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The Field Guide by SelectGlobal, LLC

Your Monthly Compass for Global Expansion

September 2026

I am out for the second half of September, at the SiteLink Forum in Cypress County, Alberta, and then at LiveXChange in Toledo. Both rooms are full of people who spend their days on the question this issue takes up: what actually decides whether a project lands. Pictures and commentary will be on LinkedIn as I go.

Michael T. Edgar, Founder and CEO

THE TERRAIN

Price Is a Number. Eligibility Is a Gate.

Between July 20 and August 26, three instruments arrived from three statutory authorities. As a group they look like more tariffs. As a progression they show something else. Until this summer, exposure to United States policy resolved into a number. For one of the three, it now resolves into a decision: may this transaction proceed. Different question. Different answer.

WHAT THE THREE DO

Section 338 of the Tariff Act of 1930. On July 20, three proclamations invoked it against Canada, adding a 50 percent duty across 554 tariff lines. It bypasses origin relief under the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement and carries no expiry. Severe, but not different in kind. Liability turns on classification, origin, and valuation. Once established, it is a landed-cost variable. Price it through, absorb it, engineer around it. Finance can answer it.

The Section 301 forced-labor action. On July 24, the Office of the United States Trade Representative issued final action in sixty investigations at 10 or 12.5 percent. The lower tier is earned, not applied for: an existing import prohibition, a commitment under an Agreement on Reciprocal Trade, or a partial regime with preventive effect. No application. No vendor roster. No transaction-level approval. An economy can stay at 12.5 percent. Conditional price, with the condition set at the level of government policy. Not a gate.

Executive Order 14421. On August 26 the President declared a national emergency over foreign supply of bulk-power system electric equipment. This one is different in kind. It prohibits transactions rather than taxing them, and names three

doors through: mitigation, prequalification, licensing. Every door is documentary. A mitigation is a negotiated instrument. Prequalification runs on evidence submitted against criteria. A license is an application with a file behind it. It reaches equipment already installed, which no tariff does. The predicate does not turn on where the factory sits. It turns on ownership, control, jurisdiction, and the software, firmware, maintenance, and remote-access capability supplied with the equipment. Allied origin is not a safe harbor.

ELIGIBILITY DOES NOT TRAVEL

Each authority runs its own predicate, its own test, its own decision-maker. Clearing one clears nothing else. Canada showed it inside a single month: the lower forced-labor tier under one authority, 50 percent under another.

A country-level read is insufficient. So is an allied-origin read. Standing is assessed authority by authority.

The failure modes are not the same size. Misjudge a price instrument and margin erodes. Misjudge an eligibility instrument and the transaction does not proceed. That discovery arrives in diligence, after the site is chosen and the capital committed. The record proving a door was satisfied, covering ownership, jurisdiction, equipment, mitigation, and authorization, has to exist before anyone asks for it. It cannot be built under deadline.

WHY NOW

Executive Order 13920 declared the same emergency over the same equipment in 2020. A new administration suspended it within days. It returned six years later, broader, with licensing and mitigation machinery the first version lacked.

Nothing here requires predicting the next administration. The rulemaking is happening now. Criteria drafted, procurement revisions written, comment periods opening and closing. Eligibility is being defined in that window.

Waiting is not neutral. It is a decision to accept whatever roster emerges.

THE PITCH:

That was the rule. Here is the machinery. *"If You Are Not at the Table, You Are on the Menu"* takes Executive Order 14421 apart: the predicate, the test, the three doors, the record, and the wall. It runs Canada as the worked case, four standings under four authorities, only two of them operative. It works the installed-base problem. And it names what would prove the whole read wrong. Five steps you can run against instruments not yet written.

READ THE FULL ANALYSIS

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UPCOMING EVENTS:

ITAGC Luncheon

September 16 | The State of U.S.-China Relations 2026-2028: Deja Vu All Over Again?

Xi Jinping visits Washington on September 24. Ahead of it, Ed Sacharski, thirty years living and working in China, reads the commercial paradigm and the possible outcomes, joined by Jan Siegel of M.E. Dey and Ed Wasylik of E.M. Wasylik Associates.

Wednesday, September 16, 11:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Carlucci Rosemont, 6111 North River Road, Rosemont, IL. Members of sponsoring organizations $60, non-members $85.

September 16-18 | SiteLink Forum, Cypress County

SiteLink Forum brings its measured, in-depth model to Cypress County, Alberta, in southeastern Alberta on the Canada-U.S. border next to Medicine Hat. The three days combine structured presentations, peer learning, and direct collaboration. Structured sessions and complementary events, golf and local tours among them, offer participants real time to talk at length with a curated set of site selection professionals. A disclosure and an invitation in one: I am one of the featured site selector speaker.

Registration closed on September 2. If you are attending, find me.
September 16-18, 2026, Cypress County, Alberta, Canada.

September 23-25 | LiveXchange Fall Forum

A reimagined LiveXchange format splits the program across two Toledo venues: conference sessions and boardroom presentations at the Renaissance Toledo Downtown Hotel, with 1:1 meetings between site selectors and economic developers hosted in the luxury suites at the Toledo Mud Hens Baseball Club. Whether or not you have attended a LiveXchange event before, this one is worth the trip.

Early interest is high; register early.
September 23-25, 2026, Toledo, OH.

THE COMPASS CHECK

We want to make sure this newsletter provides value to you. How did we do?

Short List

Needs Due Diligence

Site Rejected

NAVIGATING TOGETHER

As we refresh our systems this quarter, a quick favor: If SelectGlobal's insights on global expansion are valuable to you, help us serve you better by:

Reply to this email with the topic you want to see next month. I read every response, and the best question becomes the next issue.

Forward this newsletter to a colleague

IN CLOSING

Voting in the midterms starts this month. North Carolina mails its first absentee ballots September 4, and in-person early voting opens in Minnesota and South Dakota around September 18. Expect announcements. An announcement is not an instrument.

The test is simple enough to run yourself. When a sector gets named in a campaign speech, check whether a statute or a budget authority moved with it. Most will not. The ones that do are the ones worth tracking, and that is the read we keep testing here.

See you in October.

ABOUT SELECTGLOBAL

SelectGlobal is a jurisdictional intelligence firm that maps where validated federal and state demand intersects with geographic realities, then connects allied-nation manufacturers to those windows before capital is committed. The Fork Framework (tm) gives established international companies two structured paths into the U.S. market: a Virtual Path to test demand over 3 to 6 months, or a Physical Path when the case is proven. The LatticeWorks Constellation (tm) coordinates 250+ municipalities and 68+ trade commissioners on behalf of each engagement. Principal-led by Michael T. Edgar, NCARB-certified architect, former U.S. Investment Advisory Council member, and ITAGC board member. www.selectglobal.net

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