

business WOMEN 2015

in international trade



EXPORTING: A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

The signs of today's vibrant global marketplace are all around us: online, in stores and in the products we use every day. We buy from other countries. Why not sell to them, too? As a Canadian business woman, your goods and services are worthy of international attention, and the payback is often far more rewarding than what you can achieve in Canada alone.

That's exactly why Vancouver's Lindsay Nahmiache is opening a Jive Communications office in Los Angeles. She believes the risks of pursuing new markets are worth the rewards. "Our Toronto and Vancouver clients need public relations support in L.A. The decision is a calculated risk because we know the market. We looked at our business in Canada and asked whether it could sustain our existing staff and overhead during the expansion. The answer was, 'Yes, so let's do it!'"

Take a strategic approach

Whether you're already doing business abroad, or just getting started, a strategic approach is essential to exploring new markets and maximizing your returns. Where do you start? Connect with the Business Women in International Trade (BWIT) program and the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service (TCS).

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BUILDING ON OUR MOMENTUM

The year 2014 was the most successful for trade in Canadian history. It was a pivotal year for Canadian small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), with the conclusion of the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the coming into force of the Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement (CKFTA).

CETA will create new opportunities for Canadian companies across the European Union, a market of more than 500 million consumers. It is expected to boost Canada's economy by \$12 billion annually and increase bilateral trade by 20%.

CKFTA is expected to contribute \$1.7 billion each year to Canada's economy and increase Canadian exports to South Korea by 32%. It will provide a gateway for Canadian businesses into the growing and dynamic Asian marketplace.

Our government will continue to implement our trade strategy to support your global growth. We want to be the strong partner that SMEs can depend on to export successfully.

As Canadian business women, your potential to help grow the Canadian economy through trade is immense. This newsletter is here to provide step-by-step advice and direct you to our many valuable resources.

Together, we can continue to build on our momentum. We encourage you to take part in one of our trade missions, access the services offered by BWIT and the TCS, and participate in one of our 'Go Global' export workshops. We are committed to working shoulder to shoulder with you on your path to export success.



**The Honourable
Ed Fast**
Minister of
International Trade



**The Honourable
Dr. K. Kellie Leitch**
Minister of Labour
Minister of Status
of Women





EXPORTING: A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

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“Let us know about the markets you’re interested in pursuing. We can discuss the market research you’ve already done and help identify additional sources of intelligence,” explains Vancouver-based Trade Commissioner Victoria Hayes. “Once you’ve developed a business strategy for your target markets, we can connect you with our colleagues in those regions for on-the-ground advice and support. We can also help you identify the contacts required to move your business forward in those markets, whether you need foreign buyers, partners or other parties who may be interested in your product or service.”

Target promising markets and sectors

With the Government of Canada supporting your efforts, you are steps ahead of those who do it alone. The Global Markets Action Plan concentrates Canada’s efforts on the markets and sectors that hold the greatest promise for Canadian businesses.

This ambitious trade plan is yielding results. Canada has opened up critical markets through free trade agreements with South Korea and the European Union. We now have a total of 11 agreements in place, and we are involved in negotiations with more than 60 countries. Our exports to the world are increasing. For the first time, our two-way trade surpassed \$1 trillion in 2014.

Take steps to ensure your success

As for Nahmiache, she has some final words of advice if you’re planning your own expansion. “Reach out to people in your professional network with exporting experience. Align your approach with your existing business. Work with BWIT and take part in their events and trade missions. You’ll learn so much. I know I did.”



Lindsay Nahmiache, Co-owner
Jive Communications

Are you ready to take on the world?

Take the BWIT Export Readiness Survey to find out. You’ll also discover aspects of your business or export plan that you may need to focus on before you decide to go global. It takes only 5-10 minutes to complete. Visit tradecommissioner.gc.ca/bwitsurvey-exporting.



FIVE STEPS TO YOUR NEXT MARKET

You’re ready to set your sights on new markets: where do you start? Rashma Agarwal, the Senior Trade Commissioner in Los Angeles, and Wendy Weir, owner of loose leaf tea glass company, Libre, offer their advice:

1. Explore your potential

“Figure out what’s different about your product or service that will resonate in your chosen market. Research your potential and what sets you apart from the competition. Then take baby steps. Look at how much work is involved: Can you take it on? Are the regulations easy to navigate? Consider a local partner or distributor. The TCS can play an important role in helping companies achieve success faster.” - Rashma

2. Understand your customers’ needs

“Knowing who we’re targeting is everything. It’s why we’ve been successful in the U.K. We knew that loose leaf tea was embedded in the yoga lifestyle, but the rest of the country uses tea bags. We exhibited at a big yoga trade show and our U.K. business took off from there.” - Wendy

3. Focus your efforts

“Don’t jump into a market too fast. The U.S., for example, is a collection of diverse regional markets each with their own opportunities and challenges. A customized approach for each market is required when pursuing opportunities.” - Rashma

4. Be ready to deliver

“Consider your market carefully, even if it’s a small one. Know your limitations. Can you scale up to deliver on large orders? Don’t fall into the glamour opportunity of selling to a big company like Disney if you aren’t ready for it.” - Rashma

5. Seek advice from experts

“The TCS gave us distributor leads and local market knowledge. Then we researched our options. We now stock our products in Los Angeles, Vancouver, the U.K. and Australia for easy distribution to our customers.” - Wendy

BENEFITS OF EXPORTING

- » Boost your sales and profits
- » Gain economies of scale
- » Reduce your company’s vulnerability
- » Gain new knowledge and experience
- » Increase your competitiveness – in Canada and internationally

FREE TRADE: YOUR GLOBAL GATEWAY



Tara Kelly, President and CEO
Splice Software

Tara Kelly knows a great opportunity when she sees one. As President and CEO of Calgary-based Splice Software, she is expanding the company's international footprint in countries that have signed free trade agreements (FTAs) with Canada.

