Factors Impeding the Development of Export Activities: A Survey of Louisiana Small Businesses

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Abstract

It is well documented that small businesses play a significant role in the economy of the United States. And there are many programs both at the state and federal level to assist small businesses develop export trade activities. However, as reported by Kedia and Chhoker (1986), the level of awareness of the various assistance programs is low among small businesses. This paper examines the factors that impede the development of export activities of small businesses in Louisiana. Data was collected from 151 small businesses. Survey results show that the most significant factors that hinder the development of export activities are: lack of knowledge of where and how to start export activities, limited organizational financial resources, perceived limited profit potential of export sales, and lack of resources to finance international transactions. Other obstacles include high (uncompetitive) prices, products not meeting foreign standards, and export logistics problems. These findings generally agree with results reported by other studies that examined similar issues with different small business populations and samples (e.g., Hester, 1985; Shuman 1997; Leonidou, 1995, 2004).

I. Introduction

The growing globalization of the marketplace is becoming increasingly important to U.S. businesses, and provides an important area of growth and expansion for many small firms (Caldwell, 1992). The internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is being driven by three significant factors: the globalization of competitors, opening of markets due to regional trade agreements, and higher growth rates in foreign markets (Simon, 1998).

Small and medium sized businesses play a crucial role in the U.S. economy. Today, about 99 percent of all businesses in the United States are small firms. They employ more than half of the U.S. workforce and account for about half of the gross domestic product (Shuman, 1997). Small businesses generate about 66 percent of all new jobs, and they are also one of the most dynamic sources of U.S. export growth. According to Shuman (1997), approximately 96 percent of U.S. exporting companies are SMEs; however, they only account for about one-third of U.S. exports. The general belief is that, despite their importance in the economy, when it comes to exporting, small businesses are not realizing their potential.

To help alleviate the problem, the U.S. Department of Commerce and various other federal agencies have introduced export promotion programs to boost U.S. exports (Ali & Sweircz, 1991). In addition to federal programs, each of the 50 States has programs that are geared toward increasing exports from their particular region.

According to Sisisky (1989), every manufacturer in the U.S. is in the international market, even if they do not attempt to sell to foreign markets.

> "Decisions by U.S. small businesses not to export do not keep foreign competitors from sending their products to this country. Small business people must recognize that a good defense is an effective offense and they should be exporting." (Sisisky, 1989, p.1).

An example of this observation involves the Louisiana crawfish farmers. According to the Economist magazine (1998), the U.S. crawfish market has been dominated by Louisiana farmers for years; its 2,500 crawfish farmers and 1,200 wild-crawfish harvesters produce more than 100 million pounds each year, nearly all of the U.S. domestic supply. However, as local farmers ventured into the east- and west-coast markets of the U.S., they encountered competition from China. According to the head of Louisiana's Crawfish Promotion Board, Harold Benoit, Chinese crawfish farmers were targeting the U.S. market for crawfish tails. And crawfish tails are usually peeled or processed in one form or another. About half of Louisiana's crawfish crop is sold whole (un-peeled, and unprocessed); the rest is pre-peeled by seasonal workers. The labor cost of the peeling process drives up the prices of Louisiana crawfish; and this is where the Chinese began to gain advantage. And starting in the early 1990s, Chinese crawfish farmers flooded the U.S. market with cheap frozen tails. By 1995, imports from China had grown to millions of pounds, priced at less than half the Louisiana rate; resulting in hard economic times for local peelers and processors.

II. Background

Several studies have dealt with various aspects of export activity by small businesses. In a survey of small businesses, Hester (1985) identified three principal reasons why small businesses failed to export. These include: (1) lack of knowledge of foreign markets (67 percent); (2) limited financial resources (50 percent); and (3) the current strength of the U.S. dollar (33 percent). Like Hester (1985), other studies have suggested that lack of knowledge about foreign markets, inability to assess market conditions in a changing international environment, and inability to target export sales are the major problems inhibiting small and medium-sized organizations from exporting (Czinkota & Johnston, 1983; Edmunds & Sarkis, 1986; Green & Larsen, 1987; Kaynak & Kothari, 1984; Kinsey, 1987).

Kedia and Chhoker (1986) evaluated small firms' knowledge and use of export assistance programs provided by various governmental agencies. Their study indicated that a large number of small- and medium-sized firms are eager to export their products and services, but are unsure of the methods for reaching their goals. These firms are unfamiliar with the various incentives and assistance programs offered by both federal and state governments. However, among the small minority of firms which are aware of the programs, the level of participation is fairly high.

