

Information Sheet:

Travel (Here Vs. There)

It is a well documented fact that the most effective way to do international business is to go there — travel to the foreign markets and meet with your customers first-hand. However, many companies cannot afford to do this, particularly when starting to export.

So, if you can't go, what can you do?

I. “Here”

For many companies, one of the most effective sales and promotion tools available is their people and facilities. Many have experienced that whenever they have had the opportunity to host a prospect, they have made a customer and a friend.

A company can do this for its international prospects as well....

Most of the better foreign distributors, agents and manufacturers' representatives visit the United States frequently, and are more than willing to come see a company when on one of their scheduled trips (they won't necessarily make a special trip, but they will include a company visit in their itinerary). So why not offer them the opportunity to visit?

Hint: Create a "Visitation Program."

Any potential distributor visit will have a much greater chance of becoming a reality and success if the company:

1. **Assists the foreign prospect —**
 - make hotel/motel arrangements (best if the company pays!).
 - meet at airport and provide escort.
 - cover expenses while visiting (lodging, meals).
 - provide translators, if needed.

2. **Prepares an internal plan —**
 - provide a schedule so all who need to meet your prospect are ready.
 - incorporate some product training.
 - include some social activity (an invitation to a key manager's home is particularly special, and more casual, relaxing events are generally always appreciated).

Hint: Don't overlook the international potential of a U.S. trade show.

As companies expand into the global markets, most U.S. trade associations are becoming more aware of their need to also serve the global markets. As a result, most U.S. trade shows now have a special emphasis on their international visitors.

Contact your trade associations to find your international potential that is available in the U.S. (and implement your "Visitation Program").

II. “There”

We all understand the importance of going "there"... but how do you initiate a foreign trip?

A. **Travel Strategy**

One of the best ways to plan an overseas trip is to focus on international trade shows specific to the industry sector that the company serves. By planning a trip around a trade show event, the company can usually receive the fullest return on its investment of time and money. And to fully realize the potential of a trip, the company should contact the U.S. Department of Commerce and utilize its ADS (Agent Distributor Service) program for lining up potential distributors before going!

Combining a trade show visit (or participation) with prearranged trade leads from an ADS is a winning strategy for planning a foreign trip.

B. **Trade Shows**

Perhaps the single best way to enter new foreign markets is to participate in a trade show. Even if you don't exhibit, a visit scheduled around a trade show can be productive, particularly if you fully utilize the opportunity to:

1. Conduct market research.
2. Identify major companies.
3. Meet distributors/agents.
4. Learn about trade associations.

All of which are available at trade shows!

Listings of international trade fairs are available from numerous sources, but perhaps the easiest to obtain is from the U.S. Department of Commerce District Office.

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