



Business and Professional Services in Atlantic Canada

Atlantic Canada has more than 10,000 firms operating in the business and professional services industry. Business and professional service firms operate with a global perspective providing services that include marketing, engineering, management, financial, scientific, technical and legal.

COMPARATIVE BUSINESS COSTS INDEX*

OVERALL RESULTS

NEW YORK, NY	112.6	ATLANTIC CANADA	CHARLOTTETOWN, PE	91.7
DETROIT, MI	102.7		HALIFAX, NS	92.2
SAN DIEGO, CA	103.2		MONCTON, NB	91.1
BOSTON, MA	107.8		ST. JOHN'S, NL	94.3
CHICAGO, IL	100.8		SYDNEY, NS	92.2
PHOENIX, AZ	101.1		TRURO, NS	89.4
ATLANTA, GA	96.4		PICTOU, NS	89.9

source: *Competitive Alternatives: KPMG's guide to international business costs, 2006 Edition.*

* Business costs are expressed as an index, with the United States average being assigned the baseline index of 100. A cost index of less than 100 indicates lower costs than those in the U.S.

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Atlantic Canada has the lowest business cost environment among G7 countries. This is according to *Competitive Alternatives: KPMG's guide to international business costs, 2006*, which analyzed 27 location-sensitive cost factors in more than 125 cities. The study showed that Atlantic Canada's available skilled workforce costs are, on average, 21% lower than in the U.S., corporate taxes are, on average, 4.8% lower than in the U.S. and property taxes are 18% lower than the U.S. average. Add to that low energy costs and excellent business, telecommunications, and transportation infrastructure, and it is easy to see why Atlantic Canada's business and professional services industry is performing so well.

Atlantic Canada benefits from having one of the best labour markets in North America, with a productive and bilingual workforce of 1.2 million people (Statistics Canada 2005) and the lowest turnover and absenteeism rates in North America.

Atlantic Canada has a strong commitment to innovation in all industries and boasts a cutting-edge telecommunications infrastructure, supporting one of the highest percentages of high-speed Internet users in North America. Halifax, Nova Scotia, for example, has the second highest rate of households connected to the Internet of all cities in Canada.

Atlantic Canada's workforce offers many valuable attributes, making the region one of the most economical and advantageous places in the world to do business. Companies in Atlantic Canada have access to a labour force that is bilingual, highly skilled and highly educated. The region claims the lowest turnover and absenteeism rates in North America.

Atlantic Canada has more than 10,000 business and professional services firms, including approximately:

- 1,200 law firms
- 1,450 management consulting firms
- 1,350 computer and system design firms
- 1,100 engineering firms
- 400 scientific and technical services providers
- hundreds of firms offering marketing, training and financial services

source: Statistics Canada,
Canadian Business Patterns (2005)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

While Atlantic Canada is at the forefront of providing innovative solutions to businesses, it also remains strong in traditional support services such as accounting, financial and legal services.

Accounting

More than 1,200 accounting and bookkeeping offices are located throughout Atlantic Canada. They accommodate small and medium-sized operations along with national and international firms such as Deloitte & Touche, KPMG, Ernst & Young and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Financial

There is also a full range of financial services and investment firms in the region. Financial institutions including banks, trust companies, insurance companies, loan companies and credit unions are located in each of the Atlantic provinces.

Canada's five largest banks – Scotiabank, RBC Royal Bank, CIBC, BMO Bank of Montreal, National Bank and TD Canada Trust – are well represented throughout the Atlantic provinces and have a presence in all urban areas. One or more of the six have branches in most towns and villages in the region.

Legal

The legal profession is made up of practices that range in size from small and local to large and regional. With many firms working in both English and French, specialized expertise is offered in areas of law including maritime, constitutional, intellectual property and telecommunications. In a region that is home to the Sable, Hibernia and Terra Nova energy mega-projects, the legal aspects of oil and gas are a specialty. Regional firms are rivalling those from Alberta's energy patch for breadth and depth of expertise in energy resources.

BUSINESS SERVICES

Engineering

Atlantic Canada has close to 1,100 engineering firms employing approximately 11,000 engineers and engineering technologists. The Fredericton, New Brunswick, area boasts the most engineers per capita in Canada. Many of these firms have major international contracts and a wealth of expertise in everything from construction to environmental engineering.

Atlantic Canadian engineers are building anaerobic wastewater treatment systems around the globe. They are heading breakthrough projects such as a plasma reactor pilot plant project in Singapore to destroy hazardous wastes, and the development of new electromagnetic methods to extract minerals.

Brooke Ocean Technology Limited

(Halifax, Nova Scotia) is an example of a leading-edge ocean engineering company that markets its expertise internationally. Additionally, Brooke manufactures advanced data collection platforms for the marine science, naval and offshore sectors. Over 70% of Brooke Ocean Technology's work is done outside the country and its exports have jumped by almost 50% since 2000.

MANAGEMENT CONSULTING

Another large component of the region's service industry is management consulting, with more than 1,400 companies providing management consulting and communications support to businesses.

Communications

Atlantic Canada also has a wealth of award-winning national and international communications firms specializing in all aspects of communications, including marketing, branding, advertising, event management, public relations, government relations and research. Communications firms in Atlantic Canada offer world-class services and results, especially where significant industry clustering has taken hold: St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and Moncton, New Brunswick.