O'Rourke (1985) found that foreign promotion and sales by small and large corporations differ in several important aspects. In comparison to larger firms, small businesses have attempted to penetrate foreign markets only recently; they export a small share of their total output; they tend to rely more on the initiatives of their foreign clients than on their own efforts to seek out foreign markets and customers.

In a major study of the barriers hindering small business export development, Leonidou (2004) reviewed the findings of 32 empirical studies conducted during the period 1960-2000. The results of the analysis show that export barriers can be classified as: (a) internal – i.e., barriers associated with the company's resources and capabilities as well as the company's approach/attitude toward export business opportunities (e.g., functional, informational, and marketing), and (b) external – i.e., barriers associated with either the home environment of the firm or the host environment of the country that the firm is attempting to export (e.g., procedural, governmental, task, and environmental). Among the various categories of barriers, Leonidou noted that informational barriers (e.g, locating foreign markets, finding international market data, identifying foreign business opportunities, and contacting foreign customers) were consistently rated as the areas of critical need by exporting and non-exporting small businesses alike.

Access to trade finance is another reason cited as a major barrier. The lack of export financing is particularly damaging to SMEs because such firms do not have the internal financial strength to generate working capital to produce, process or acquire goods and services to fill purchase orders, or ship and extend credit to their buyers (Shuman, 1997).

The increasing number of studies that are being conducted on the subject of small business exporting activities reflect the importance of the need to understand the underlying factors that impede the development of their export activities.

III. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the major reasons why small businesses in Louisiana are experiencing difficulties reaching their export potential. Specifically, the study determines the factors that serve as impediments for non-exporting small business firms in developing export trade activities. Since small business activities are affected by local environmental factors (e.g., state and local government assistance, tax incentives, local labor skills, etc.), this study attempts to examine those factors from the perspective of small businesses in Louisiana.

IV. Methodology

Sample Design

The sample for the study was drawn from three sample frames: firms that are listed in databases compiled by (a) the Louisiana Department of Economic Development, (b) the World Trade Center of New Orleans, and (c) the U.S. Small Business Administration, Office of International Trade. These firms have certain characteristics that are not necessarily present in the general population of small businesses in Louisiana – they have taken affirmative steps to learn more and/or participate in export trade activities. These affirmative steps include registering with one or more institutions/organizations that normally offer assistance in export trade development. Thus, the focus of the study is on small businesses in Louisiana that are interested in participating in export trade activities. And specifically, for those firms that have not yet succeeded in completing a single international transaction, this paper examines the reasons for not exporting.

Data Collection

Data for the study was collected by means of a mail survey. Questionnaires were mailed to 1300 firms. Of the 1,300 questionnaires mailed, 96 were returned as undeliverable. Thus, only 1204 reached their destination. A total of 151 questionnaires were completed and returned, for a response rate of about 12.54 percent. Relevant sections of the questionnaire are presented in Exhibit I.

To collect measures to answer the research question of: "Reasons for Not Exporting", respondents were instructed to check the single most important reason that their firm is not participating in export trade. The list of possible reasons (see Exhibit I) was assembled after an extensive review of the literature. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to assume that the list is by no means exhaustive. Data about reasons for not exporting was collected only from those participants whose firms were not participating in export trade.

Characteristics of the Sample

A profile of the responding firms reveal that more than 60 percent of them engage in export trade (see Table 1). The majority of the firms (83%) have been in business for five years or more (Table 2). However, in terms of size, about 56% of firms have 10 employees or fewer (Table 3). The majority (82.2%) of the firms are headed by men (Table 4).

TABLE 1: Export Trade Status

	Number	Percent
Exporting Firms	87	62.6
Non-Exporting Firms	52	37.4
Total	139	100

TABLE 2: Years Firm Has Been In Business*
(By Export Trade Status)

Years In Business	Export Trade Status				Total n = 135	
	Exporting Firms		Non-Exporting Firms			
	n	%	n	%	n	%
5 or Less	5	5.70	15	31.30	**20**	**14.8**
5 - 10	3	3.40	11	22.90	**14**	**11.4**
10 - 15	10	11.50	2	4.20	**12**	**8.9**
15 - 20	17	19.50	4	8.30	**21**	**15.6**
20 - 25	9	10.30	7	14.60	**16**	**11.9**
25 - 30	8	9.20	1	2.10	**9**	**6.7**
30 - 35	5	5.70	1	2.10	**6**	**4.4**
35 - 40	3	3.40	1	2.10	**4**	**3.0**
40 - 45	7	8.00	0	0.00	**7**	**5.2**
45 - 50	2	2.30	1	2.10	**3**	**2.2**
51 +	18	20.70	5	10.40	**23**	**17.0**
Total - Columns	87	100	48	100	**135**	**100**

Note: Years Firm Has Been in Business was collected as a ratio data; categories were developed for presentation purposes only.

