASHRAE	Georgia	(404) 636-8400	(404) 321-5478	
American National Standard Institute – ANSI	Washington	(202) 293-8020	(202) 293-9287	<a href="http://www.ansi.org">www.ansi.org</a>
National Evaluation Services Inc. - NES	Virginia	(713)931-2187	(713)931-6505	<a href="http://www.nateval.org">www.nateval.org</a>
National Institute of Standards and Technology -NIST		(310) 975-6478		<a href="http://www.nist.gov">www.nist.gov</a>
International Standards Organization -ISO				<a href="http://www.iso.ch">www.iso.ch</a>
Construction Specifications Institute -CSI				<a href="http://www.csinet.org">www.csinet.org</a>
American Concrete Institute - ACI	Michigan			<a href="http://www.aci-nt.org">www.aci-nt.org</a>
The Masonry Society - TMS	Colorado	(303) 939-9700	(303) 541-9215	<a href="http://www.masonrysociety.org">www.masonrysociety.org</a>
US Department of Transportation	Wash., DC	(202) 366-4000		<a href="http://www.dot.gov">www.dot.gov</a>
Department of Forestry				
Portland Cement Association - PCA	Illinois	(847) 966-6200	(847) 966-9781	<a href="http://www.portcement.org">www.portcement.org</a>
Federal Highway Administration – FHWA (DOT)	Wash., DC	(202) 366-6765	(202) 366-3077	<a href="http://www.fhwa.dot.gov">www.fhwa.dot.gov</a>
Precast / Prestressed Concrete Institute - PCI		(312) 786-0300		<a href="mailto:Info@pci.org">Info@pci.org</a>
National Ready Mixed Concrete Association - NRMCA	MD	(301) 587-1400	(301) 585-4219	
Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute –	Illinois	(847) 517-1200	(847) 517-1206	<a href="mailto:Info@crsi.org">Info@crsi.org</a>

CRSI				
American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials - AASHTO	Wash., DC	(202) 624-5800	(202) 624-5806	<a href="mailto:Info@ashto.org">Info@ashto.org</a>
American Society for Testing Materials - ASTM		(610) 832-9585	(610) 832-9555	<a href="http://www.astm.org">www.astm.org</a>
UL of Canada	Toronto	(800)463-6852 (416)757-3611	(416) 757-9540	<a href="http://www.ulc.ca">www.ulc.ca</a>
Underwriters Laboratory - UL	Illinois	(847) 272-8800	(847) 272-8129	<a href="mailto:Northbrook@us.ul.com">Northbrook@us.ul.com</a>
Underwriters Laboratory - UL	New York	(631) 271-6200	(631) 271-8259	<a href="mailto:Melville@us.ul.com">Melville@us.ul.com</a>

### **Section Three - Environmental**

Environmental Protection Agency

**Website:** <http://www.epa.gov>

### **Section Four - Health & Safety**

Occupational Safety & Health Administration

**Website:** <http://www.osha.gov>

Centers for Disease Control and Protection

**Website:** <http://www.cdc.gov>

### **Section Five - Construction Services**

Department of Labor

**Website:** <http://www.dol.gov>

WSIB

**Website:** <http://www.wsib.on.ca>

Associated General Contractors of America

**Website:** <http://www.agc.org>

The Permit Place

**Website:** <http://www.permitplace.com>

The Commerce Business Daily

**Website:** <http://www.cbdnet.gpo.gov>

State Bidding Opportunities

**Website:** <http://www.fedmarket.com>

Government Commerce Network

**Website:** <http://www.govcommerce.net>

Federal Business Opportunities

**Website:** <http://www.fedbizopps.gov>

Construction Dodge Report

**Website:** <http://www.fwdodge.construction.com>

## **Section Six - Export Financing**

### **Government Export and Financing Resources**

**Export Development Corporation:** Accounts Payable Insurance, plus many transaction-specific trade finance products.

**Website:** [www.edc-see.ca](http://www.edc-see.ca)

**Canadian Commercial Corporation:** Provides various export financing services.

**Website:** [www.ccc.ca](http://www.ccc.ca)

### **Other Trade Financing Resources**

**Actrade Capital Canada Inc. (TCA member):** Utilizing Trade Acceptance Drafts provides short-term (under 6 months) financing of export transactions. Buyer in a trade transaction is granted payment terms through Actrade, while supplier is paid COD.

*(Note: Can also be used for Canadian domestic trade transactions)*

**Website:** [www.actrade.ca](http://www.actrade.ca)

**i-Trade Finance Inc.:** Offers guarantee of payment under purchase orders written to the exporter on behalf of the foreign buyer. It confirms the availability of financing for the goods or services purchased, thereby assuring the exporter that payment will be made.

