EXPORT America

December 1999 Volume 1 Number 2
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THE FEDERAL SOURCE FOR YOUR GLOBAL BUSINESS NEEDS

Shooting for Gold

Scoring Sales at Global Sporting Events

Trade Events • Latest Export Data • Technical Advice • The Federal Scoop

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December 1999 Volume 1, Number 2 http://exportamerica.doc.gov

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
International Trade Administration

William M. Daley
Secretary of Commerce

David L. Aaron
Under Secretary for International Trade

Daniel Cruise
Director of Public Affairs

Arrow Augerot
Editor

Brendan Mullen
Editorial Intern

Sarah Kellerman
Editorial Intern

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EDITOR'S MEMO

Why is it that a significant percentage

of U.S. exporters sell to only one country? Well, it may be that once a small- or medium-sized business makes a sale to a customer in another country, and learns all the regulations associated with that sale, it seems like too much of an investment to seek out additional opportunities. We at *Export America* know that doing market research and finding trade leads are often daunting tasks for the small businessperson. That is why we created the NEW OPPORTUNITIES section (see pages 18-21)—to provide you with information about new markets and opportunities that you may not have thought about on your own.

This month's feature—*Shooting for Gold: Scoring Sales at Global Sporting Events*—outlines construction, licensing and retail opportunities related to major international sporting competitions, such as the Olympic Games, the Pan American Games and World Cup Soccer. What you may not have realized while watching these events on TV, is that "U.S. businesses are discovering valuable markets and profitable opportunities for supplying goods and services to major international sporting competitions." What's more, the events named in the article are not the only competitions with contract possibilities for U.S. exporters. Most international sporting events have at least some construction and/or licensing opportunities associated with them.

ASK THE TIC (see pages 14-15) also provides assistance for the exporter looking to expand into new markets. This column, dedicated to business travel, provides answers to your questions about how to plan for your trip and how to take your equipment with you.

As you probably already know, the World Trade Organization Ministerial will be meeting this month in Seattle, Washington (November 30-December 3, 1999). What you may not know is why you, the small businessperson, should be interested. Our NEWS FROM COMMERCE section gives you an idea of all the ways that the WTO, and specifically these negotiations, will benefit SMEs (see page 12).

We will see you in the next millennium with our January issue, featuring ways to protect your intellectual property. As always, we look forward to hearing your feedback. Please email your questions and comments to us at Export_America@ita.doc.gov.

Arrow Augerot
Editor

Photo courtesy of International Sports Images

See our NEW OPPORTUNITIES section for market insights.

GLOBAL NEWS LINE

RUSSIA

A **Russian customs decree,** announced June 21, 1999, obliges customs officials to open 95 percent of the cargo imported into Russia. The unpopular rule was introduced in order to detect smuggling and boost duty collections. While it is too soon to measure the impact on trade, it is likely that customs clearance will become lengthier and more expensive.

Russian Central Bank Letter 519, effective March 22, 1999, requires all Russian firms importing goods to deposit the ruble equivalent prepayment at a Russian bank. The deposit is returned to the importer only after the goods have cleared Russian customs, which must be done within 90 days. Russian importers must present an original copy of the customs declaration with the customs office seal as proof of the goods' arrival and clearance by Russian customs. As a result, many Russian importers prefer either to pay foreign suppliers from their offshore accounts in foreign banks or to use a bank guarantee in lieu of prepayment.

POLAND

The Polish Parliament has adopted a **Polish Language Act.** Although the Polish President has not yet signed it into law, this Act has the potential to significantly influence the way in which future business activities are conducted in Poland. Below is a summary of the most important points:

- If one of the parties of a contract is a Pole or Polish legal entity, the language used in mutual legal relations should be Polish. This applies in particular to the names of products and services, advertising, users manuals, product information, conditions of guarantee, invoices, bills and receipts.

- If a Pole or Polish legal entity is a party to a contract that would be performed in Poland, this contract should be written in Polish. Failure to do so will result in unfavorable treatment of the contract, as it won't be considered concluded in writing, and by extension, based on provisions of the Polish Civil Code, will not be recognized as evidence in a court of law.

- Supervision of the performance of the obligations imposed by the Act will be carried out by the Trade Inspection Office and the Office for the Protection of Competition and Consumers.

- Failure to observe the provisions of the Act is punishable by a fine of up to 100,000 Polish zlotys (approximately US$25,000).

- The Act will enter into force six months from the date of its publication.

KAZAKHSTAN

The enforcement deadline on a **new law requiring that all products sold in Kazakhstan be labeled in both the Russian and Kazakh languages** has been delayed until early 2000. Starting February 1, 2000, the import of any goods without dual language labeling will be prohibited. Distribution of any unlabeled goods within Kazakhstan is to be prohibited as of April 1, 2000. The original deadline of October 1, 1999 was extended at the request of a number of importers. Several U.S. companies, particularly in the electronics and pharmaceutical industries, are finding it difficult to translate specialized technical and medical terms into the Kazakh language. For a complete list of goods affected, please contact the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service in Almaty at Almaty.Office.Box@mail.doc.gov.

New amendments to Kazakhstan's subsurface (mining, oil & gas) law went into effect Sept. 1, 1999. Positive changes include the complete elimination of the licensing requirement and the allowance of subsoil rights as pledges, which should allow for improved financing opportunities. Cited as a negative change is a requirement that subsoil rights holders use only Kazakhani goods, products, works and services that meet certain (unspecified) standards in carrying out mineral activities. For services not available in Kazakhstan, foreign services may be used only with permission by the Kazakhstani government. These changes primarily affect new projects. The law specifically provides that the terms of licenses in existence prior to the effective date of the amendments are grandfathered. For more information, please contact the Commercial Service in Almaty at Almaty.Office.Box@mail.doc.gov.

AUSTRALIA

On July 30, 1998, the **Australia New Zealand Food Standards Council (ANZFSC) adopted a standard that would make it illegal to sell any food produced using gene technology** unless an application was first made to the Australia New Zealand Food Authority (ANZFA) and subsequently approved by ANZFSC. The standard prescribes mandatory labeling for foods that contain new and altered genetic material that are not substantially equivalent to their conventional counterparts in any characteristic or property of the food. On August 3, 1999, ANZFSC agreed to extend the standard to require mandatory labeling of all food produced using gene technology.

On October 22, 1999, Australian and New Zealand Health Ministers deferred the adoption of a labeling requirement pending a comprehensive assessment of the economic impact of such a regime, accounting for costs and export implications. It is unlikely that any further action by ANZFSC will be taken until early 2000 or possibly later. Adoption and implementation of any labeling regime is unlikely to occur until 2001 at the earliest.

MALAYSIA

The Government of Malaysia unveiled an election year budget for 2000. It features a 1 percent reduction in across-the-board personal income tax rates, a

10 percent salary hike and bonuses for the country's 880,000 civil servants, tax relief for businesses undergoing debt restructuring, cuts in import tariffs on a number of popular food items and tax incentives to spur bank lending. Analysts see the budget as providing a few extra ringgit in the average citizen's pocket as the Prime Minister's Barisan National Coalition prepares for elections, which must be held by Summer 2000. The budget also allocates approximately US$52 million to a special venture capital fund to finance high technology products.

Of particular interest to U.S. investors is the decision to repeal limitations on dividend payments, the target of American-Malaysian Chamber of Commerce lobbying efforts since the dividend limits were hurriedly passed in the aftermath of the September 1998 imposition of capital controls. The provision's restriction on the repatriation of funds had been a significant irritant to investors.

INDIA

September 22, 1999 was an historic day for Indian industry when the **Industrial Credit & Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) became the first Indian bank in history to list its shares on the New York Stock Exchange** (NYSE). ICICI, a financial institution jointly sponsored by the World Bank and the Government of India, is fast diversifying into banking, capital markets, securities and venture capital. The American Depository Receipt (ADR) issue managed by Morgan Stanley Dean Witter & Co. and Merrill Lynch was oversubscribed six times with a total subscription of US$1.6 billion. The ADR priced at US$9.80 per receipt opened at US$11.25. An interesting fact is that 40 percent of the subscribers to the issue were retail buyers.

BRAZIL

Raymundo Garrido, Brazilian Secretary of Hydro Resources, indicated that the **pending creation of the new National Water Agency (ANA) is expected to be approved by the Brazilian Congress.** Brazil's Water Code dates back to 1934 and deals mostly with the usage of water by hydropower plants. The proposed creation of ANA aims to reduce water pollution and to resolve conflicts among competitive water users. The establishment of a pricing mechanism is expected to yield substantial investment in river clean-ups; in water, wastewater and industrial effluent treatments; and, in water recycling technologies. Secretary Garrido noted that only about 15 percent of Brazil's sewage is treated. However, when ANA and the numerous hydrographic river basin agencies are established, Secretary Garrido estimates that revenues resulting from the water agencies' fees will amount to $1 billion.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Franchising in the Dominican Republic is still a fairly recent phenomenon, but it is rapidly becoming more common. In the past five years, the franchise concept has gained respect and acceptance in the Dominican business community and there are now close to 60 franchises operating in the Dominican market. The largest and fastest growing sector is food franchising, with approximately 20 names present in Santo Domingo and other cities such as Santiago and Puerto Plata. As the food service sector of franchising becomes well established, Dominican entrepreneurs are looking to expand in the areas of retail and service franchises.

CANADA

Canadian government officials have announced combined funding of US$43 million to be directed to **preliminary remediation programs for the Sydney Tar Ponds in Nova Scotia.** Of that amount, approximately US$10 million will be used for administration and assessment, while the balance will be allocated to Phase I remediation and on-site demonstrations. The Sydney Tar Ponds have been described as Canada's worst environmental problem and have been the subject of extensive public and private sector scrutiny over the last 15 years. U.S. companies interested in opportunities related to this project are invited to contact the Commercial Service in Halifax (tel: (902) 429-2482; fax: (902) 429-7960) for the latest information on this remediation project.

MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS

World Bank lending to Latin America and the Caribbean hit a record level of US $7.7 billion in 1999, accounting for an all-time high of 27 percent of the Bank's total worldwide loan commitments. Most of the increase was due to loans made to assist Brazil and Argentina as they responded to the impact of the 1997-98 Asian economic crisis and Russian debt moratorium, and to help with reconstruction after Hurricane Mitch in Central America. The Bank also launched a Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) in 1999, an integrated approach to development focused on results and based on a long-term vision articulated and "owned" by countries. Bolivia and the Dominican Republic are among a dozen of the Bank's client-countries where this new approach is being piloted.

NEED MORE DETAIL?
Ask a Foreign Commercial Officer at one of the Department of Commerce's posts located around the globe. Contact information, including phone, fax and email, is available by calling the Trade Information Center at 1-800-USA-TRADE.

CLEANING UP

THE R.B. MORRISS COMPANY EXPORTS ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO SOLVE WASTE PROBLEMS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

by Jake Bright
Office of Public Affairs

Is it possible to do well by doing good? For Robert B. Morriss of Diamond Bar, California the answer is, "Yes." Mr. Morriss, founder and CEO of R.B. Morriss Company, Inc., signed a deal to turn waste into profit, while cleaning up the environment and aiding food production in Nigeria. Teaming up with the U.S. Department of Commerce's Export Assistance Center (USEAC) in Atlanta and the U.S. Foreign & Commercial Service in Lagos, Nigeria, Morriss participated in the first ever Video Gold Key Service between the U.S. and Nigeria. The Gold Key pairs potential U.S. exporters with interested buyers in foreign markets and can be initiated at any Export Assistance Center (locations and contact information are listed on the back cover).

The R.B. Morriss Company, Inc. specializes in developing bacterial products that convert waste into water, oxygen and fertilizers. In Nigeria, Morriss focused on exporting his "Earth Care Technology." Earth Care is a unique composting process that takes Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and converts it into a nutrient rich compost that, because it can be used on all agricultural applications, is a commercially viable product. The process has important environmental benefits, as well. It shrinks the volume of landfill waste by up to 90 percent, reduces dependence on chemical fertilizers and mitigates the damage done to soil by chemical fertilizers. This technology is especially attractive to agriculture-intensive economies that have waste treatment issues.

Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Commerce

The stage in Lagos, Nigeria for the first ever Video Gold Key Service between the U.S. and Nigeria.

Earth Care attracted Dr. Benjamin Ohiaeri of the Abuja International Diagnostic Center in Nigeria. After a live half-hour satellite presentation on the product by Mr. Morriss, Dr. Ohiaeri was interested. Within just two months of the Gold Key, Morriss had signed a deal with Dr. Ohiaeri for approximately $30 million in the first year.

Dr. Ohiaeri had plans in place to design and build solid waste landfills in nine cities across Nigeria. Morriss proved to have the perfect environmental technology to make the landfill sites more efficient and produce a compost product that would be marketable for agricultural uses. The partnership was especially timely considering the new Nigerian government has acknowledged the need for the latest environmental technologies to improve the living standards of its population.

R.B. Morriss Co., Inc. has frequently targeted foreign markets for its products. The company has used the Commercial Service, in countries such as Malaysia, Egypt and South Africa, to export its environmental waste treatment technologies. Morriss' export success helped his company grow from total revenues of US$400,000 in 1993 to US$4.6 million in 1995. When asked

about the Commercial Service's role in arranging his Nigeria deal, Mr. Morriss said, "We would not be there without [their] assistance...and especially those who helped us in attending the satellite Gold Key. As a small company we often struggle to keep going, but the Commercial Service has gone above and beyond their duty to help us succeed and we really appreciate it."