TABLE 3: Company Size (No. of Employees)
(By Export Trade Status)

No. of Employees	Export Trade Status				Total n = 135	
	Exporting Firms		Non-Exporting Firms			
	n	%	n	%	n	%
10 or Fewer	37	43.00	39	79.60	**76**	**56.3**
10 - 50	30	34.90	8	16.30	**38**	**28.1**
50 - 100	5	5.80	0	0.00	**5**	**3.7**
101 +	14	16.30	2	4.10	**16**	**11.9**
Total - Columns	86	100	49	100	**135**	**100**

* Note: Company size was measured by means of number of employees - ratio data was collected; categories were developed for presentation purposes only.

TABLE 4: Gender of CEO
(By Export Trade Status)

Gender of CEO	Export Trade Status				Total n = 135	
	Exporting Firms		Non-Exporting Firms			
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	74	87.1	37	74.0	**111**	**82.2**
Female	11	12.9	13	26.0	**24**	**17.8**
Total - Columns	85	100	50	100	**135**	**100**

Nonresponse Error

Of the 1204 mailed questionnaires that reached their destination, 151 were returned, for a response rate of 12.54%. The seemingly low response rate requires that the issue of nonresponse error be examined. In the general social science research literature, it is suggested that nonresponse error can be assessed in many ways including: (a) archival, (b) follow-up, (c) wave, and (d) intentions approaches (Rogelberg et al. 2003; King & He 2005; Dooley & Lindner 2003).

In applying the archival approach, comparisons are made between the respondents and the population in the archival set (King & He 2003); in this study, that would be a comparison between the respondents and the population set of the three databases from which the sample was drawn. The follow-up approach requires that a small sample of nonrespondents be contacted; they are then compared to the respondents, based on organizational characteristics (King & He 2003; Dooley & Lindner 2003). The intentions approach is similar to the follow-up approach; however, the comparison is based on the attitudes of those not intending to respond to the survey versus the attitudes of those who intend to respond (Rogelberg et al. 2003; King & He 2003). In the wave approach, early responders are compared to late responders; the assumption is that late responders are similar to nonreponders (than they are to early responders) on important organizational and/or attitudinal factors (King & He 2003; Dooley & Lindner 2003; Ellis et al. 1970).

In this study, the wave approach of assessing nonresponse error was adopted. A comparison was made between those questionnaires that were returned early (fours weeks after mailing) and those that were returned late (six to 10 weeks after mailing). And there were no statistically significant differences between the two groups based on size of the firm, years in business, and whether they participated in export trade or not.

V. Results

Reasons for Not Exporting

As Table 5 shows, the single most significant reason why many small businesses in Louisiana are yet to take advantage of export opportunities is a lack of knowledge. More than 50% of the non-exporting firms cited a lack of knowledge as the major reason. They do not know where or how to start export trade activities. Lack of resources is the second major reason for not exporting - about 21% of the non-exporting firms noted that they have limited financial resources. And about 13% of the businesses believe that there is limited profit potential in export trade.

TABLE 5: Reasons for Not Engaging In Export Activities (Non-Exporting Firms)

	n	%
Do not know where and how to start export activities	25	53.19
Firm has limited financial resources	10	21.28
Export sales have limited profit potential	6	12.76
Found a foreign buyer, but, could not finance sale	3	6.38
Our prices are too high	1	2.13
Our product does not meet standards	1	2.13
Found a buyer, but, encountered export logistics problems	1	2.13
TOTAL	47	100

"Do not know where and how to start export activities"

In this study, 53.19% of the non-exporting firms stated that they "do not know where and how to start export activities". This is the single most important barrier selected from a list of factors (see Exhibit I) that have been identified as barriers in the literature. This barrier is the general lack of knowledge with respect to "identifying, selecting, and contacting international markets due to informational inefficiencies" (Leonidou, 2004, p. 285). Leonidou (1995, 2004) classifies this particular type of obstacle as informational barriers. Other studies that have identified informational inefficiencies include Morgan and Katsikeas (1997), Katsikeas (1994), and Katsikeas and Morgan (1994). However, this particular obstacle may also imply the lack of expertise of the management of the firm with respect to export developing activities. In Louisiana (and in many other states), there are programs that are designed to help small businesses develop export activities. However, in almost all cases, it is left to the management of each firm to locate and take advantage of available assistance programs. A lack of the ability to locate and capitalize on available assistance programs may suggest ineffectiveness on the part of the management of the small business.

