



# NEW ORLEANS' 20th CENTURY MARKET PLACE

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The twentieth century's embodiment of the age-old market place is New Orleans' new International Trade Mart. An imposing 1½ million dollar structure of concrete, glass, and steel, the Trade Mart exhibits more than 700 products from 32 States and 26 foreign countries.

A logical running mate to the city's International House, a clearing house for trade information and business contracts, the five-story mart serves as an ultra-modern display and trading center, offering domestic and foreign manufacturers space in which to display and sell their wares, all under one roof and in one operation.

Though other ports have service facilities, the International Trade Mart is the first permanent exhibit and sales center of its kind in the Nation. All goods on exhibit are available for sale. Exhibitors are expected to complete sales on the spot, since the mart functions neither as an exhibition or an office building, but as a combination of both.

The air-conditioned mart building is located near the heart of the New Orleans business district. It greets the viewer as a broad curved expanse of shining white concrete broken by vertical patterns of glass blocks. Arrayed on the roof are the flags of many nations.

Entering the marble lobby, the visitor receives the impression of a United Nations meeting with businessmen conversing in all tongues, interpreters standing ready to assist—and fascinating exhibits from all over the world.

Indirect fluorescent lighting gives the interior an appearance of daylight, and the building is constructed to minimize dust and noise. The first floor is terrazzo, while the other four are asphalt tile.

Three fast passenger elevators provide transportation

from floor to floor for businessmen and visitors, while a freight elevator, convenient loading docks, and removable partitions allow the exhibitor maximum flexibility in arranging his display and serving buyers.

Leased to tenants on a yearly basis, the exhibit spaces range from 192 to 2,600 square feet, and display such varied items as tapestries, shotguns, soda fountains, furniture, precision tools, pool tables, and glass and stoneware.

The 1½ million dollars of bonds to construct the mart were purchased not only by large concerns but also by doormen and stenographers, shipping clerks, and small businessmen. That their faith in the city's future was justified is evidenced by the amazing increase in traffic through the Port of New Orleans. In 1947 it totaled 1¼ billion dollars—five times as much as in 1940.

The story behind the modernistic Trade Mart began in 1943 when New Orleans leaders—city officials, business and professional men, and others—contributed \$250,000 to build International House, the Mart's complement, which since 1945 has provided visiting businessmen with air-conditioned offices, free secretarial and translation service, a research department, and all the comforts of a top-notch club, complete with lounge and bars.

Two years later the port asked for and got the present 20-acre free trade zone, offering a custom-free area in which products from abroad may be stored, packaged, and otherwise handled before being brought into the United States or reexported.

Then in November 1948 doors were formally opened to the International Trade Mart, an ideal setting for the domestic or international buyer and seller, and the twentieth century's answer to the market place of old.