Morriss plans to continue marketing all of his services abroad. In addition to Earthcare, the company offers products that recycle used oil, treat wastewater and help clean oil spills. He sees great promise for Earth Care as demand in developing countries continues. In these countries, "landfills are filling up, fertilizers are damaging the soil and compost is the only repair," says Morriss. Many countries have difficulty paying the high fees of private waste firms. In addition, the import and use of pesticides depletes foreign reserves, damages soil and excludes goods from export to other countries. Earth Care reduces costs paid for both waste disposal and pesticides, and creates a safe product that helps countries develop. "It is a phenomenal way to look at it, and we did not quite realize its implications, but it helps them out of poverty," says Morriss.

In 1995, R.B. Morriss Company was named an "Exporter of the Year" by the U.S. Small Business Association. The award recognizes businesses that post substantial growth in international sales and derive a significant percentage of their sales through exports. The company continues to live up to this distinction, attending trade events, working closely with the Commercial Service, and signing contracts with foreign firms and governments searching for innovative ways to deal with waste problems. As Robert Morriss says confidently, "Just provide us details about the waste, and we can find a solution." ■

Photo courtesy of R.B. Morriss Company, Inc.

Robert Morriss and Dr. Benjamin Ohiaeri (Center) finalize their contract. Also present is the Hon. Gov. Bola Tinuba of Lagos State.

ARE YOU LOOKING TO EXPORT YOUR GOODS AND SERVICES TO ANOTHER COUNTRY?

The Gold Key Service can help you. Contact your local Export Assistance Center (locations and contact information for the nationwide Commercial Service network are listed on the back cover) or visit the Gold Key website at (www.ita.doc.gov/uscs/uscsgold.html). For more information on the Video Gold Key Service, see the November issue of *Export America*, p. 13. Christina Sharkey, from the US&FCS, contributed to this article.

Where There's Smoke, There's Fire-Lite

Mark Levy's firm doesn't like to keep the fires burning. Then again, that's what Levy's clients expect from his products.

"It's a wonderful feeling to be in this business, because tonight, one of our fire detection products will save someone's life. "We've come a long way since the early 1950s, when fire alarms where essentially heat-based detection systems," Levy said.

Levy, whose father founded Fire-Lite Alarms in 1952, says that today's microprocessor technology enables fires to be detected much earlier, saving more lives and property.

"Strong fire prevention standards not only save lives, but serve as an important attraction for overall business and tourist investment in a country," Clark says. "If you are the operator of a hotel with strong fire codes, that's something travelers will take into account when making business and vacation plans."

Over the years, Fire-Lite/Notifier has utilized the export services of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Middletown, Connecticut Export Assistance Center. The company now has 1,100 employees and 400 independent distributors worldwide with regional offices in Latin America, Canada, Europe, Australia, the Middle East and the Pacific Rim. In 1997, U.S. Commerce Secretary William M. Daley presented the firm with the President's prestigious "E" Award for exporting excellence.

"IT'S A WONDERFUL FEELING TO BE IN THIS BUSINESS, BECAUSE TONIGHT, ONE OF OUR FIRE DETECTION PRODUCTS WILL SAVE SOMEONE'S LIFE."

"These technologies range from infrared heat and photoelectronic detectors to laser and fiber optic systems," he says. "We can monitor the level of fire detection sensitivity of equipment by measuring the effects of smoke, air temperature and dust which adversely affect fire detection capability."

Levy says the new systems are also far superior in that they can measure even levels as low as 1/10 of 1 percent smoke content in a room as compared to 4 percent with older fire alarm systems.

It's a fire detection technology that's going global. About 50 percent of the company's business is now international, says Managing Director George Clark. For example, the firm designed and built a sophisticated fiber-optics system that monitors the key telecommunications network stations in Argentina, and works closely with major facilities such as automotive assembly plants in Brazil and Canada.

The firm also provides security for major airports, monitoring areas such as boarding, hangers, and baggage claims. *Hey, has anyone seen my suitcase?*

Clark says the biggest challenge for Fire-Lite/Notifier is educating overseas governments and businesses about the need for stronger fire prevention measures.

"We've really seen a growth in fire detection technologies that allow our systems to detect fires much earlier than in the past, and the sophistication of these technologies will become even more precise in the future to where we can predict the speed and direction of a fire," Clark says.

So, while Fire-Lite/Notifier works to keeps the heat off its customers, is there any doubt that satisfied clients will continue to fan the flames about the firm's quality reputation? "Our greatest advertising is by word of mouth," says Clark. "We will not compromise safety in the name of price." ■

Photo by PhotoDisc

Curt Cultice is a Public Affairs Specialist in the International Trade Administration.

EXPORT SUPPORT FOR SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES

by Cory Churches
Small Business Program, Trade Development

Thanks to the Internet and e-commerce, our world is getting smaller every day. Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have the potential to be the greatest beneficiaries of this trend, especially when it comes to increasing their customer base by exporting their goods and services.

The International Trade Administration (ITA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce recognizes the importance of small- and medium-sized businesses to the U.S. economy and offers a vast array of programs and services to help them through every stage of the exporting process. One of the ways ITA is trying to assist companies is by following this electronic trend and delivering its services through alternative channels, such as the Internet and email. Below is a brief overview of how ITA can assist small businesses.

THE ITA RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE OF SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESSES TO THE U.S. ECONOMY AND OFFERS A VAST ARRAY OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO HELP THEM THROUGH EVERY STAGE OF THE EXPORTING PROCESS.

HELPING SMES FROM START TO FINISH

GETTING STARTED

If a small business is just getting started exporting, we encourage them to contact the **Trade Information Center (TIC)**, the first stop for exporters who want to obtain information—via phone, Internet or email—on a variety of export questions, ranging from how to get started to how to get paid. The TIC also provides basic export counseling and information on all U.S. Government export assistance programs. Last year, the TIC gave personal assistance to more than 80,000 businesses, 83 percent of which were SMEs.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

For face-to-face, in-depth export assistance such as targeting key markets or exploring trade finance options, please visit the **U.S. Export Assistance Centers (USEAC)**, located in major metropolitan areas throughout the United States. The USEACs combine the resources of Commerce, the Small Business Administration, the Export-Import Bank, and other state and federal agency assistance programs. The Commerce Department's **Export Assistance Centers (EACs)**, located around the country, provide companies with local export promotion assistance. The USEACs and EACs work closely with federal, state, local, public and private organizations to provide the highest level of service possible to help U.S. businesses compete in the global marketplace. To locate your nearest USEAC or EAC, visit the Commercial Service website (http://www.ita.doc.gov/uscs), call 1-800-USA-TRAD(E) or refer to the back cover of Export America.

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

The ITA's **Industry Officers** deliver information and analysis on foreign market conditions and opportunities, export financing options, industry trends, and business and cultural practices by sector. This expertise is not found anywhere else, either inside or outside the U.S. Government. To locate the specific industry officer applicable to your business, contact the TIC at 1-800-USA-TRAD(E) or visit Trade Development's website (www.ita.doc.gov/td).

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Country-specific counseling is available on standards, intellectual property protection, government procurement, and other commercial laws, regulations, and practices; distribution channels, business travel and other market information; opportunities and best prospects for U.S. companies in individual markets; import tariffs, taxes and customs procedures; and, commercial difficulties encountered in doing business abroad. Country

Photo by Chris Conoco

Co-chaired by Secretary Daley, SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez and Canadian Minister for International Trade Sergio Marchi, this first-time event brought together over 200 Canadian and American business leaders for networking, policy discussions and business matching.

counseling is divided by region and personalized assistance is available by calling 1-800-USA-TRAD(E). All of the programs below may be accessed through the USA Trade Center website (http://usatc.doc.gov).

The **Trade Information Center (TIC)** specialists provide counseling and assistance on Asia, Western Europe, Latin America, NAFTA, and Africa and the Near East.

Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States (BISNIS) is the U.S. Government clearinghouse for business information on the Newly Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union (www.bisnis.doc.gov).

Central and Eastern Europe Business Information Center (CEEBIC) is a business facilitation program for U.S. firms interested in expanding into the Central and Eastern European markets (www.mac.doc.gov/eebic/ceebic.htm).

Small business exporters traveling overseas also have access to services provided by U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service Officers in U.S. embassies and consulates in more than 130 countries around the world. Commercial Service Officers develop information about trends and trade barriers in their areas, and they seek out trade and investment opportunities open to U.S. firms. They also provide a range of services to potential exporters traveling abroad, including arranging appointments with prospective clients and government officials.

MAKING CONTACTS ABROAD

TRADE EVENTS

In 1999, through 86 trade missions and more than 500 other promotional events, including trade fairs, catalog events and international buyer shows, the ITA assisted nearly 5,000 American businesses enter new markets overseas. Many of these events were joint ventures with industry groups. Trade Events are an excellent way for companies to get international exposure and make valuable contacts. [See *Ask the TIC*, pages 14-15, for more information on how to access the Export Promotion Calendar. Or, look at our Trade Events section on pages 22-25.]

SUPPORT ALONG THE WAY

The **Advocacy Center** is the "nerve center" of U.S. Government efforts to assist both small and large firms win contracts abroad. Advocacy is essential to assisting U.S. businesses enter the many global markets where playing fields are not level, and where bidding processes are not always as open and transparent as possible.

The **Trade Compliance Center (TCC)** helps U.S. exporters receive the fullest benefits of the more than 300 trade agreements that exist between the U.S. and its trade partners. U.S. businesses may use the TCC's Online "Trade Complaint Hotline" to report a suspected violation of a trade agreement

One of our most recent events was the Canada-U.S.A. Businesswomen's Trade Summit, which brought together more than 200 U.S. and Canadian businesswomen for networking, policy discussions and business matching.

Photo courtesy of the Small Business Program, Trade Development

Photo courtesy of the USDOC

Past and current ISAC 14 members.

or report market access problems. The TCC also maintains a database of trade agreements, accessible through the TCC's website (http://www.mac.doc.gov/tcc). [For more information on the TCC's web services, see *TCC Online Gets a Fresh New Look* and Added Features on pages 33-34.]

CONTRIBUTING YOUR VIEWS

The ITA manages the **Industry Advisory Program** to ensure that trade policy work is relevant to the needs of small- and medium-sized exporters. ITA solicits advice on trade policy development, as well as on continuing negotiations, through its Industry Consultations Program. This program includes 17 Industry Sector Advisory Committees, four Industry Functional Advisory Committees on Trade Policy Matters and a Committee of Chairmen. These committees provide a critical link between U.S. industry interests and federal trade policy. Small business is well-represented throughout the advisory committees. The **Industry Sector Advisory Committee on Small and Minority-owned Business for Trade Policy Matters (ISAC-14)** concentrates solely on the trade concerns and issues of the small and minority-owned business exporting community.

COORDINATING IT ALL

The ITA's **Small Business Program** is a focal point for trade policy issues concerning SMEs. The Program ensures that they have a strong voice in trade negotiations and in formulating U.S. trade policy. The Small Business Program represents the trade policy views of small-business in multilateral fora, such as the WTO, the OECD Working Party on SMEs and the APEC SME Working Party. For more information email the Small Business Program (Small_Business@ita.doc.gov).

The Small Business Program also provides outreach to small and minority-owned businesses through its updated network of more than 300 small, women-owned and minority-owned business trade associations. This network allows ITA to reach out to these organizations and to inform them of the export assistance services offered by the Commerce Department and other government agencies. In addition, the Small Business Program participates in and organizes events for these groups, including next year's OECD Conference on *SMEs in the Global Economy*, the *2nd OECD Conference on Women Entrepreneurs in SMEs 2000* and the APEC *SME Business Forum.* ■

BECOME AN ADVISOR

"To become an advisor..."

The Secretary of Commerce and the U.S. Trade Representative appoint the 35 members of the Industry Sector Advisory Committee on Small and Minority Business (ISAC-14) and the 16 other sectoral ISACs. Members serve terms that are concurrent with the two-year Committee Charter, which is next up for renewal in March 2000. ISAC-14 members are drawn from U.S. small and minority-owned businesses that trade internationally or support trade activities of other firms, with knowledge of both the industry represented and other trade matters. Individuals act as representatives, presenting the views and interests of U.S. business in the small and minority-owned business sector. Representatives of foreign-owned or foreign-controlled firms and registered foreign agents are not eligible for membership. To achieve balanced participation on the Committee, nominations are sought to obtain representation of a broad range of industry and service sectors, and to reach a demographic balance. Since members have access to classified information, nominees for membership will undergo the security clearance process. ■

Interested businesses should contact:

The Small Business Program
ISAC 14 Designated Federal Official
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street & Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 2015B
Washington, D.C. 20230
Tel: (202) 482-4792
Fax: (202) 482-4452
Email: Small_Business@ita.doc.gov

SMES AND THE WTO

by Cory Churches, *Trade Development*
& Judy Sever, *Market Access & Compliance*

For the last 50 years, the globalization of trade has provided remarkable economic benefits to the United States and the rest of the world. Exports have been one of the keys to the U.S. economic boom of the 1990s, providing nearly 25 percent of our economic growth since 1991. We are the world's largest exporter, with $934 billion in exports of goods and services in 1998, and with 12 million Americans owing their jobs to exports—jobs that tend to be better paying and have better security than most. SMEs are a main beneficiary of this export expansion. Of the 209,000 U.S. enterprises engaged in exporting, 97 percent are SMEs, accounting for 30 percent of all U.S. exports.