"Firm has limited financial resources"

Export development activities require significant financial commitment on the part of the small business. Activities such as participating in foreign trade missions, developing marketing promotion programs for foreign markets, selecting foreign distributors and representatives, and traveling and visiting major potential customers require financial resources. Small businesses are generally not only small in size, but, they also tend to have limited resources; and this creates a major obstacle in terms of developing export trade activities. Many (21.28%) of the non-exporting firms noted that their firms lack the financial resources to develop export trade activities. For this group of firms, this is the most significant barrier that they are facing. However, in the export trade development environment, there are programs designed to help businesses finance export transactions. In the United States, at the federal level, the Export-Import (EXIM) Bank provides assistance to businesses.

"Export sales have limited profit potential"

Many small businesses tend to cite perceived lack of profit potential in international transactions as a barrier to export development. In this study, 12.76% of the non-exporting firms reported that the most significant reason for their lack of interest in exporting is that there is not enough profit in export sales. The low potential for high profits is derived from the fact that international transactions can and do involve the performance of additional marketing, sales and logistics tasks which may include, product adaptation, transportation over long distances, and insurance. In a global business environment with great distances between the point of production and points of consumption, these additional tasks increase the cost of marketing and sales significantly (Tersptra & Sarathy, 2000; Czinkota & Ronkainen (2001); Cateora & Graham 2005). Usually, the major beneficiaries of export trade activities are firms that have achieved economies of scale in their production and marketing functions. Therefore, it has been recommended that small businesses adopt a strategy of niche marketing which will afford them the potential of achieving reasonable profits even with small scale production and marketing activities (Doole & Lowe, 2001).

"Found a foreign buyer, but, could not finance sale"

There are small businesses that have taken the preliminary steps in developing export trade activities, but, have not been able to complete a single transaction because of inadequate finance. In this study, about 6.38% of the non-exporters noted that in their export development efforts, the firms were able to develop foreign prospects, but the transactions could not be consummated because of lack of resources to produce and transport the requested products. This barrier is not unique to small businesses in Louisiana, as it has been reported in other studies (Shuman, 1997; Leonidou, 1995, 2004). However, it is an issue that needs to be addressed by the State. Louisiana, like many other states, conducts trade missions overseas in search of foreign market opportunities for products (and services) that are produced in the State. In some of these missions, one or more participating small businesses may be able to establish good prospects, but, only to see the potential transaction wither, because of a lack of resources to finance it.

Other Factors that Impede Export Development

Other factors uncovered in this study that impede export development activities include: (a) High (Uncompetitive) Prices - "Our Prices are Too High"; (b) Failure to meet Foreign Standards – "Our Product Does Not Meet Standards"; and (c) Export Logistics Problems – "Found a Buyer, But, Encountered Export Logistics Problems". Though, these barriers are similar to those that have been reported in other studies (e.g., Hester, 1985; Czinkota & Johnston, 1983; Edmunds & Sarkis, 1986; Green & Larsen, 1987; Kaynak & Kothari, 1984; Kinsey, 1987), they are not perceived as major obstacles by a large number of Louisiana small businesses. Each of these factors was cited as the most significant barrier, by only about two percent of the non-exporting firms in this study.

Organizational Factors and Small Business Export Development Activities

Analysis of the data reveal important correlates between organizational factors such as size (i.e., number of employees), number of years in business, and gender of the Chief Executive Officer (or owner of the business) with the exporting status of the firms (i.e., whether a firm engages in exporting trade activities or not). For example, Point Biserial Correlations analysis show that export status is correlated with firm size, as well as with the number of years in business (see Table 6). Generally, the results show that the larger the firm (in terms of number of employees), the more likely it will engage in export trade activities; and also, the longer the firm has been in business, the more likely it will engage in export trade activities. And though the analysis shows that the relationship is significant ($p<0.001$), the level of correlation is not strong in either of the cases (Table 6: $r=0.342$ for firm size; and $r=0.358$ for years in business). However, the findings agree with the general pattern of association between firm size and participation in export trade activities (Barker & Kaynak 1992; Katsikeas & Morgan 1994; Leonidou 2000). The overall thesis is that young firms tend to have fewer employees, and also, are generally more susceptible to export barriers because, in part, of limited resources (Leonidou 2000).