Translation

Atlantic Canadian translation firms have a worldwide appeal that is growing as companies strive to meet the demands of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the European Union – to say nothing of Canada's own bilingual requirements. Professional, diligent and resourceful, Atlantic Canada's translators are leaders in their field.

New Brunswick is fueling the translation services segment. **Lexi-tech** of Moncton, New Brunswick is Canada's leading supplier of translation services, employing 120 translators who work in 30 languages, processing over 60 million words annually. The company utilizes an integrated electronic and Internet-based solutions model. The **Université de Moncton** offers a degree in translation, creating a steady pool of talented translators.

In addition to its translation competencies, **CIDIF**, based in Edmunston, New Brunswick, is a research and development center for the "internationalization" and "localization" of software and Internet applications. CIDIF's goal is to develop software and Internet applications which are better adapted to the cultural and linguistic differences of their users.

Scientific and Technical

Scientific and technical expertise throughout the region provide specialized services globally.

In Prince Edward Island, the **Food Technology Centre** offers food safety and quality management systems for food processing and food service companies. The Centre is developing specific extraction technologies involving a new family of eco-friendly solvents, as well as a process that will extract glucosamine from lobster/crab/shrimp shell waste. The Centre entered the age of sonochemistry with the introduction of ultrasonic applications to extract high-value natural products from agricultural and marine bioresources. Similar centres operate across the region, answering the demands of industries such as forestry, construction and aquaculture.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Atlantic Canada is home to an elaborate infrastructure of research facilities, including eight National Research Council facilities. As part of the Government of Canada's Atlantic Investment Partnership initiative, the National Research Council has launched a project to further develop the region's existing strengths by forging partnerships and creating dynamic industry clusters. Research in the region focuses on a number of industries, ranging from life sciences and marine biosciences to e-business and ocean technologies.

E-LEARNING

Atlantic Canada's training and e-learning industries rank among the world's best.

The region is home to one of North America's largest e-learning clusters, with more than 1,100 training companies and institutions in the four Atlantic provinces. Their training programs include communication and interpersonal skills, management and human resource development and planning, quality assurance and on-line multimedia design, and specialized industry training in fields as varied as customer contact centre operations and hotel management. A focus of attention for the region's training programs is on computer-related skills.

A leader among e-learning firms is **Bluedrop Performance Learning** in Newfoundland and Labrador, which offers fully integrated e-learning to clients such as Cisco Systems, Health Canada and Schering-Plough. Bluedrop Performance Learning has received award recognition with the Silver Medal for Excellence in Learning from e-learning guru Brandon Hall for its on-line course, "Introduction to Aviation", developed for NAV CANADA.

The **Justice Knowledge Network**, a Prince Edward Island based e-learning consortium, develops and delivers innovative products to the law enforcement community. The Network builds web-based learning products for law enforcement organizations. Not just e-learning, but also knowledge management and communities of practice capabilities, enabling police to share information and collaborate with peers across the country. With an initial focus on Canada, the company's vision is very much international.

Doing business in Atlantic Canada means more than cost efficiencies and innovation – it includes a way of life seldom found in the world today.

The dedication of Atlantic Canadian workers combined with its high standard of living results in a very productive and stable work environment.

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES IN ATLANTIC CANADA



EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The region has more than 160 private colleges and specialty learning centres that are governed by rigorous standards of accreditation. These institutions cover a wide range of specialties and continue to insure that the workforce benefits from the most up-to-date information, knowledge and skills.

A number of Atlantic Canadian universities offer traditional law programs. **Dalhousie University** (Halifax, Nova Scotia), **University of New Brunswick** (Fredericton) and **Université de Moncton** (Moncton, New Brunswick) all offer degree programs in the legal field with specializations ranging from corporate to criminal law. All three schools have a longstanding tradition of producing superior legal talent.

Dalhousie University and the University of New Brunswick are the two oldest law schools in Canada, and the Université de Moncton is one of only two schools in Canada that teaches common law in French. The **Université de Moncton** also houses the highly specialized **Centre de traduction et de terminologie juridiques** (Centre for Legal Translation and Terminology). The Centre is recognized as an international authority in the use and promotion of French in the fields of law and commerce.

PROVINCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

- NB** - NEW BRUNSWICK
- PE** - PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
- NS** - NOVA SCOTIA
- NL** - NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

If you would like more information on this industry, please contact:

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BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES IN ACTION

"Keane has had great success in finding and hiring highly skilled and motivated workers to power the growth of our Halifax Advanced Development Centre. Our success in this area continues to be fundamental to the growth of Keane's Application Outsourcing business, and is enabled by our strong partnership with the Government of Nova Scotia."

James T. Brewer
Vice President, Global Services Delivery, Keane Inc.

Keane Inc. delivers its services with world-class processes, management disciplines and performance metrics via an integrated network of branch offices in North America and the United Kingdom. It also has Advanced Development Centres in the United States, Canada and India. This global service delivery model offers customers the flexibility and economic advantage of fluidly allocating work between a variety of delivery options including on-site at a client's facility, off-site at a remote location, nearshore in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and offshore in India. Branch offices work with Keane Consulting Group, the company's consulting arm, and are supported by centralized strategic practices and quality assurance groups.



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