**Website:** [www.itfi.net](http://www.itfi.net)

**Northstar Trade Finance Inc.:** Finances large-ticket export sales transactions with repayment terms of one to five years. Available in two distinctive products: Term Finance and Floor Plan Finance.

**Website:** [www.northstar.ca](http://www.northstar.ca)

## **Section Seven - NAFTA**

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

**Website:** <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca>

## **Section Eight - Strategic Alliances**

DFAIT Website: [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

Ontario Exports Website: [www.ontario-canada.com](http://www.ontario-canada.com)

## **Section Nine - FAQ**

### **Business Number - Importer/Exporter Account Number**

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's web site at <http://www.ccradarc.gc.ca/formspubs/menu-e.html> or contact the nearest Canada Customs and Revenue Agency Business Window Office.

**Automated Customs Information Service (ACIS)**

Callers can access ACIS free of charge throughout Canada by calling 1-800-461-9999. For further information, visit Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's web site at <http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/eservices/acis/menu-e.html>

**Reporting of Exports**

Visit Statistics Canada's Canadian Automated Export Declaration web site at <http://www.statcan.ca/english/exports/index.htm>.

**Requirements for Imports and Exports of Prohibited and Controlled Goods**

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's Internet site at <http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/menu/EmenuKCT.html> to download and consult a partial list of the D19 series of Customs Memorandums.

**Export Permits**

Export Controls Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade at (613) 996-2387, fax your request to (613) 996-9933 or visit DFAIT's web site at [http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/~eicb/epd\\_home.htm](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/~eicb/epd_home.htm).

**For more in-depth information about the Business of Exporting please visit:**

Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre (COBSC)

Tel: (416) 954-4636 or 1-800 567-2345

Fax: (416) 954-8597

Team Canada Trade Enquiries 1-888-811-1119

Info-FAX: (416) 954-8555 or 1-800-240-4192

Web site <http://www.cbosc.org/ontario>

## **TABLE TWO - Government Export Resources**

**Ontario Exports Inc.:** Export agency of the Ontario Provincial Government. Website has extensive information on planning and implementing an export strategy.

*Website:* [www.ontario-canada.com](http://www.ontario-canada.com)

**Canada-Ontario Business Service Centre (COBSC):** Gateway for Ontario companies to access federal and provincial programs and services for business.

*Website:* [www.cbosc.org/ontario](http://www.cbosc.org/ontario)

**Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT):** Canadian Consulate General offices around the world provide wide range of market information to Canadian companies wishing to expand their export business into specific geographic areas.

*Website:* [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

**Program for Export Market Development (PEMD):** The Canadian federal government's international business development program.

*Website:* [www.infoexport.gc.ca](http://www.infoexport.gc.ca)

**Export Source:** Team Canada Trade Network's online resource for export information. Single access point for trade-related government departments.

*Website:* [www.exportsource.gc.ca](http://www.exportsource.gc.ca)

**Strategis:** Provides information on markets, trade, technology, and research and business management.

*Website:* [www.strategis.ic.gc.ca](http://www.strategis.ic.gc.ca)

**Strategis Guide to Exporting:** <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/sc01071e.html>

### **TABLE THREE - OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES**

[Bank of Canada](http://www.bankofcanada.ca/)

<http://www.bankofcanada.ca/>

The Bank of Canada does not carry out ordinary banking business, nor does it accept deposits from the general public. But it does influence the economic circumstances of businesses and individuals across the country.

[Business Development Bank of Canada](http://www.bdc.ca) [www.bdc.ca](http://www.bdc.ca)

The Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) offers innovative financial services that address the unique needs of today's small and medium-sized businesses.

[Canada Customs and Revenue Agency](http://www.ccr-aadrc.gc.ca/) <http://www.ccr-aadrc.gc.ca/>

Site provides on-line access to most of Canada Customs and Revenue Agency's public information, including guides, brochures, and forms.

[Canada NewsWire Ltd.](http://www.newswire.ca)

[www.newswire.ca](http://www.newswire.ca)

A full-text news release service providing its clients with the keys to successful communications programs.

[Canadian Commercial Corporation](http://www.ccc.ca)

[www.ccc.ca](http://www.ccc.ca)

(CCC)

CCC can facilitate access to commercial sources of pre-shipment financing for export sales through our Progress Payment Program (PPP) for small and medium-sized enterprises. With CCC's involvement in your deal, your bank will normally be prepared to provide funds beyond your regular line of credit.