TABLE 6: Point Biserial Correlations: Export Trade Status By Company Size and Years in Business

	Export Trade Status by Company Size*	Export Trade Status by Years in Business
Point-Biserial	0.342** n=135	0.358** n=135
P-Value	0.000	0.000

* Note: Number of employees was used as a proxy for company size; ratio data was collected.
** p< 0.001

As reported previously, 82.2% of the firms who participated in the study were headed by men and 17.8% were headed by women. The data was analyzed to determine whether there is a relationship between the gender of the Chief Executive Officer (or owner of the business) and the export trade status of the firm. Since the data for both variables were collected as categorical (nominal) data, a Chi-Square analysis was conducted. The results show that there is a difference in the distribution of the two categories (exporting versus non-exporting firms) when viewed from the perspective of the gender of the head of the firm (see Tables 7.1 & 7.2). Generally, a higher percentage of the firms headed by men engaged in export trade activities than those headed by women; however, the difference is not statistically significant – (see Tables 7.2 - Pearson Chi-Square = 3.673; $p<0.10$).

TABLE 7.1: Export Trade Status (By Gender of CEO)

Export Trade Status	Gender of CEO			
	Male		Female	
	n	%	N	%
Exporting Firm	74	66.7	11	45.8
Non-Exporting Firm	37	33.3	13	54.2
Total - Columns	111	100	24	100

TABLE 7.2: Chi-Square Statistics
Export Trade Status (By Gender of CEO)

	Value	Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	3.673	0.055
Likelihood Ratio	3.561	0.092

VI. Discussion

A major objective of this study was to identify the factors that serve as major impediments to export development by small businesses in Louisiana. The scope of the study was limited to Louisiana because small business activities are affected by local environmental factors (e.g., state and local government assistance, tax incentives, local labor skills, etc.), and there is always a need to examine how those factors affect the perception and behavior of small business owners. The findings show that the majority of the small businesses that do not export (53.19%) cited a lack of knowledge about the exporting process as the primary reason for their lack of involvement in export development. Most of these businesses do not know where or how to start export activities. The second factor cited is lack of adequate financial resources to pursue foreign markets (21.28%). And the third obstacle cited as a major impediment to exporting is the lack of profits in export sales activities.

These are some of the same factors that have been reported by other studies of small businesses (e.g., Leonidou 1995 & 2004, Hester 1985; Howard & Herremans 1988; Kathawala et al. 1989; Badrinath 1994; Moini 1998). For example, Howard and Herremans (1988) noted that based on several hearings, the Congressional Committee on Small Business found that the greatest obstacles in exporting are lack of information, regulations, expenses, and financing. And Badrinath (1994) noted that small and medium sized enterprises (SME) do not generally have the ability to sift through the large mass of information that is usually handed to them at export trade offices. These businesses have difficulty extracting the parts of the information that may be relevant to their specific needs. Leonidou (2004) categorized these types of impediments as informational barriers, and noted that they tend to rank high as major barriers to small business export development.

Other findings of the study include the fact that some of the small businesses (6.38%) may have been successful in identifying foreign prospects for their products, but only to see potential transactions wither because of a lack of funds to finance them. Additional obstacles identified include: High (Uncompetitive) Prices (2.13%), Failure of Product to Meet Foreign Standards (2.13%), and Export Logistics Problems (2.13%). However, as the results indicate, the majority of Louisiana small businesses do not consider these additional obstacles as major barriers.

These findings have significant implications both for small businesses as well as for public policy makers. Increased globalization of businesses from emerging markets are making it more difficult for small businesses in the United States to be satisfied with just serving the U.S. market. Small and medium size businesses from countries like China and Vietnam are bringing competition home to Louisiana businesses - both in the crawfish and the shrimp markets.

For public officials, the primary concern is with the effectiveness of the various state and federal programs aimed at encouraging small businesses to engage in export. For example, in a study of Wisconsin small businesses, Moini (1998) noted that existing export assistance programs were not reaching their targeted audiences in an effective manner. The issue seems to center on how to get the right assistance programs to the right group of small businesses. It has been argued that small and medium-sized firms do not constitute a single homogeneous group (Bilkey & Tesar, 1977; Tesar & Tarleton, 1982). And therefore, it is important that policy makers have a good understanding of the characteristics of the differences that can occur among them, if they are to implement assistance programs effectively.