The upcoming World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial—to be held in Seattle, November 30- December 3, 1999—offers another opportunity to further liberalize global trade and expand the number of potential consumers worldwide. Reducing trade barriers and expanding markets will give American companies better access to the 96 percent of the world's population that lives outside the United States.

The WTO provides significant benefits to SMEs. It expands access to foreign markets by lowering tariffs; reducing foreign barriers in the services sectors; providing protection for intellectual property rights; and, helping to ensure that regulations, standards, testing and certification procedures do not create unnecessary obstacles. Moreover, the WTO works to ensure that import licensing rules are simple, transparent and predictable; that there is a fair, uniform and neutral system for the valuation of goods for customs purposes; that rules of origin are transparent and impartially applied; that agricultural rules expand; and, that there are increased opportunities for sales to foreign governments. The WTO also provides a dispute settlement system to ensure that controversies are resolved multilaterally and not unilaterally, and that WTO members abide by agreed procedures and respect final judgments.

Smaller firms have complained that the present complexity of customs and other trade procedures continues to be a major trade barrier. Customs clearance regulations must be simpler, cheaper and faster. In response to this need, the U.S. Government put forth a proposal in Geneva with specific ideas on how the new round could make progress in this important area. The Clinton Administration is also seeking to extend the current moratorium on tariffs on electronic commerce. This is highly valuable to SMEs who don't have large resources for agents or travel and can use their computers to tap into foreign markets. Other Administration proposals for the new round include reducing tariffs and trade barriers on a broad range of industrial and agriculture products, broadening and deepening services commitments, securing a new agreement on transparency in government procurement, and ensuring that the benefits of the trading system are shared by all people.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION PROVIDES SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS TO SMES

U.S. business can participate in the shaping of future trade rules through the Industry Sector Advisory Committee Programs, which provide the framework and forum for businesses to monitor ongoing WTO negotiations and provide feedback to the U.S. Government. If you would like to be considered for membership, please contact the Director of the Industry Consultations Program at (202) 482-3268, or visit the ICP website (http://www.ita.doc.gov/icp).

THE FTAA

FREE TRADE MADE EASY

by William Muntean

Office of NAFTA & Inter-American Affairs, Market Access & Compliance

During the Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA) Trade Ministers meeting in Toronto, Canada on November 3-4, 1999, concrete progress was made towards advancing the FTAA agenda and setting the course for the next phase of negotiations. All 34 democratically elected governments in the Western Hemisphere are participating in the negotiations, which are scheduled to be completed by 2005. However, the following key outcomes of this November's Ministerial will immediately help U.S. small- and medium-sized exporters do more business within the Western Hemisphere.

KEY OUTCOMES OF THE NOVEMBER FTAA MINISTERIAL WILL IMMEDIATELY HELP U.S. SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED EXPORTERS DO MORE BUSINESS WITHIN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

BUSINESS FACILITATION MEASURES

The FTAA ministerial agreed on a package of eight customs-related business facilitation measures (BFMs) aimed at overcoming obstacles to exporting within the Western Hemisphere. These measures include streamlining procedures for the temporary importation of goods related to business travel, expediting express shipments, simplifying procedures for low-value shipments and disseminating customs regulations through the FTAA website (www.ftaa-alca.org), which also includes full text of the BFMs. These measures, which will be implemented beginning on January 1, 2000, will increase customs efficiencies, thereby easing the burden small- and medium-sized firms face every day in advertising, selling and transporting their products to foreign markets.

In addition, ten transparency BFMs will make information on FTAA countries' laws, regulations and procedures available over the Internet. This should alleviate some of the traditional informational challenges SMEs face when trying to enter a foreign market.

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE REPORT

The Joint Government-Private Sector Committee of Experts on Electronic Commerce produced a report on how to increase and broaden the benefits of e-commerce. The report notes that "the use of electronic commerce by SMEs could reduce traditional obstacles to entry such as distance and size, and enable them to be more competitive in the international economy." The report recommends that the FTAA explore ways to better support small- and medium-sized exporters; recognize a variety of national approaches to protect privacy and avoid the creation of barriers to trans-border data flows; and create a framework suitable for e-commerce in the legal system of each country. The full report is on the U.S. Government Electronic Commerce Policy website (www.ecommerce.gov).

In Toronto, more than 800 business leaders gathered to discuss trade issues and provide input for the FTAA negotiations. In addition, SMEs contributed to the first Civil Society Forum, which included participants from throughout the hemisphere and addressed a wide range of issues, such as the environment and labor.

More information about the general FTAA process, business facilitation measures and e-commerce report can be obtained through the official FTAA website (www.ftaa-alca.org) or by calling the Office of NAFTA and Inter-American Affairs at 202-482-0393.

ASK THE TIC

BUSINESS TRAVEL: HOW TO PLAN YOUR OVERSEAS BUSINESS TRIP AND BRING YOUR EQUIPMENT WITH YOU

by Jeff Rohlmeier
Trade Information Center, Trade Development

WHAT INFORMATION CAN I GET FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO HELP ME PLAN MY TRAVEL?

The first thing you should consider before planning your international travel is whether or not any foreign holidays may occur during your trip, and whether they will disrupt the normal flow of business. If offices aren't open, you may not be able to schedule as many appointments or make enough contacts. The Trade Information Center (TIC) maintains a listing of foreign holidays on its website(). Once you are on the site, click on "Country and Regional Market Information" and then select the link to "Business Holidays".

A business traveler should also be mindful of the State Department's Travel Advisories when planning a trip. These are listed on the State Department's website (www.state.gov) or can be obtained by calling the Travel Advisory Hotline (202-647-5225).

There are additional cultural, political and economic factors that every international business traveler should be familiar with before heading abroad. Department of Commerce Trade Specialists at the USA Trade Center (1-800-USA-TRAD(E)) are trained to answer questions about political and economic conditions in countries around the globe. The TIC's website also provides further country-specific information and contains documents directly related to business travel. After you have entered the TIC website, click on "Country and Regional Market Information", and then on the region you will be visiting. By selecting "View All Documents by Country", you will get a listing of all TIC country-related documents, including the "Business Travel" chapters from the *Country Commercial Guides*. TIC Trade Specialists and the TIC website provide information for the Western Hemisphere, Europe, Latin America, and Asia and the Pacific. Trade Specialists from the Business Information Service for the Newly Independent States (http://bisnis.doc.gov) and the Central and Eastern European Business Information Center (www.mac.doc/eebic/ceebic.html) can also be reached by dialing 1-800-USA-TRAD(E).

HOW CAN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE MAKE MY OVERSEAS TRAVEL MORE EFFECTIVE?

The **Gold Key Service**, a customized U.S. Department of Commerce program, helps U.S. companies promote their products overseas and meet potential trade partners abroad. The Gold Key is a custom-tailored program that combines orientation briefings, market research, appointments with potential partners, interpreter service for meetings and assistance with developing follow-up strategies. The Gold Key is now available in more than 70 of the world's best export markets at fees ranging from $150 to $600.

Depending on the country, variations of the Gold Key Service may also be available to the exporter. For instance, the Commercial Section of the U.S. Embassy in India sponsors a **Silver Key Service**. This program is the same as the Gold Key except that U.S. Government personnel do not attend meetings with the exporter. The **Green Key Service**, available in Brazil, is geared towards environmental technologies. The U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service conducts these customized services at U.S. embassies overseas, and they can be initiated by contacting an Export Assistance Center near you (locations and contact information available on the back cover).

DOES THE U.S. GOVERNMENT SPONSOR ANY GROUP EVENTS OVERSEAS THAT MAY INCREASE MY TRIP'S EFFECTIVENESS?

Overseas trade events may prove useful to a U.S. company in promoting its products overseas or in finding potential trade partners abroad. The Department of Commerce maintains an **Export Promotion Calendar** that includes information on upcoming overseas trade events supported by one or more U.S. Government agencies. These events include **Trade Fairs, Trade Missions and Matchmaker Trade Delegations**. Trade Missions, in particular, are excellent ways to increase a trip's effectiveness. Missions may include individual appointments tailored to each member's needs, plant and factory tours or technical seminars. The Department of Commerce sponsors several trade missions each year and high-level Department of Commerce officials, including the Secretary of Commerce, frequently accompany trade missions to various areas of the globe. The Department of Commerce also supports **Certified Trade Missions**, which are planned, organized and led by non-Commerce officials in other federal agencies, industry trade associations, agencies of state and local governments, chambers of commerce and other export-oriented groups.

To access the Export Promotion Calendar visit the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee's website

(www.ita.doc.gov/epc.nsf). Events are listed by industry, country and type. A more detailed description of the U.S. Department of Commerce's trade missions can be found at www.ita.doc.gov/doctm. [Also see page 16-17 of this magazine.] For further information on Department of Commerce, and state and local events occurring overseas, contact a TIC Trade Specialist at 1-800-USA-TRAD(E).

Q&A HOW DO I TAKE MY LAPTOP COMPUTER, PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS OVERSEAS?

The U.S. Government typically does not restrict travelers from taking laptops out of the country for personal business use. However, some equipment, including some high-speed or encrypted laptop computers, do require an export license from the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Export Administration (BXA). Also, some technical materials, sophisticated equipment, and goods taken to certain countries will need a license. If you are unsure whether or not an export license is required for your laptop or other materials, we advise you contact BXA (202-482-4811). More information on BXA's export licensing process can be found at www.bxa.doc.gov.

Most importing countries exempt goods from import duties and taxes if they are entering that country only temporarily. Fifty nations currently accept a document known as the **ATA Carnet**. The ATA Carnet is essentially a passport for your goods. If the good can be described as a "tool of the trade", then, upon presentation of the ATA Carnet, the good may be exempt from duties and taxes. "Tools of the trade" are items such as commercial samples, professional equipment and items used for trade shows or exhibitions. Some ordinary goods such as computers (including laptops) or industrial equipment will also qualify as "tools of the trade". Carnets do not cover consumable goods, disposable items or postal traffic. The ATA Carnet can be ordered by contacting the United States Council for International Business (1-800-5-DUTYFREE). It usually takes five working days to process the document, and the Carnet must accompany the good into the country. Processing fees will vary according to the declared value of the item being sent.

Countries that do not accept the ATA Carnet may have another type of temporary import procedure exempting goods from the normal application of import duties and taxes. Some countries require that the importer pay a temporary import bond that is reimbursable if the product leaves the country within a specified period of time (usually one year from the date of importation). Egypt allows the temporary importer a choice of two separate entry procedures: A "temporary release system", requiring the importer to pay 5 percent of the normal duty rate, and a "duty drawback" program, mandating that the importer pay full duties and taxes which are then reimbursable if the product leaves the country within six months.

More information on temporary import provisions and other foreign customs requirements, including documentation, may be obtained from a TIC Trade Specialist. In addition, the TIC's website provides information on foreign customs requirements and procedures. Once you have entered the TIC website, simply click on "Country and Regional Market Information" and then select a region. Next, click on "Customs and Import Documentation" for customs information organized by country. Foreign customs regulations for the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union, and Central and Eastern Europe, may be obtained by contacting a Trade Specialist from either the Business Information Center for the Newly Independent States (BISNIS) or the Central and Eastern European Business Information Center (CEEBIC).

Finally, before you leave for your trip, we advise you to contact the U.S. Customs Service and notify them that your items will be coming back into the U.S. and that U.S. import duties and taxes should not be assessed on the goods once they return. U.S. Customs will need the serial number of the item you are taking. A trade specialist at the USA Trade Center can give you the contact information for your local customs office. This information is also available online on the U.S. Customs website (www.customs.ustreas.gov). ■

The Trade Information Center (TIC) is operated by the International Trade Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce for the 20 federal agencies comprising the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee. These agencies are responsible for managing the U.S. Government's export promotion programs and activities. You, too, can "Ask the TIC" by calling 1-800-USA-TRAD(E) toll free, Monday through Friday, 8:30-5:30. Or visit the TIC's web site at http://trade-info.doc.gov.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF TRADE MISSIONS

by Loretta Allison
Women In Trade Business Development Missions, Trade Development

If your company is well-established in the United States, and you believe that your goods and services are exportable, you should consider participating in a trade mission.

Trade missions—groups of eight to twenty companies—focus on one or two product sectors, and are designed to help U.S. firms meet potential agents, buyers, distributors, representatives and joint-venture partners.

As part of a trade mission, the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service staffs overseas arrange six to eight appointments per day for each participant with prescreened executives. Business receptions, directed networking events and market briefings are also planned to increase your knowledge of, and opportunities in, each country on the mission schedule. You will also receive an individualized market report for your products and services. In addition, Commerce staff will arrange both ground transportation and professional translators.

