EXPORTING TO CANADA

“Before loading your product on a northbound train,” you need to know about exporting to Canada. A study by the Institute for International Economics states that businesses grow faster and are almost 8.5 percent less likely to go out of business if they export. Yet, less than 1% of America’s 30 million company’s export, which is lower than all other developed countries.

Consider Canada as a starting point for learning to export. The United States and Canada share a connection that most countries do not. Canada does value its close relationship with the United States, but Canada is an international market, with rules and regulations that the people of the United States must follow. One difference between Canada and the United States is that 90% of their products are sold around a few large cities such as Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. So, you might want to look to the wide open provinces using e-commerce and the web.

The top 10 non-agriculture imports to Canada are: computer software, computers and peripherals, telecommunications equipment, pollution control equipment, automobile after-market parts, furniture, medical equipment, electric components, sporting goods, machine tools and metalworking equipment. The top agriculture imports are: fresh vegetables, baked goods, sauces and condiments, breakfast (cereal, pancake mix, dough), pet food (dogs and cats), sugar candy and confectionary, chocolate and chocolate confectionary. Many service-related ventures have no boundaries.

All merchandise sold in North America is required to be accompanied by the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) Certificate of Origin. It must be completed and signed by the exporter in the language of either the exporter or the importer. It covers importing of goods for a 12-month period. NEXUS is a joint program with the CBSA (Canada Border Services Agency) that allows pre-screened shipments quick access to trusted travel lanes at airports, water ways, and land crossings. The NEXUS programs between Canada and the U.S. improves border security and simplifies pre-approved low-risk goods to cross.

Canada has fewer trade barriers to U. S. imports than many other countries, but they still exist. Trade agreements between the U. S. and Canada have eliminated virtually all tariffs on imported goods. However, Canada continues to have specific regulatory requirements on U. S. Imports. Labeling is also an issue since most provinces require imported products to be labeled in both English and French. For more detailed information about trade barriers and other restrictions, visit the U. S. government’s exporting website at www.export.gov.
NAFTA IN THE NEXT CENTURY

Regardless of your political view of NAFTA, few will argue that the pact has raised a level of awareness about North American trade opportunities and has ushered many domestic companies into a global marketplace right in their own backyards. NAFTA really gave globalization a shot in the arm in terms of getting free and open trade options between neighbors.

NAFTA facilitates business with Canada or Mexico, but you still have to globalize your thinking. Each and every country has its idiosyncrasies on how they do business, and as a foreigner going into that marketplace, you either accept them, or have a rude awakening.

Exporting your products to foreign countries is an exciting way to grow your business and take advantage of the Internet’s global audience. But, it raises a number of challenges -- among the most obvious is transporting your products after you sell them. Another big concern is getting paid. However, both Illinois and the U.S. Government have help networks in place. The issues, concerns and logistics are solvable!
KASKASKIA COLLEGE INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONSULTANT

Exporting has become a lucrative activity for many U. S. companies. New and expanded information tools and services make it easier for firms of all sizes to enter the international marketplace. Exporting offers the opportunity to open new markets, broaden customer bases and reduce seasonal fluctuations. The International Trade Center at Kaskaskia College is available to assist companies with formulating a solid export strategy utilizing the skills for Ms. Elizabeth Ahern of Greenville, Illinois who has been retained to provide consultant services in International trade.

Ms. Ahern is a global business leader with over fifteen years of International business experience: market development; sales; marketing/distribution for various industries (including electronics, medical, chemical and pharmaceutical). She is familiar with strategic business development throughout the Americas, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Elizabeth serves on the CIBER (Center for International Business and Education Research) Advisory Council at the University of Illinois, is fluent in Spanish with knowledge of French and Portuguese.

Ms. Ahern is available to assist non-exporting companies to explore possibilities and, also to work with companies already exporting. Services include assisting with logistics questions and transaction details, plus foreign country documentation requirements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT STEVEN GRONER AT THE ILLINOIS INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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