Moini (1998) noted that growing evidence suggests that firms pass through several stages on the way to becoming actively involved in export activity (e.g., Bilkey & Tesar 1977; Bilkey 1978). If this is the case, export assistance programs should be targeted to provide the right type of assistance at the appropriate stage of the internationalization process. Bilkey (1978) argues that if export assistance programs are formulated in terms of the export internationalization process, then:

(1) experienced exporters would be stimulated to increase exports by removing perceived obstacles to exporting;
(2) non-exporters would be stimulated to begin exporting by being provided with export orders and with managerial assistance; and
(3) firms that have not attempted to export would be stimulated to explore the feasibility of exporting by programs promoting the attractiveness of exporting and through international education.

Similarly, Badrinath (1994) argues that, small businesses are usually daunted by the complexities of international marketing and feel unprepared to go through the steps of selling abroad. They are faced not only with the challenges of achieving reasonable product quality and respectable production levels, but also the tasks of arranging logistical support for the movement of consignments, preparing export documentation, securing export credit and insurance, and other export related activities. For small businesses in this category, assistance programs should provide a precise list of target markets and the necessary background information about each market, as well as the proposed marketing operations. And whenever possible, a list of potential buyers should be provided. However, for the small businesses with experience in exporting, the traditional promotional methods of organizing marketing missions and participating in trade fairs, particularly specialized ones, would continue to be effective not only for market entry, but also for market diversification.

VII. Conclusion

While the study and its findings may be of value to practitioners, researchers, and policy makers, there are limitations that should be noted. The study examined a limited number of variables, and may have overlooked other factors that could have offered alternative explanation of why some small businesses do not export, such as the overall educational level of the owner/founder of the business, the risk-averse behavior of decision makers, and /or the inward- versus outward-looking perspective of the managers, or macro-level factors in the overall business environment (Zapalska et al. 2000). Additionally, the results obtained from the analysis of the relationship between organizational factors and export trade status suggests that organizational factors can influence the development of export trade activities, at least minimally. Furthermore, a focused study of this type, with a sample of small businesses from Louisiana, can produce results that may be difficult to replicate with other samples.

Nevertheless, despite the many factors identified as impediments to the export development of small businesses in Louisiana, those businesses (large and small) that engage in export activities are making great strides. According to the Louisiana International Trade Bulleting (2006), Louisiana merchandise exports grew 16.2% percent during the first nine months of 2006 (when compared to 2005). The increase in exports was achieved despite the negative effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita during the second half of 2005.

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EXHIBIT I

A. In the present environment of expanding global business opportunities there are several reasons why many small businesses are not yet involved in international sales and export trade; check the one most overriding reason why your business is not yet involved in international sales. (check the most important reason only)

1. Don't know how to start developing a foreign market .... □
2. Found a foreign buyer for our product(s), but, could not finance the sale .... □
3. Found a foreign buyer for our product(s), but, export logistics problems, e.g., documents, freight, etc.,) made the deal to fall through .... □
4. Our company has not put that much interest in international sales .... □
5. Found a foreign buyer for our product(s), but, could not get a working capital loan to produce the products that were ordered .... □
6. Found a foreign buyer for our product(s), but, our prices were too high .... □
7. Our company has limited financial resources to invest in foreign sales .... □
8. There is not enough profit potential in export sales .... □
9. The owner(s) of the business has no interest in international market .... □

B. How many full-time employees does your company currently have?

1. 1 - 25 □	4. 76 - 100 □	7. 201 - 250 □	10. 351 - 400 □
2. 26 - 50 □	5. 101 - 150 □	8. 251 - 300 □	11. 450 - 500 □
3. 51 - 75 □	6. 151 - 200 □	9. 301 - 350 □	12 501+ □

C. For how long has your company been in business?

(1) 5 years or less □	(5) 21-25 years □	(9) 41-45 years □
(2) 6-10 years □	(6) 26-30 years □	(10) 46-50 years □
(3) 11-15 years □	(7) 31-35 years □	(11) 51-55 years □
(4) 16-20 years □	(8) 36-40 years □	(12) 56+ years □

The following set of information is needed so that we can better understand and interpret the data that will be collected from this survey. The information pertains to the individual who is the owner, chief executive officer, or chief operating officer of the business - basically, the individual who makes the major decisions.

D. Male □ Female □

E. Age:

21 - 25 □	31 - 35 □	41 - 45 □	51 - 55 □	61 and over □
26 - 30 □	36 - 40 □	46 - 50 □	56 - 60 □	