TRADE MISSIONS ARE DESIGNED TO HELP U.S. FIRMS MEET POTENTIAL AGENTS, BUYERS, DISTRIBUTORS, REPRESENTATIVES AND JOINT-VENTURE PARTNERS.

TIPS FOR TRADE MISSIONS

Following these simple guidelines will help you gain the most from your trip.

BEFORE YOU GO

- Provide complete and detailed information about your company and its products to the trade mission manager as early as possible. If there are specific companies you want to meet, make sure to tell the mission manager.
- Call or email the Commercial Service officer responsible for the mission in each overseas city that you will be visiting. More information means better appointments.
- Translate some of your business literature into the language of the host country.
- Make sure your website address is printed on your literature.
- Read the market research documents on each country before leaving. Call 1-800-USA-TRADE for more information on how to obtain recent foreign market reports.
- Take more business cards than you think you will need. Print one side of the card in English and the other in the language of the country you will be visiting.
- Arrive at the first stop of the mission at least a day ahead of time.

APPOINTMENTS

- If a meeting is set up with a person whose business interests do not match yours, talk to that person anyway. They may turn out to be a good source of information or business contacts. In one recent case, that approach netted a mission participant a half-million dollar deal.

NETWORKING

- Be prepared to talk with fellow executives who are already in the overseas market. Sometimes they are able to help you achieve your goals since they are already in the country and know the key players.
- Be sure to talk to and network with your fellow mission members. Many business and partnership agreements have been generated between mission members, sometimes in countries outside of the region visited by the trade mission.
- Another networking opportunity is the reception generally held at the beginning of each stop. Corporate executives and high-level government officials attend, and can give you great contacts and ideas.

FOLLOW UP

■ Be flexible, ask questions and follow up on your contacts. Whether you sign a contract on your trip or not, it makes good business sense to revisit the country again within approximately three months to follow up on your contacts. This way the person you met knows you are serious about doing business.

■ Exporting takes time and dedication, so be patient if you don't see immediate results from the trade mission. Sometimes it takes a while for contacts to turn into contracts. An executive who participated in a jewelry trade mission to Europe, for example, received a large order two years after her initial contact in Amsterdam. Another company went on a trade mission to Africa in October 1997 and just recently signed a contract to handle operations for a major conference in Johannesburg. ■

WHERE TO FIND OUT ABOUT TRADE MISSIONS

Visit the Commerce Department's website (www.doc.gov) and click on the "Trade Events & Missions" button, found on the lower part of the homepage. Then, explore both the "Trade Missions Calendar" and the "Trade Events Calendar". From the "Trade Events Calendar", open the links to other U.S. Government agencies that are part of the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee (TPCC), especially the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Open the links to the websites of Trade Show Central (www.tscentral.com) and Trade Show News (www.tsnn.com) to gain information on private sector missions. In doing searches, be aware that missions go under a lot of different names, including seminar, matchmaker, summit, corporate executive office, executive services, conference or workshop.

SECRETARY DALEY'S PRESIDENTIAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MISSION TO THE MIDDLE EAST

by Paul Thanos
Office of the Near East, Market Access & Compliance

Secretary Daley led a presidential business development mission to the Middle East October 8-19, 1999. The delegation made stops in Jordan, Israel, the West Bank, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. Seventeen American companies accompanied the Secretary, representing sectors such as information technology, health care, communications, engineering, energy, pharmaceuticals and environmental technologies. Throughout the mission emphasis was placed on the importance of free trade, privatization, transparency and intellectual property protection.

In Jordan the trade delegation met with the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Industry and Trade and other members of the Jordanian Government's economic team.

In Israel, the Secretary focused on the need to both expand U.S.-Israel bilateral trade and support regional economic development. U.S.-Israel trade increased 17 percent in 1999. The Secretary also announced that the Commerce Department would develop an environmental trade mission to Israel and the Palestinian Authority in the first half of 2000.

The delegation spent a full day meeting with Palestinian officials, including Chairman Arafat and Minister of Economy and Trade Masri. The Secretary highlighted the importance of an expanding Palestinian economy for the long-term success of the peace process, and stated that he hoped American companies would play a greater role in Palestinian projects.

In Egypt, officials expressed their strong interest in pursuing economic reform, including privatizing large portions of the public sector and liberalizing their trade and investment regimes. The Secretary signed a joint statement with Minister Boutrous Ghali on future electronic commerce cooperation, and announced a new training program for Egyptian insurance regulators and supervisors.

In Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Abdullah announced an energy initiative and said he looked forward to seeing more American energy companies enter the Saudi market. The Secretary stressed the need for greater regional integration through the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to boost both Saudi and U.S. trade.

In the United Arab Emirates, the delegation met with all key Ministers and visited both Abu Dhabi and Dubai. ■

Shooting

SCORE SALES AT GLOBAL SPORTING EVENTS

By Brendan Mullen

Office of Public Affairs, International Trade Administration. Compiled from information provided by Patrick Santillo US&FCS Athens, Greece; Larry Farris US&FCS Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic; Todd Thurwachter US&FCS Osaka, Japan; and Robert Dunn US&FCS Seoul, Korea

When we think of international sporting competitions, we like to think of our athletes standing atop the winner's podium, his or her hard work rewarded with victory. However, it is not only American athletes who find opportunity and are rewarded for perseverance at events like the Olympics, the Pan American Games and World Cup Soccer. Increasingly U.S. businesses are discovering valuable markets and profitable opportunities for supplying goods and services to major international sporting competitions. After all, someone has to supply the food the athletes eat, the buildings in which they sleep, the equipment with which they train and the venues where they compete. And this brief list doesn't even begin to anticipate the demand generated by hundreds of thousands of tourists and spectators.

OLYMPICS 2004: ATHENS

While observers agree that many major contracts for Olympics-related works are likely to go to Greek firms, major subcontracting opportunities are also developing. U.S. companies can still participate as contractors, investors/partners, subcontractors, and equipment and product suppliers in the major infrastructure projects for the Games. These projects have an estimated budget of around $1.2 billion. The U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service office in the U.S. Embassy in Athens is committed to helping U.S. companies identify and pursue all of the Athens 2004 Olympics opportunities.

Since September of 1997, when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced *"The winner is Athens!"*, a series of committees and organizations have been formed to prepare for the large and small projects that must be completed before the games begin. The responsibility for implementing these projects lies with Athens 2004 S.A., a private, Government-sponsored corporation.

Athens 2004 S.A. announced the long awaited "master plan" for the remaining Olympics projects in May 1999. The plan contains some very tight time-lines and other constraints, deviations from which could upset the successful completion of the projects and negatively impact the staging of the Games. But, it is not too late to participate in the building projects. For example, the sites and final blueprints for some of the required structures have not yet been finalized. To date, up to 30% of the large-scale required structures have not even been started. Although a tentative budget was released that outlines the primary sources of revenue and costs associated with staging the games, until all sites and agencies responsible are identified, the budget for the Games cannot be considered final.

PROJECTS

A strong component of Athens's successful bid for the 2004 Olympics was the existence of an estimated 70% of the sports facilities needed to stage the games. However, at least eleven new sports facilities are still needed and will be constructed in and around Athens in preparation for the 2004 Olympic Games. The largest of these is a Five-Stadium Athletic Complex, which will be built at Faliro at an estimated cost of $105 million. The other facilities include: the **Baseball Stadium** (budgeted for $8.7 million); the **Equestrian Center**, to be constructed at Markopoulo, near the site of the new Athens Airport (cost of $27.0 million); the **Shooting Center**,

Photo courtesy of International Sports Images

for Gold

The Olympic Superdome under construction in Sydney, Australia.

to be built in Markopoulo (budgeted for $10.0 million); the **Table Tennis Facility**, to be built in Galatsi (cost of $12.2 million); the **Archery Center**, to be built in Markopoulo (budgeted for $7.0 million); **the Softball Stadium** (budgeted for $7.7 million); the **Weightlifting Center**, to be built in Nikaia (budgeted for $10.5 million); the **Beach Volleyball Center**, to be located in Faliro (projected cost of $5.6 million); the **Sailing Center** in Agios Kosmas, (cost of $14.7 million); and, the **Rowing Center**, to be constructed in Skinias (budgeted for $22.0 million).

U.S. companies are already playing a part in creating the master plan and architectural design of the Olympic Village. The initial scheme called for the financing and implementation of the project by a private contractor who would then have the right to sell parts of the village as residential housing after the games. Now, however, there is a possibility that the Government will participate in the financing. Under this scenario, after the Games the properties will be allocated through a Government-controlled worker's housing organization. Some projections for the cost of the village are as high as $200 million. In June 1999 the Committee issued a tender for the Master Plan of the Olympic Village. Thirty-six groups, among them seven U.S. firms or consortiums, expressed interest to participate in this tender. The short list is expected to be announced soon. The Labor Housing Authority, OEK in Greek, will build the Olympic Village.

A number of ongoing major infrastructure projects are seen as crucial to the successful staging of the Games, and experts believe that the Olympics will provide extra motivation to complete them by 2004. These projects include the Athens Metro, Spata Airport, Suburban Railway System, the Stavros-Elefsina-Spata Highway and the Athens-Schisto-Elefsina Highway.

Some experts also foresee a critical shortage of hotel beds for the visitors expected to attend the games. One proposal calls for international hotel chains to build up to six new hotels around the new Spata Airport. However, many analysts believe that these hotels will either be insufficient or inappropriately located to meet demand. Alternatively, they believe that chartered cruise ships, docked in Faliro near most of the athletic venues, would be the best way to meet this need.

"THE MARKETING POTENTIAL OF THE WORLD CUP FOR U.S. BUSINESSES HAS ONLY BEGUN TO BE RECOGNIZED..."

PAN AMERICAN GAMES 2003: SANTO DOMINGO

While the 2004 Olympic Games in Greece and the 2002 World Cup in Korea and Japan may literally seem like half a world away, it is important not to forget about less publicized international sporting competitions in our own hemisphere. For example, every four years the athletes of the Americas come together to participate in the Pan American games, a tremendous competition in itself and an important prelude to the Olympic Games. Given the more manageable geographic location, small- and medium-sized exporters may find significant business opportunities in the Pan Am Games.

Such potential abounds in the Dominican Republic, who will be hosting the 2003 Pan American games in Santo Domingo. As a result of Hurricane George, the Olympic Center, the largest sporting complex in the city and the center of the games, is badly in need of repairs. Opportunities exist for everything from reconstruction of certain areas to supplying swimming, cycling and gymnastics equipment.

The second major project being undertaken in preparation for the games is the construction of five apartment towers to house over 5,000 athletes. There are opportunities for U.S. firms in the actual designing and building of the project as well as in supplying building products, materials and fixtures for the towers. For more information on either project, interested firms should contact the Secretary of State for Public Works in Santo Domingo or our Commercial Service office in Santo Domingo.

In addition to the large construction projects, the organizing committee is also in the process of receiving and reviewing proposals for the extensive service needs encountered when preparing for the games. One of the areas of highest demand is food preparation. Organizers are in the process of looking for catering services, along with equipment and refrigeration suppliers. The committee is also receiving proposals for sponsorship from transportation companies, car dealers, airlines, couriers and broadcasting partners.

WORLD CUP 2002: JAPAN & KOREA

Between June 1 and June 30, 2002 hundreds of millions of fans will turn their attention to the most popular and

widely followed sporting event in the entire world, World Cup Soccer. The marketing potential of the World Cup for U.S. businesses has only begun to be recognized in the last decade as soccer has become more popular in our country. But regardless of its success in this country, it is important for U.S. companies to realize that soccer is unquestionably THE sport in the rest of the world. With so many fans in hundreds of countries—170 competing for qualification in the 2002 games—the opportunities for U.S. exporters are tremendous.

The copyright holder for the World Cup is the Federation Internationale de Football Association based in Switzerland. However, ISL Marketing AG, also based in Switzerland, is the sole marketing agency for FIFA and is in charge of licensing. Products and services which are able to utilize the licensed World Cup logo vary, as long as they do not duplicate the market interests of the World Cup's official sponsors and suppliers. The license market in Japan alone for the 2002 World Cup is expected to break $380 million dollars.

Each overseas market has an in-country contact point for licensing information. Dentsu Inc. has unofficially assumed this role in Japan and will announce details on licensing opportunities in February or March of 2000.

For more information about licensing and construction opportunities related to the World Cup, please use the contact information provided in the sidebar.

CONTACT INFORMATION

OLYMPICS 2004

Patrick Santillo
Commercial Counselor
PSC 108 Box 30
APO AE 09842
Tel: (30-1) 720-2302/3
Fax: (30-1) 721-8660
Email: Oathens@mail.doc.gov.