[Canadian Exporters Catalogue](http://www.worldexport.com)

[www.worldexport.com](http://www.worldexport.com)

The Canadian Exporters Catalogue helps Canadian companies market themselves cost-effectively on a global scale by providing qualified foreign buyers with information about Canadian products and services.

[Canadian Intellectual Property Office](http://cipo.gc.ca/) <http://cipo.gc.ca/>

Search for registered patents, trademarks and copyrights.

[Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters](http://www.the-alliance.com)

[www.the-alliance.com](http://www.the-alliance.com)

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters provides an on-line directory of the who, what, where and how of Canadian manufacturers, exporters and distributors.

[Canadian Missions Abroad](#)

[www.infoexport.gc.ca](http://www.infoexport.gc.ca)

The Trade Commissioner Service of DFAIT currently has over 125 offices around the world. Contact them here.

[COBSC](#)

[www.cbosc.org/ontario](http://www.cbosc.org/ontario)

Canada Ontario Business Service Centre (COBSC), provides cost-effective business information easily accessible to the small business community in Ontario.

[Commodity Classification Codes](#)

<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/schedules/b/index.html>

Searchable Commodity Classification Codes- Schedule B.

[County and City Data Books](#)

<http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/ccdb>

This resource provides access to the electronic demographic information from the USA 1988 and 1994 County and City Data Books.

[Currency converter](#)

[www.xe.net/ucc](http://www.xe.net/ucc)

Site featuring the Web's most popular currency converter.

[DFAIT](#)

[www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

[Export Development Corporation](#)

[www.edc.ca](http://www.edc.ca)

EDC is a financial institution that helps Canadian businesses grow and prosper through exports and international investment. EDC's can help exporters compete in more than 200 countries. EDC is a Crown corporation that operates as a commercial financial institution.

[ExportSource](#)

[www.exportsource.gc.ca](http://www.exportsource.gc.ca)

ExportSource is "Team Canada" Trade Network's on-line resource for export information providing a single access point from all trade-related government departments.

[Government of Canada](#)

<http://canada.gc.ca>

Government of Canada Primary Internet Site (Canada Site) is the Internet electronic access point through which Internet users around the world can obtain information about Canada, its government and its services.

[Metric convertors](#)

[www.worldwidemetric.com/metcal.htm](http://www.worldwidemetric.com/metcal.htm)

Converts data into metric units.

[Ontario Association of Trading Houses](http://www.oath.on.ca) [www.oath.on.ca](http://www.oath.on.ca)

The Ontario Association of Trading Houses (OATH) is a private, non-profit organization representing the trading houses of Ontario involved in export and import of goods and services.

[Ontario Building Products for Export Association](http://www.obpea.com/Association) <http://www.obpea.com/>

Source for building products and services from Ontario.

[Ontario Chamber of Commerce](http://www.occ.on.ca) [www.occ.on.ca](http://www.occ.on.ca)

This site offers a searchable database of members of chambers of commerce and boards of trade, political research and advocacy reporting and a forum to discuss business issues.

[Patent database search](http://www.gibbsgroup.com/patsearch.html) [www.gibbsgroup.com/patsearch.html](http://www.gibbsgroup.com/patsearch.html)

Internet site that searches registered patents.

[Standards Council of Canada](http://www.scc.ca) [www.scc.ca](http://www.scc.ca)

Search the abstracts of over 5,000 National Standards of Canada. Search other foreign and international standards databases, including the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

[STAT - USA](http://www.stat-usa.gov) [www.stat-usa.gov](http://www.stat-usa.gov)

Subscription site. A low-cost business service run by the U.S. Department of Commerce. It is a site for the U.S. business, economic and trade community.

[Statistics Canada](http://www.statcan.ca/start.html) [www.statcan.ca/start.html](http://www.statcan.ca/start.html)

Statistics Canada is the country's national statistical agency, with programs organized into three broad subject matter areas: demographic and social, socio-economic and economic.

[Strategis](http://strategis.ic.gc.ca) <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca>

Strategis - the information resources of Industry Canada is available to you and is dedicated to promote the success of all Canadian businesses at home and abroad.

[Thomas Register](http://www.thomasregister.com) [www.thomasregister.com](http://www.thomasregister.com)

Thomas Register on the Internet is a comprehensive directory of industrial buying and specifying information.

[Trade Show Central](http://www.tscentral.com) [www.tscentral.com](http://www.tscentral.com)

Trade Show Central is a free Internet service providing information on more than 50,000 Trade Shows, Conferences & Seminars.

[Virtual customs office](#)

<http://www.ccra-adrc.gc.ca/menu/EmenuVCO.html>

The Virtual Customs Office site is a prototype of a potential future Internet offering of Revenue Canada