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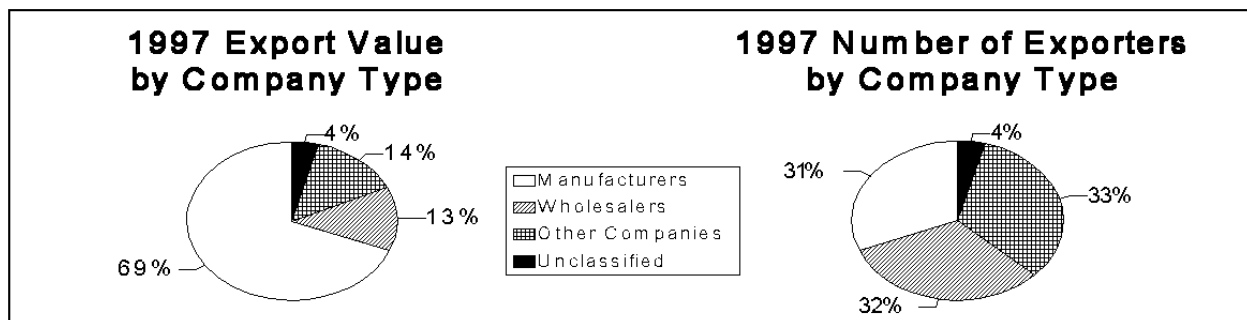
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A Profile of U.S. Exporting Companies, 1996-1997

The Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce, announced today that the identified U.S. exporting community consisted of 189,670 companies that exported \$501 billion in merchandise in 1996 and 209,455 companies that exported \$563 billion in merchandise in 1997. These companies accounted for 80 and 82 percent of total 1996 and 1997 U.S. merchandise exports of \$625 billion and \$689 billion, respectively. The remaining value is accounted for by the low-value estimate, exports by U.S. and foreign governments, revisions, and export records that could not be assigned to specific U.S. companies.

The number of identified exporting companies in 1997 represented an 86 percent increase over the 112,854 companies identified as exporting in 1992. Likewise, the export value associated with these companies (known value) increased 62 percent from the \$349 billion shipped in 1992. These increases reflect both an increase in the number of companies that export as well as an increase in the percentage of value attributed to specific exporters (up from 78 percent in 1992).



Manufacturers accounted for the largest portion of the 1997 known value at \$386 billion. Wholesalers made up the next largest portion at \$71 billion. Other companies, which include freight forwarders, transportation services, business services, engineering and management services, gas and oil extraction companies, coal mining companies, communication services, and others, accounted for \$81 billion in known value. Exports by unclassified companies made up the remaining \$25 billion. The mix of exporting companies was much the same for 1996.

During 1997, only 15 percent (30,432) of all exporters were multiple location companies, but these companies accounted for 80 percent of the known export value. In contrast, 179,023 single location companies, making up 85 percent of the exporting companies, accounted for 20 percent of the known export value.

This report on U.S. exporting companies is based on values reported on the export documentation that companies filed with the U.S. Customs Service or the U.S. Bureau of the Census for export clearances during 1996 and 1997. Company type and employment data are taken from administrative records and census or survey data on file at the Census Bureau. The tables may slightly understate the number of exporters because of low-value trade (exporters are not required to file documentation for shipments under \$2,501) and the unidentified exports. Users should not assume that these unidentified exports reflect the same distribution of company types and sizes as the identified (known) exporters.

Large Exporting Firms

Large exporting companies (those employing 500 or more workers) were responsible for about 69 percent of the known export value although they represented less than 4 percent of all exporters. We also found that roughly 42 percent of the known export value associated with large multiple location manufacturers was between related parties. Exports by large multiple location wholesalers and large “other companies” to related parties were 38 and 34 percent, respectively.

Among the company types, 45 percent of the known export value of the manufacturing sector was accounted for by the top 50 manufacturers. For “other companies” and wholesalers--the top 50 firms accounted for only 37 and 28 percent of their respective sectors’ total exports.

Small and Medium-Sized Exporters

Although exports are dominated by a few large companies, most exporting companies are small- and medium-sized exporters (those employing fewer than 500 workers). Almost 97 percent or 202,185 of all exporters were small- or medium-sized companies. These companies accounted for about 31 percent of the known export value.

Where are the Major Export Markets?

Most exporting companies (62 percent) trade with only one foreign country. However, a small percentage of companies, less than ½ of a percent, trade with 50 or more countries and account for slightly over half of the known export value.

About 90 percent of all companies exported to at least one of the top 25 partner countries in 1997. Canada had the greatest number of companies (104,544) exporting to it, followed by the United Kingdom

(33,020), Japan (28,518), and Mexico (27,873). Mexico, while ranking fourth in the number of exporters, ranked second in total export value at \$71 billion, up from third place in 1996.

Expanded Press Report

This is the third in a continuing series of profiles of U.S. exporters. The last report, *A Profile of U.S. Exporting Companies, 1992*, was released in August, 1997. The expanded report, which sells for \$25.00, includes the following tables as well as more detailed explanatory information.

- Table 1.** 1996 and 1997 Exports by Company Type and Employment Size
- Table 2.** Top Companies’ Share of the 1996 and 1997 Export Market by Company Type
- Table 3.** 1996 and 1997 Exports to Related Parties by Company Type and Employment Size
- Table 4.** 1996 and 1997 Exports by Company Type and Employment Size to Number of Partner Countries
- Table 5.** 1996 and 1997 Exports to Selected Countries and Major World Areas
- Table 6.** 1996 and 1997 Exports by the State of the Exporter Location
- Table 7.** 1996 and 1997 Exports by the State of the Origin of Movement

To order the expanded report, call (301)457-2242.

Note: The data in this report came from Census Bureau files or administrative records of other federal agencies. Quality assurance procedures were applied to all phases of collection, processing, and tabulation to minimize errors. However, the data are still subject to error from miscoding, estimation for missing or misreported data, and difficulties in identifying every unit that should be included in this report. The data also differ from other Census Bureau reports in terms of industrial scope, business unit covered, receipts size, and coverage of companies with no employees.