PAN AMERICAN GAMES 2003

Ing. Diandino Peña
Secretary of State for Public Works
Secretariat of State for Public Works and Communications
Avenue Hector Homero Hernandez Vargas (Antigua San Cristobal)
Ensanche La Fe, Zona Postal No. 5
Santo Domingo, D.N.
Dominican Republic

Professor Danilo Aquino
Director General Organizing Committee
Juegos Panamericanos 2003
Roberto Pastoriza
Edif. Diandy VIII
6to. Piso Ensanche Naco
Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic
Tel: (809) 544-3320
Fax: (809) 544-4901

WORLD CUP SOCCER 2002

JAPAN

Mr. Hidetoshi Maki, Project Manager
ISL Department, Sports Marketing Division
Dentsu Inc.
1-11 Tsukiji, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104-8426
Tel: 011-1-3-5551-7102
Fax: 011-81-3-5551-2034
Email: d10723@dentsu.co.jp

KOREA

Mr. Robert Dunn, Commercial Attache
Mr. Park, Moon-Sik, Commercial Specialist
Commercial Service
U.S. Embassy
82 Sejong-ro, Chongro-ku, Seoul 110-050
Tel: 822-397-4743
Fax: 822-739-1628
E-mail: Robert.Dunn@mail.doc.gov
Web site: www.cskorea-doc.gov

Mr. Jang, Ki-Chang, Director
Facilities & Technology Department
Korea Organizing Committee for the 2002 FIFA World Cup Korea/Japan
13th Floor Leema Bldg., 146-1 Susong-dong,
Chongro-ku, Seoul 110-140
Tel: 822-737-9664
Fax: 822-730-7846
Web site: www.2002worldcupkorea.org

FOR OTHER COUNTRIES' MARKETS, PLEASE CONTACT ISL MARKETING AG:

Mr. Gerhard P. Prochaska, Head of Licensing, Managing Director
Mr. Phillippe Le Floc'h, Head of Event Licensing, Vice President
ISL Marketing AG
Zenatraistrasse 1
P.O. Box 3339, CH 6002
Lucerne, Switzerland
Tel: 011-41-41-228-9595
Fax: 011-41-41228-9739

UPCOMING TRADE EVENTS

FEBRUARY - AUGUST 2000

DATES	EVENT	CITY
Feb. 1- March 30, 2000	**Infrastructure 2000** Promote your products at Infrastructure 2000, an official U.S. Catalog Exhibition in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The U.S. Department of Commerce will promote your product literature in 11 dynamic markets, including South Africa, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, to help you test your sales potential and make valuable business contacts.	Africa, the Middle East & Asia
Feb. 7-10, 2000	**ISPO Winter** ISPO Winter 2000, with over 1,400 exhibitors, is the premier international event for the winter sporting goods industry in Europe. Commercial Service Munich will staff a Business Information Office to assist U.S. companies throughout the show. We expect over 60 American firms to participate.	Munich, Germany
Feb. 14-17, 2000	**World Food Technology 2000** World Food Technology 2000 is expected to draw 8,000 professional, invitation-only visitors from throughout Russia and the neighboring newly independent states. About half the attendees will be food processors, but they will be joined by beverage process equipment dealers and retail/restaurant operators. 130 exhibiting companies are expected, representing all areas of the food industry, including processing and packaging equipment manufacturers, refrigeration and handling, and food service and display.	Moscow, Russia
Feb. 24-March 1, 2000	**CeBIT** The world's largest annual trade fair for computers, software, office automation and telecommunications, CeBIT attracts more than 6,900 exhibitors from 60 countries displaying their products in 24 halls. In addition to the hundreds of independently exhibiting American companies, more than 400 U.S. firms make use of the eight U.S. pavilions organized and recruited by Hanover Fairs USA and supported by the Commercial Service in Germany.	Hannover, Germany
April 10-17, 2000	**Manufacturing Matchmaker** The U.S. & Foreign Commercial Service will take up to 20 manufacturing companies on select visits to various cities in India to meet with Indian manufacturers and distributors. This high-level delegation will also receive special one-on-one appointments.	India
May 3-7, 2000	**CTO 2000** The CTO Exhibition is the largest and most professionally organized IT trade event in Nigeria. The show focuses on computer equipment, software and services, and attracts buyers from throughout West and Central Africa.	Lagos, Nigeria
May 4-7, 2000	**Interzoo 2000 Product Literature Center** This is Europe's leading trade fair for the pet care industry. Pet products are top sellers in Germany. Small companies, who are new to the European market, will find this a very attractive and low-cost opportunity to test their products in the one of the world's largest markets.	Nuremberg, Germany
May 17-21, 2000	**Thailand Aerospace Exhibition 2000** Aerospace products and services of all kinds—equipment, parts, accessories, materials—are the focus of this low-cost promotion opportunity at Thailand's top aerospace marketplace. Product literature and sample displays are most helpful to smaller American companies and to new suppliers testing the market.	Utapao, Thailand

INDUSTRY	CONTACT INFORMATION
General Industrial Equipment	Nancy Hesser Tel: (202) 482-4663 Nancy.Hesser@mail.doc.gov
Sporting Goods	Bernd Kietz Tel: (49-89) 2888-75 Fax: (49-89) 2885-261 Bernd.Kietz@mail.doc.gov
Food Processing & Packaging Equipment	Sergey Minko Tel: (7-095) 737-5038 Sergey.Minko@mail.doc.gov
Information & Communication Technology	John Lumborg Tel: (49-30) 8305-2736 Fax: (49-30) 2045-4466 John.Lumborg@mail.doc.gov
General Industrial Equipment	Molly Costa Tel: (202) 482-0692 Molly.Costa@mail.doc.gov
Information Technology	Anayo Agu Tel: (234-1) 261-0050 Sean_McAlister@ita.doc.gov
Pet Products	Edward Kimmel Tel: (202) 482-3460 Edward_Kimmel@ita.doc.gov
Aerospace Products & Services	Erik McDonald Tel: (202) 482-1237 Erik_McDonnald@ita.doc.gov

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS

HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGIES MATCHMAKER

MADRID, SPAIN & MILAN, ITALY
FEBRUARY 28 – MARCH 3, 2000

The markets for medical devices and healthcare products are expected to top $2.2 and $3.0 billion respectively in the year 2000. There is a need for innovative, technologically advanced products for which the United States has an established reputation for leadership. Participants in this Matchmaker will receive individual itineraries, prescreened appointments, meeting spaces, in-depth market briefings, hospitality, interpreters and full logistical support. The application deadline is January 7, 2000. Contact Yvonne Jackson by telephone: 202-482-2675 or email: Yvonne.Jackson@mail.doc.gov.

MEDICAL MISSION TO CHINA

BEIJING, SHANGHAI & CHENGDU, CHINA
MARCH 19-28, 2000

Medical and dental devices, medical device components and laboratory instruments are best market targets for this Commerce Department Office of Microelectronics, Medical Equipment and Instrumentation Division trade mission. The sheer size of the population, 1.2 billion and growing by 16 million each year, makes China an excellent sales prospect for U.S. exporters who want to remain globally competitive. Hospitals in China have great autonomy in purchases and want high quality, advanced technology medical devices. For more information, contact Lauren Saadat by telephone (202) 482-4431.

COMEXPO (INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS EXPOSITION)

CARACAS, VENEZUELA
MAY 24-27, 2000

COMEXPO is the largest and most important annual information technology/telecommunications industry trade show in Venezuela. This event showcases not only the traditional areas of telecommunications, but also new communications products, including broadband media services. Sector analysts estimate the Venezuelan telecommunications industry will require investments on the order of ten billion dollars in the next eight years. As the sector gears up for the opening to competition of the basic wireline telephone service in November of 2000, opportunities for U.S. companies will abound. Commercial Service Caracas participates in COMEXPO by organizing a stand to counsel companies interested in U.S. products and services, as well as to distribute information on U.S. companies looking for possible representation in the region. If you would like to take advantage of this unique opportunity without investing a lot of budget or time, contact Cindy Acosta by email: cindy.acosta@mail.doc.gov, telephone: (582) 975-9495 or fax: (582) 975-9643. More information about Comexpo can be found at www. prexexpositions.com

DATES	EVENT	CITY
May 18 - 31, 2000	**Drupa 2000** The Commercial Service in Dusseldorf will organize a Corporate Executive Office (CEO) at the world's largest trade show for the printing and paper industries. More than 400,000 visitors from over 170 countries are expected to attend this show. The CEO, taking place from May 22-25, 2000, will offer U.S. companies an alternative means of participating in the show, with a table location in the U.S. pavilion and an assistant to make appointments during the event.	Dusseldorf, Germany
June 1, 2000	**Comdex/Infocomm** This is the largest and most important IT event in the region, with over 250 international firm participants and over 38,000 visitors anticipated. Hundreds of IT products, technologies and services will be presented and the latest IT innovations will be featured.	Buenos Aires, Argentina
June 1, 2000	**EXPO USA 2000** A unique trade exhibition featuring U. S. products and services. In 1999, it attracted over 3500 Dominican and International visitors with 50 U.S. companies displaying their goods and services.	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
June 6 - 12, 2000	**Bologna Children's Book Fair** This is the world's largest event for the children's publishing industry, and CS Italy is pleased to invite all publishers of children's and educational software to participate. The Commercial Service will organize a U.S. pavilion which will feature turnkey multimedia booths and CS Italy will schedule pre-arranged business appointments with potential partners for all U.S. participants.	Bologna, Italy
June 12 - 13, 2000	**Growth Industry 2000 Multi-State Catalog Exhibition** This event is a combined multi-state trade days and regular catalog exhibition. Multi-State catalog exhibitions held in Latin America over the past four years have been highly successful, generating thousands of trade leads for the U.S. firms. We expect 10 to 13 states to join us as active partners in Growth Industries 2000, which will be a horizontal event, covering a range of product categories taken from best prospects listings in the 2000 *Country Commercial Guide* for each country.	Caracas, Venezuela; Lima, Peru; Santiago, Chile; & Cordoba, Argentina
June 20 - 25, 2000	**INTERSCHUTZ 2000** Occuring only every six years, this event is the #1 international promotion for fire and catastrophe prevention and rescue services. In 1994, 990 companies exhibited and over 138,000 attended. The U.S. pavilion, sponsored by FEMSA, FAMA, and NEEDA, is expected to attract at least as many exhibitors as last time, making the U.S. participation second only to Germany in size.	Augsburg, Germany
June 21 - 24, 2000	**Western Canada Farm Progress Show** With over 700 exhibitors and 50,000 visitors, this is the world's largest trade show for agricultural machinery and equipment.	Regina, Canada
June 27 - 29, 2000	**XII Latin American Petroleum Show** It is a tradition at Commercial Service Caracas to organize a mini-pavilion at the annual oil show in Maracaibo. This booth allows U.S. companies to exhibit their products at a very low cost, while also making contact with over 500 domestic and international companies in the sector. The show is attended by high-level decision-makers and exhibits the latest technology in up- and down-stream operations.	Maracaibo, Venezuela
June 30, 2000	**Computex Taipei 2000** Computex Taipei represents the largest information technology trade show of its kind in Asia and the third largest in the world, with 910 exhibitors filling 1,800 booths. The 66-booth USA Pavilion is the largest foreign presence at the event by far.	Taipei, Taiwan
July 17 - 19, 2000	**International Fashion Fair** The Commerce Department's Office of Textiles and Apparel and the Commercial Service Tokyo are providing a USA pavilion for 20 U.S. high fashion apparel companies. This event is sponsored by *Senken Shibun*, Japan's leading apparel trade newspaper, and will take place at the Tokyo Exhibition Center.	Tokyo, Japan

INDUSTRY	CONTACT INFORMATION
Printing & Paper Industries	Birgit Hesse Birgit.Hesse@mail.doc.gov
Information Technology Industry	Silvia Yaber Tel: (54-11) 4777-4533 x2410 Silvia.Yaber@mail.doc.gov
All Sectors	Sheila Andujar Sheila.Andujar@mail.doc.gov
Children's Books	Barbara Lapini Tel: (39-055) 292266 Barbara.Lapini@mail.doc.gov.
All Sectors	Patricia Wagner Tel: (582) 975-9495 Patricia.Wagner@mail.doc.gov
Safety & Rescue	Hans Wischmann Tel: (49-40) 41171-31 Hans.Wischmann@mail.doc.gov
Agricultural Machinery & Equipment	Crystal Roberts Tel: (403) 265-2116 Crystal.Roberts@mail.doc.gov
Oil & Gas	Yuri Flores Tel: (582) 975-9495/9541 Yuri.Flores@mail.doc.gov Internet: www.celpexpo.com
Computers & Peripherals	Alain DeSarran Tel: (202) 482-2422 Alain.Desarran@mail.doc.gov
Textiles & Apparel	Maura Kim Tel: (202) 482-4324 Maura_Kim@ita.doc.gov

TRADE EVENTS SCHEDULE

KIND UND JUGEND CHILDREN'S APPAREL FAIR

COLOGNE, GERMANY
AUGUST 18-20, 2000

Children's wear, maternity fashions, nursery equipment, baby carriages and textiles are featured at Kind und Jugend, Germany's leading child and youth marketplace. The Commerce Department's Office of Textiles and Apparel will be sponsoring an USA pavilion with space for 8-10 U.S. exhibitors. There will be some 450 sellers from 30 countries presenting their wears. For more information, contact Kim-Bang Ngugen at (202) 482-4805.

U.S. PAVILION & "DEALMAKER" AT GLOBE 2000

VANCOUVER, CANADA
MARCH 22-24, 2000

Globe2000, an international marketplace for environmental solutions will host over 75 economies and more than 10,000 visitors. To help U.S. manufacturers and service providers in the environmental technologies industry enter the Canadian market, the Commercial Service Vancouver offers a unique and cost-effective way to find agents, distributors, and strategic alliance partners. U.S. manufacturers of pollution control, solid waste and air quality management, hazardous waste, and wastewater treatment should consider exhibiting in the U.S. pavilion and participating in the following "Dealmaker" options:

"Dealmaker" Premiere Package—The Commercial Service will arrange pre-screened one-on-one appointments with qualified business partners, display your product literature, include your company in our "Virtual Trade Show", gather customized trade leads, provide a complimentary show pass and invitation to a networking reception hosted by the U.S. Consul General. Cost $950.00

"Dealmaker' Video Conferencing—For those who cannot attend Globe2000, you can still participate electronically through Video Conferencing. Your products will be featured in the U.S. Product Showcase and Virtual Trade Show during Globe 2000. Two to three weeks after Globe2000, we will arrange your one-on one appointments to take place via video conferencing equipment. Cost $1350.00

"Dealmaker" Catalog/Virtual Trade Show Option—Your product literature will be displayed and promoted during Globe2000. Customized trade leads will be forwarded to you at the conclusion of the show. In addition, participating U.S. firms will be promoted on the Internet via E-Expo USA. Canadian and International buyers can access this website during Globe2000 and for the next 365 days! Cost $400.00

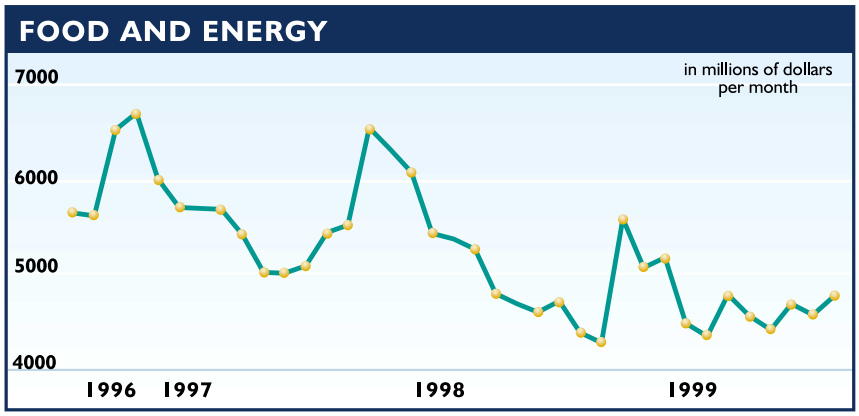
Think "Canada First"!

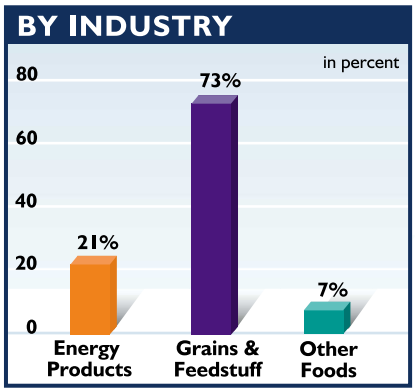
For more information on Globe2000 "Dealmaker" options, please contact Cheryl Schell, Commercial Specialist, Tel: (604) 685-3382, Fax: (604) 687-6095, Email: cheryl.schell@mail.doc.gov.

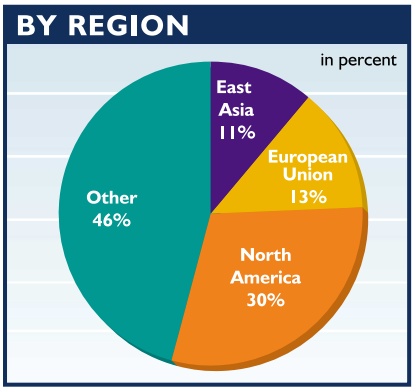
A LOOK AT U.S. EXPORTS

FOOD AND ENERGY

Recent months have seen some stabilization in this segment. The August 1999 value exceeded that of August 1998, in contrast to a decline during the previous year. This pattern characterizes both the food and energy components.







MATERIALS

Exports of these products in August 1999 surpassed the last year's level, hinting at a turnaround.

Product categories (except for services) are based on end-use classification.

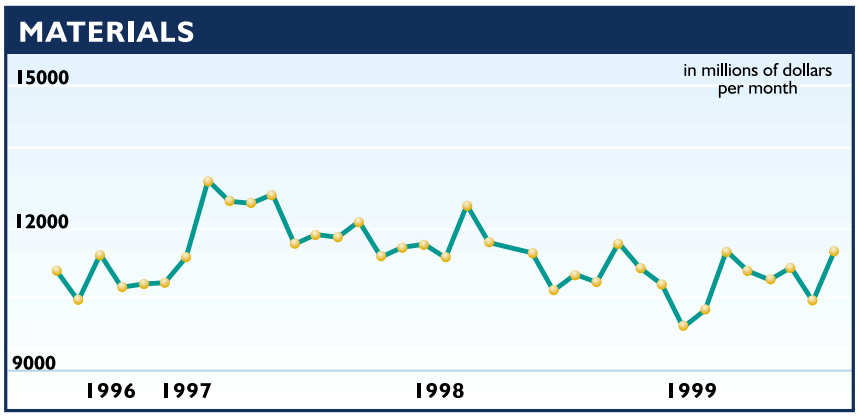
North America: Canada and Mexico.

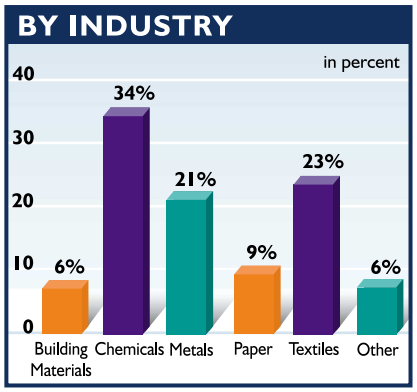
The European Union: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom.

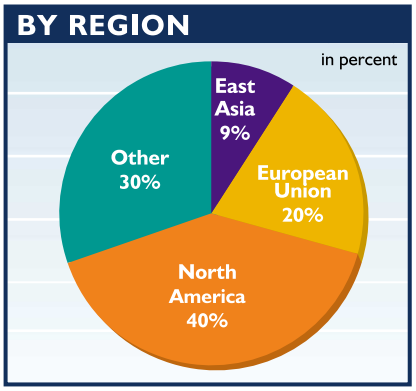
East Asia: China, Hong Kong, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

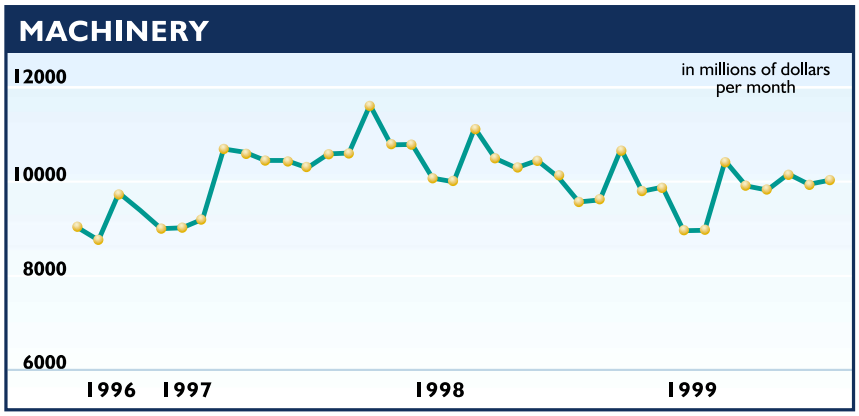
The charts showing product mix and geographic destination for goods categories are based on data for the twelve months ending August 31, 1999. For services, the pie chart is based on CY98.

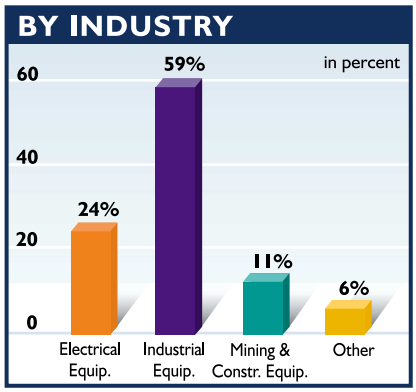
Source: Bureau of the Census (goods), Bureau of Economic Analysis (services).

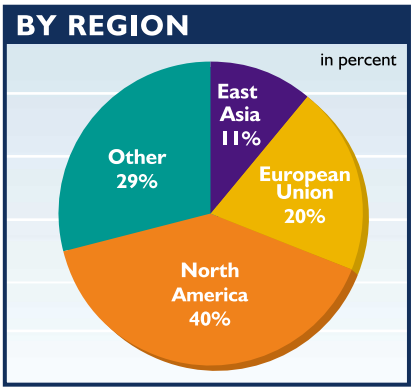






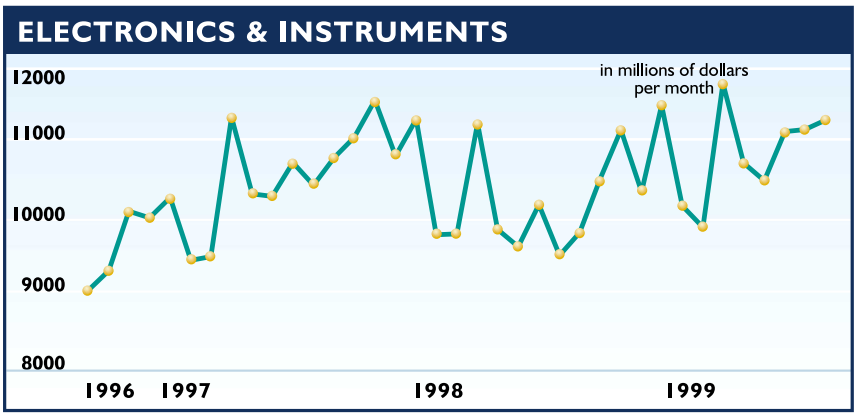


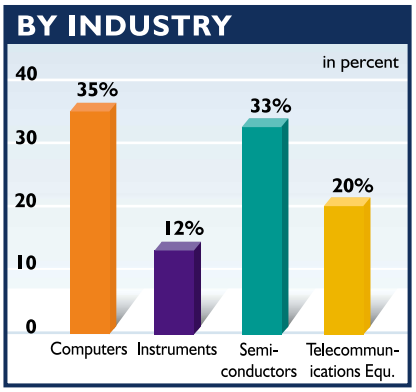


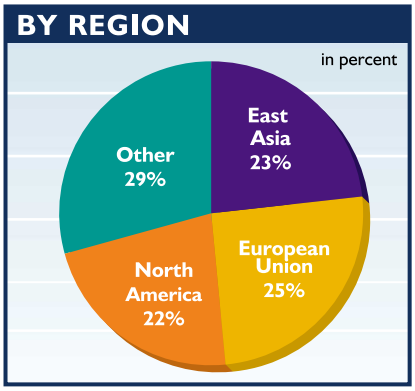


MACHINERY

Exports of these products remain, roughly, on a plateau, nearly, but not quite, matching their 1997 level during recent months.





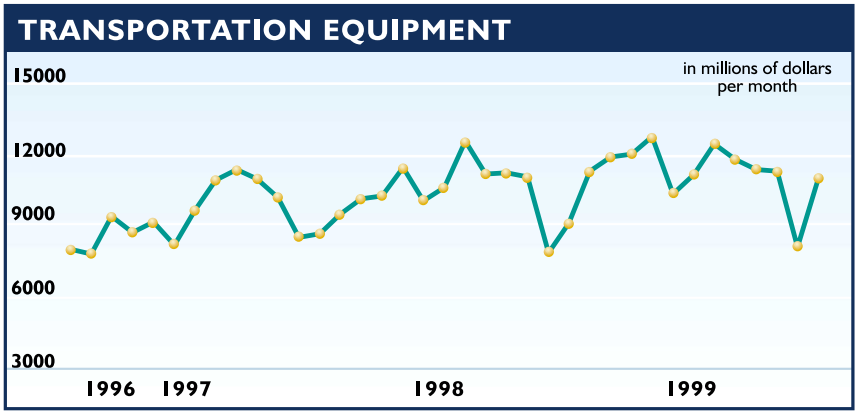


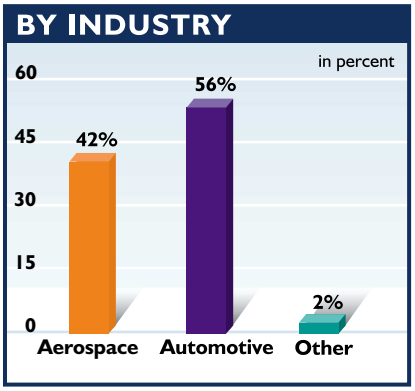
ELECTRONICS & INSTRUMENTS

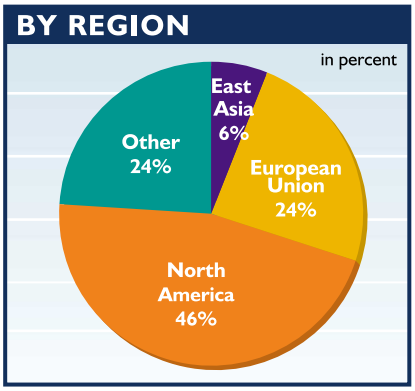
There is evidence of a return to growth in U.S. exports of these products. Recent monthly values clearly exceed those of 1998.

TRANSPORATION EQUIPMENT (CIVILIAN)

In this volatile sector there is evidence of underlying growth. August 1999 exports significantly exceeded those of August 1998. Exports of large aircraft dominate trends in this category.

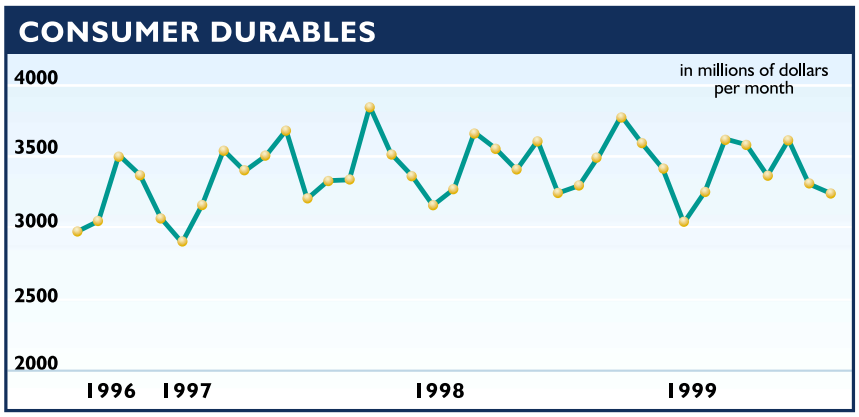


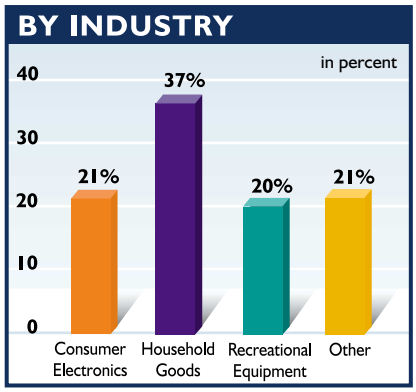


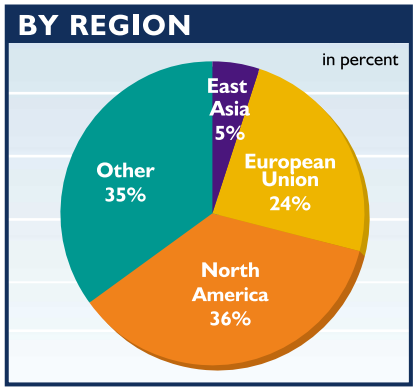


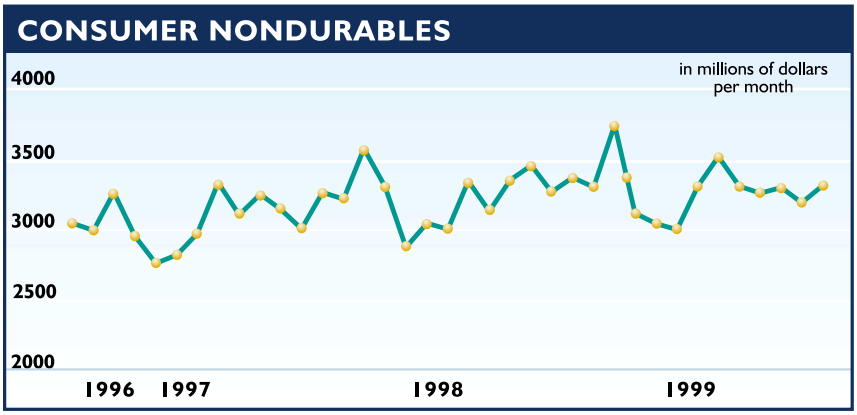
CONSUMER DURABLES

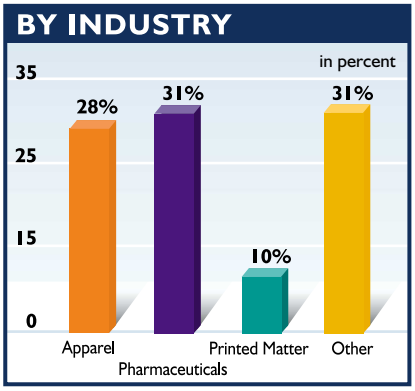
Exports continue to fluctuate within the steady range that has characterized the past two years. The August 1999 level is virtually the same as those of August 1998 and August 1997.

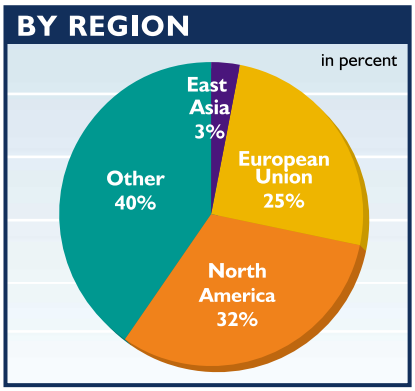






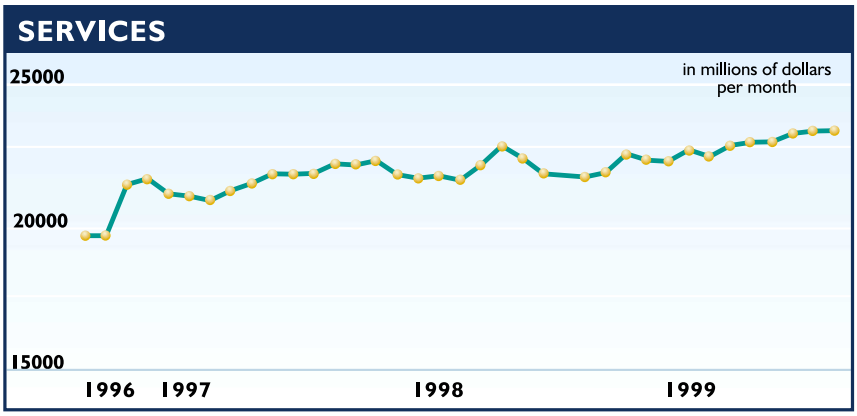


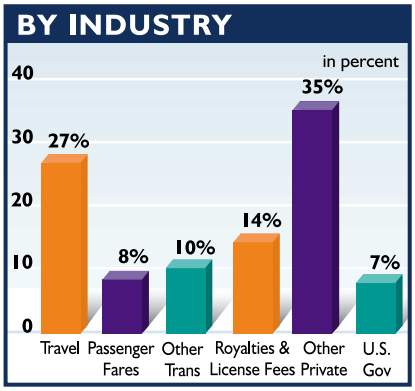


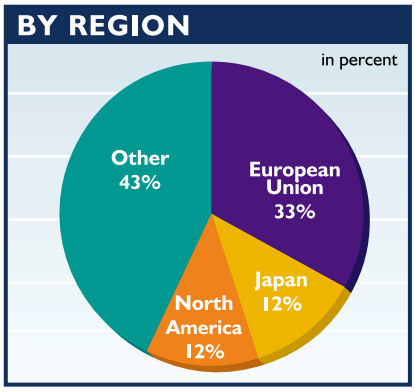


CONSUMER NONDURABLES

August 1999 exports were a bit lower in value than they had been a year before. The steady growth seen in earlier years is no longer evident.







SERVICES

Exports of services in recent months have followed the long-established pattern of steady growth. Services exports are generally less volatile than those of goods. Seasonal adjustment in this chart further eliminates month-to-month fluctuations.

Additional information is available from the International Trade Administration (www.ita.doc.gov/tradestats/),

the Bureau of the Census (www.census.gov/foreign-trade/)

and the Bureau of Economic Analysis (www.bea.doc.gov/bea/).

Prepared by the Office of Trade and Economic Analysis, Trade Development. For more information call 202-482-2056.

SELECTING THE RIGHT MARKET FOR YOUR HIGH TECH EXPORTS

by Office of Computers & Business Equipment, Trade Development

Investment in information technology (IT) is a key element in a nation's economic prosperity. A recent working paper from the Center for Research on Information Technology and Organizations showed "a positive and significant relationship between growth in IT investments and growth in both GDP and labor productivity." The demand for IT technologies in developed and developing countries creates export opportunities for American Companies. This is due to the United States' position as a world leader in the production and delivery of cutting-edge information technologies. As a result, U.S. firms are uniquely qualified to help these countries enjoy the widespread benefits of IT in their overall economies.

IT AROUND THE WORLD

Information technology includes computer and data communications equipment and software, as well as the telecommunications infrastructure of the public switch network, private data networks and the Internet. While the IT industry that supplies these products and services is itself an important element in the U.S. economy, the use of IT by all industries outweighs its contribution. According to *The Emerging Digital Economy*, a Department of Commerce publication, U.S. total business investment in these technologies grew from 3 percent in the 1960s to 45 percent in 1996. IT usage has driven more than a quarter of our economic growth since 1993.

Investment in information technology varies widely from country to country. Table 1 (below) shows several IT indicators for selected countries. The data suggest(s) that users in some countries have access to a limited infrastructure, and therefore, are restricted in their ability to broadly integrate IT products into their

TABLE 1: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDICATORS FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES

Country	PCs per 1,000 people (1997)	Internet Hosts per 10,000 people	Telephone Mainlines per 1,000 people (1997)	IT Spending as a Percentage of GDP (1998)
Brazil	26.3	9.88	107	1.3
China	6.0	0.16	56	0.9
Germany	255.5	140.58	550	1.8
South Africa	41.6	34.02	107	2.5
Turkey	20.7	4.30	250	0.4
United States	406.7	975.94	644	4.0

Source: World Bank, *World Development Indicators,* and the International Data Corporation

economy. The higher the level of IT spending, the broader the diffusion of information technology in the economy. For example, Brazil and South Africa have the same number of telephone mainlines per 1,000 people.

IDENTIFYING THE BEST IT MARKETS

Economic benefits can still result from IT usage across all sectors regardless of the existing infrastructure in any given country. For example, the employees of a small business having a stand-alone PC that requires no telecommunications dependency can perform basic business calculations such as accounts payable and receivable. Quick and easy access to information increases the efficiency of such businesses and can translate into greater productivity for the economy as a whole.

THE UNITED STATES' POSITION AS A WORLD LEADER IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES MAKES U.S. FIRMS UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO HELP THESE COUNTRIES ENJOY THE WIDESPREAD BENEFITS OF IT IN THEIR OVERALL ECONOMIES

A higher level of IT investment in South Africa, however, has resulted in a much more pervasive use of IT across the economy, as is indicated by the larger number of PC owners and Internet hosts per capita. South African users appear to have a higher level of Internet use and application, which means that they are more receptive to e-commerce.

Table 2 (see page 32) compares information technology systems and telecommunications infrastructure with the possible application of IT to business processes. The table reflects the likely range of IT capabilities found around the world. Clearly, the level of sophistication in the application of IT in business functions correlates closely with systems configuration and telecommunications capabilities. A restricted telecommunications infrastructure implies that IT systems and business applications are also limited.

When identifying where U.S. IT products would have the most significant impact around the world, a careful examination of each market and

Photo courtesy of the USDOC

TABLE 2: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE AND BUSINESS APPLICATIONS

System Configuration	Typical System	Typical Business Applications	Communications Requirements
Standalone	Batch mainframes Personal computers (PCs)	Back office (i.e., financial management, human resources management) Word processing/spreadsheets	None
Teleprocessing	Mainframes with remote terminals	Back office Point-of-sale	Public switched network Private data network
Local Area Network (LAN)	PCs connected to departmental servers	Campus email Back office	Local network with twisted pair/cable/fiber, routers, switches, NICs, multiplexers
Wide Area Network (WAN)	PCs connected to enterprise servers	Corporate email Distributed back office Interactive front office	Public switched network Internet Private data network

Source: Office of Computers and Business Equipment., Trade Development, U.S. Department of Commerce

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HAS DRIVEN MORE THAN A QUARTER OF OUR ECONOMIC GROWTH SINCE 1993.

its supporting infrastructure should be made to ensure that U.S. suppliers with the most appropriate technologies participate in trade promotion events.

In underdeveloped markets, the necessary infrastructure and IT usage may not be present to justify bringing suppliers with the most advanced technologies to those markets. For example, while the telecommunications infrastructure is well developed in Europe, the level of investment in IT and Internet infrastructure in another region may not be sufficient to support the latest electronic commerce applications. On the other hand, in developing markets, it may be possible to bring advanced technologies in a modified form to support the existing IT infrastructure, such as wireless communications and computing technologies.

Other factors to consider when identifying potential markets for IT products include government and consumer attitudes towards using technology and towards technological change; whether existing laws or regulations encourage increased IT usage across industry sectors in the economy; and, whether key decision makers consider IT investment fundamental to economic growth. This type of approach to market development should ensure that U.S. suppliers are successful in selling to foreign IT markets, and that foreign users receive the most cost-effective and useful information technologies possible.

Author Information

Office of Computers & Business Equipment
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street & Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 2804
Washington, D.C. 20230
Tel: (202) 482-3548
Fax: (202) 482-0952
Internet:
www.ita.doc.gov/ocbe/ocbehome.nsf

THE TCC ONLINE

A NEW SITE FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM

by Pamela Woods
Trade Compliance Center, Market Access & Compliance

In 1999, the Department of Commerce and the United States Trade Representative announced the establishment of a new Internet service, the Trade Compliance Center (TCC)Online (www.mac.doc.gov/tcc). The website is designed to provide small- and medium-sized businesses easy access to the important information provided by the TCC. Starting in January 2000, the TCC Online, including databases with information on more than 300 trade agreements and 100 market access reports, and an online "Trade Compliant Hotline", will promote opportunities for U.S. businesses, provide crucial information on international commerce regulations and work to ensure foreign compliance with trade agreements.

THE TCC IS NOT ONLY FOR LARGE COMPANIES. IN FACT, SMALL- AND MEDIUM-SIZED EXPORTERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ALERT THE TCC TO THEIR TRADING CONCERNS USING THE WEBSITE'S INTERACTIVE FORM.

OVERVIEW OF THE TCC ONLINE DATABASES

GUIDES

This database contains "Exporter Guides", which are business friendly, "how-to" summaries created especially for small- and medium-sized exporters. The guides offer executive summaries with easy to understand explanations of commitments in trade agreements texts, which tend to be both obscure and heavily legalistic. Essentially, they address the bottom-line significance of each trade agreement for U.S. exporters and workers. The guides clearly lay out who can use the agreements, how to use them, how to recognize if you are being treated unfairly and how to get help.

NEWS

Since many trade agreements are written in complex legal terms, the TCC Online will feature changes in foreign government regulations that affect market access conditions around the globe. "Market Access News You Can Use" will make it easy for U. S. exporters to learn about proposals that may have a strong effect on their ability to obtain access to foreign markets. The core of this service is built around information on two prominent WTO agreements—one on standards and the other on government procurement. Future plans for this section include the addition of tariff changes, coverage of more trade regulations and other related market access data.

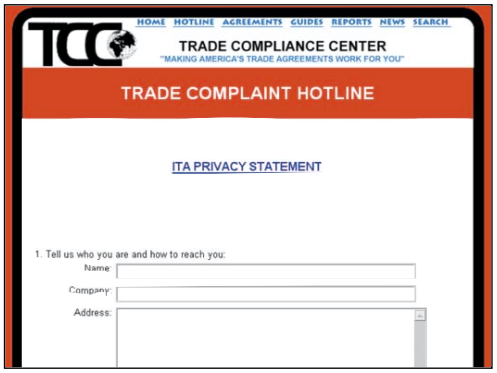
The "International Standards Notification" pages will provide users an opportunity to review and comment on proposed regulations under the "Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement". Its listings of foreign government notifications will be updated daily. This will be a major improvement in allowing U.S. companies access to prospective foreign standards that may affect them.

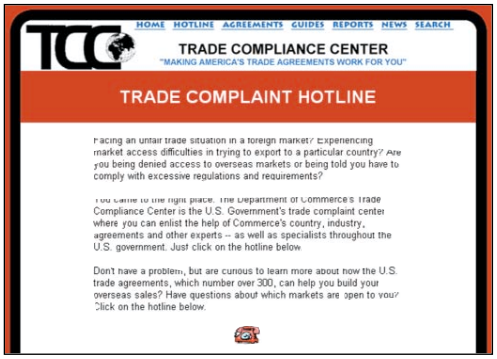
The "International Government Procurement" pages will share information on bidding processes and global opportunities with trading partners. For the first time ever, American companies will have quick and easy access to global government procurement opportunities.

TARA

The "Trade and Related Agreements" (TARA) reference database contains the texts of more than 300 trade agreements. It is a favorite of the site's visitors and will be enhanced with two new categories: "Service Industries" and "Goods Industries".

TCC—www.mac.doc.gov/tcc.gov





Photos courtesy of the TCC

The TCC Online is designed to provide small- and medium-sized exporters easy access to trade agreements and market access reports. The "Trade Complaint Hotline" will allow businesses to voice their concerns via the Internet.

MARKET ACCESS REPORTS

This very popular database provides extensive commercial and economic information collected on overseas market conditions, trade policies and export opportunities. The reports in this section of the website focus on more than 100 countries organized by region and provide instant information for U.S. exporters regarding market access conditions.

COMPLAINT HOTLINE

The TCC is also the U. S. Government's Trade Complaint Center. The "Trade Complaint Hotline" is a live complaint service center, delivering compliance advocacy to U.S. exporters. If faced with an unfair global trading situation, U.S. exporters can notify the TCC immediately. TCC specialists will determine if a trade agreement covers the case and will focus U.S. government resources on helping solve the problem.

The TCC is not only for large companies. In fact, small- and medium-sized exporters are encouraged to alert the TCC to their trading concerns using the website's interactive form. With the help of the internet, it is easy for all U.S. exporters to seek assistance. Be sure to take advantage of all of the TCC's new website features in January 2000 (www.mac.doc.gov/tcc). ■

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TRADE COMPLIANCE CENTER AND ITS PROGRAMS, CONTACT:

Trade Compliance Center
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street & Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 3043
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GROWING YOUR BUSINESS THROUGH OVERSEAS INVESTMENT

PROMISING OPPORTUNITIES IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

by Kirk Robertson
Overseas Private Investment Corporation

Doing business in today's global marketplace can be challenging. But done right, taking advantage of promising opportunities in international trade and investment will help a business grow. The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) offers a number of services to assist U.S. businesses, of all sizes, prosper in today's global economy.

OPIC supports U.S. investors through activities designed to mobilize and facilitate investment and to reduce associated risks. It provides assistance to American clients in some 140 emerging and developing markets in every region of the world. Since 1971, OPIC has supported $121 billion worth of investments have generated $58 billion in U.S. exports and created more than 237,000 American jobs.

SINCE 1971, OPIC HAS SUPPORTED $121 BILLION WORTH OF INVESTMENTS THAT HAVE GENERATED $58 BILLION IN U.S. EXPORTS AND CREATED MORE THAN 237,000 AMERICAN JOBS.

OPIC finances and insures U.S. private investment projects that are financially sound, promise significant benefits to the host country, and foster private initiative and competition. OPIC will not support projects that could result in the loss of U.S. jobs, adversely affect the environment or contribute to worker rights violations.

PROTECTING AMERICAN INVESTMENTS

OPIC protects U.S. businesses against political risks overseas by providing insurance for American investments in new ventures, expansions or privatizations of existing enterprises. OPIC offers innovative insurance coverage, advocacy and a strong claims payment record. OPIC insurance protects against the following political risks:

Currency Inconvertibility—Deterioration in an investor's ability to convert profits, debt service and other remittances from local currency into U.S. dollars and transfer those dollars out of the host country;

Expropriation—Loss of an investment due to expropriation, nationalization or confiscation by a foreign government;

Political Violence—Loss of assets or income due to war, revolution, insurrection, or politically motivated civil strife, terrorism or sabotage.

OPIC can insure up to $200 million per project, though it does not insure against currency devaluations or guarantee that investors will earn a profit. Coverage is available for equity investments; parent company, third-party loans and loan guaranties; technical assistance agreements; cross-border leases; and, other forms of investment. OPIC has special insurance programs for small businesses, capital markets, and contractors and exporters.

FINANCING AMERICAN INVESTMENTS

OPIC's finance program helps U.S. companies of all sizes compete in new and growing markets overseas where conventional financial institutions are often reluctant or unable to lend. OPIC provides both long-term project and corporate financing for

OPIC SUCCESS STORY

Aquarius Systems, a division of D&D Products, Inc., was awarded a World Bank contract in July of 1998 to supply the equipment, personnel and management to chop 3,700 acres of water hyacinth choking Lake Victoria in Kenya.

Between 15 and 45 percent of Aquarius Systems' sales are exports to Europe, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Africa. Before discovering OPIC, Aquarius Systems struggled with difficult governmental issues overseas, impeding its ability to export. OPIC's recent participation contributed the experience and expertise with foreign entities necessary to make Aquarius' Lake Victoria project possible.

OPIC's political risk insurance coverages give Aquarius Systems a level playing field in the international market, and provided its bank the confidence and peace of mind necessary to fulfill Aquarius' financial needs. ■

Photo Courtesy of OPIC

Aquarius System's Shredder at work in Kenya's Lake Victoria.

overseas investments that are wholly owned by U.S. companies or that are joint ventures with meaningful U.S. participation. OPIC uses flexible financing structures and conditions to assist U.S. companies secure timely and appropriate financing. In addition, OPIC can help U.S. contractors by providing an OPIC guaranty for bid bonds, performance bonds, and guaranties issued by other U.S. financial institutions.

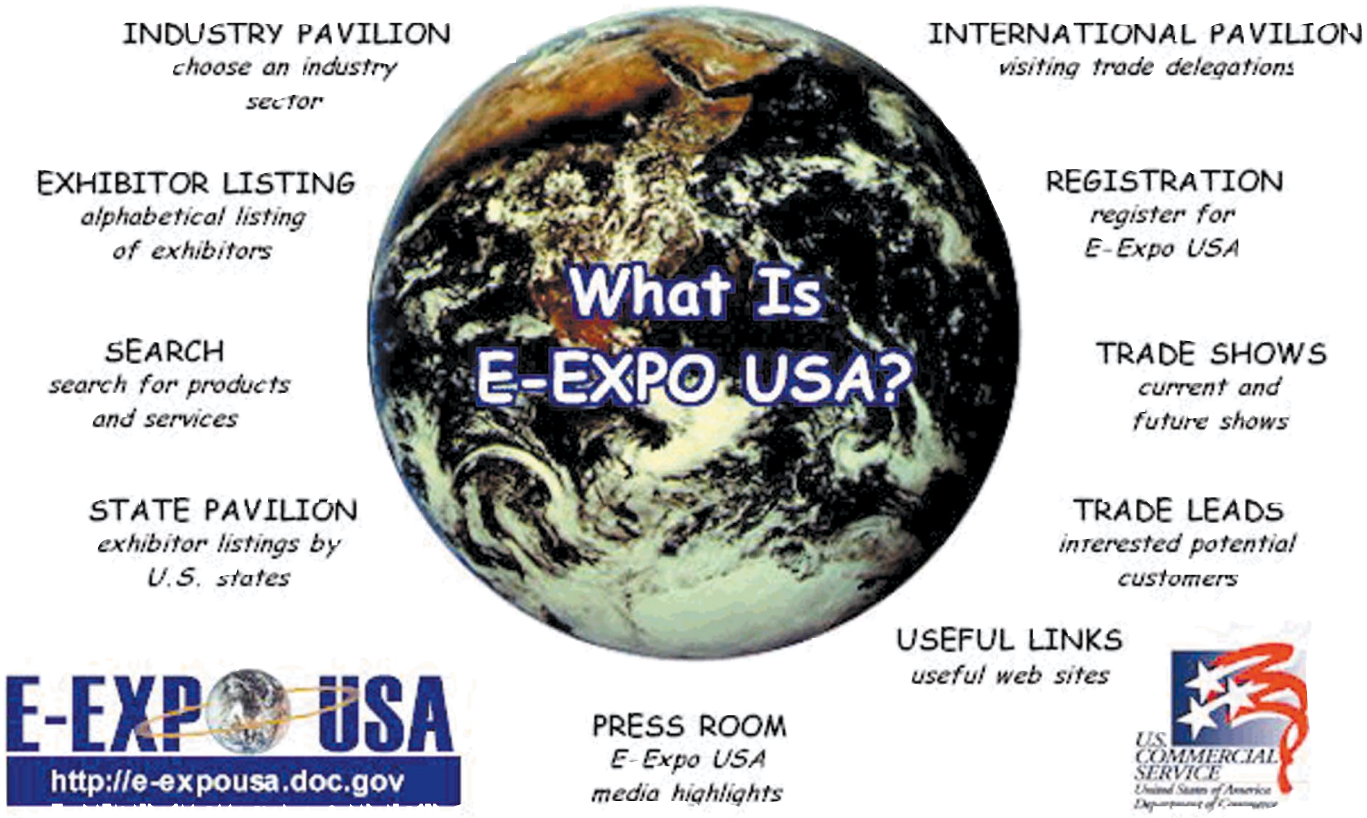
OPIC also helps finance investments through funds operating in sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, India, the Middle East, Asia, the Pacific region, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe and the New Independent States. Four sector-specific funds operate worldwide, three concentrating on environmental projects and one on investments involving U.S.-based small businesses. OPIC-supported funds have helped bring economic development to people in more than 30 developing countries.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESS

OPIC recently launched a new effort to better meet the needs of small businesses. This initiative includes a new lower minimum loan size of only $250,000 for small business; special simplified applications for small business; "Quick Cover" insurance that offers a two week turn-around for certain sectors; "how-to" materials targeted to small businesses; and a small business hotline (202-336-8610).

U.S. businesses with annual sales of less than $250 million qualify for OPIC's small businesses programs. Entities with no revenues, or with net worth or stockholder's equity of less than $67 million, also qualify. Small business projects eligible for OPIC support include new investments, or expansions; formation of a new branch office, sales office, or service center; warehousing or small assembly operations; and contracting to provide construction, advisory or technical assistance services and exporting equipment. ■

For more information on OPIC programs and services, visit the Overseas Private Investment Corporation website (http://opic.gov) or call the OPIC infoline (202-336-8799).



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