"Free trade significantly reduces the risk for our global expansion," explains Kelly.

"Canada's FTAs provide a consistent framework from market to market. I know how to make the agreement's principles work for us at all levels – cash flow, hiring and taxation."

With 11 free trade agreements in place, the doors to countries such as Chile, Colombia, Israel, Jordan, Mexico, Peru and the U.S., among others, are wide open to Canadian business women. Recently, the Canada-Korea Free Trade Agreement (CKFTA) came into force, levelling the playing field for Canadians and eliminating tariffs in a broad range of sectors, such as agri-food products, fish and seafood, forestry products and industrial goods.

Mariette Mulaire, President and CEO of the World Trade Centre Winnipeg, has joined two trade missions to South Korea over the past year.

"We're targeting the market because it's an excellent entry point into Asia. South Korean business people have an expression that means, 'Let's go. Let's do it.' They have a hunger to get down to business – and that approach works well with Canadians."

As for Kelly, her next stop is Europe, where the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) will give Canadian businesses improved access to 500 million people and the world's largest economy. The agreement will eliminate 98% of tariffs on non-agricultural products, and close to 94% on agricultural products. Opportunities for Canadian business women abound in sectors such as agri-food, automotive, chemicals, forestry products, minerals, plastics, processed and manufactured goods, and professional services.

"Canada has strong relationships with Europe and we've established a reputation for high quality, fair contracts and trustworthiness," says Kelly. "We should be proud of the free trade groundwork we've laid. It allows us to bring more international dollars back into Canada and build strong markets."



EXPORTING? MAKE BWIT YOUR FIRST STOP

In a business world that is information rich and time starved, creating a solid network of expert advisors can make all the difference to focusing your export efforts. After all, you need quick and simple access to the programs, resources and expertise that will help you succeed globally. The BWIT program is designed to fill that need.

Export consultant Deborah Youden works with the Newfoundland and Labrador Organization of Women Entrepreneurs. She says that BWIT is her 'go to' resource when it comes to serving her clients with expert advice, women-focused trade missions, partnership opportunities or connecting with in-market contacts.

"BWIT is one of my first stops when I work with clients. They have incredible contacts throughout the world," says Youden. "They work extremely hard to create high value international experiences for our business women. I've participated in a number of their trade missions and the experience for our business women is phenomenal."

“ Did you know?

The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service operates in over 175 cities worldwide and serves 15,000+ clients each year.

The TCS offers four key services:

1. Preparing for international markets
2. Assessing market potential
3. Finding qualified contacts
4. Resolving problems

The TCS provides access to market reports, accelerator programs and trade missions. To find out more, visit tradecommissioner.gc.ca.



Deputy Minister T. Christine Hogan and Chief Trade Commissioner, Susan Bincoletto, participate in a site visit to Imprint Plus, a successful global woman-owned company in Richmond, BC and a client of the Trade Commissioner Service.



FAST-TRACK YOUR GLOBAL SALES WITH E-COMMERCE

When Newfoundland seamstress Bonnie Cook received her first request for a true-to-Hollywood version of Keanu Reeves' Matrix jacket in 2002, she could never have predicted that she'd be exporting to 53 countries in a little over a decade. Today, AbbyShot is a world leader in creating screen-accurate clothing from TV series, sci fi and gaming. With most of its business conducted through online sales, AbbyShot has been growing at an exponential rate. We turned to Grace Shears, Risk Manager at AbbyShot, to discover the secrets to the company's online success.



Grace Shears, Risk Manager
AbbyShot

Get social with SEO

"AbbyShot is always exploring new ways to improve our search engine optimization (SEO) results to reach more customers. We're very active on LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, plus we blog. We make videos, run contests and genuinely get to know our customers."

Know when to grow – and how to get there

"There was a time that all of our production happened in Mount Pearl, Newfoundland. We couldn't keep up with demand, so we turned to a sourcing company to find offshore manufacturers. We established solid relationships with our new suppliers and tucked them firmly under our AbbyShot wing."

Consider offshore production quality control

"Our quality standards are high, so we work with a global inspection agency. They inspect our inventory and oversee our quality control process. They send us a detailed pre-shipment report with pictures and measurements. It must be up to the standards that we have set for our customers, and that our customers set for us."

Move your inventory closer to your customers

"We took the brave step of moving 95% of our inventory out of Canada to get it closer to our customers. With fulfillment houses in North Carolina and Northern Ireland, our customers save on cross-border shipping and duties."

Be willing to shift gears with your online strategy

"When we started distributing out of Europe and the U.S., we created three websites, but we discovered that they were competing with one another. We decided to create a whole new website with a new platform and new look and this increased our SEO and traffic to the site."

Turn to the experts for advice and support

"We've had a massive amount of help from the federal and provincial governments. At AbbyShot, we believe that what you put out there is what you get back. Reaching out to the BWIT team for answers has given us remarkable success."

“ Sound advice: Seek in-market expertise

"Call in the experts you need to make your e-business successful. Set up meetings with in-country marketing advisors who can tell you how to reach your target customers online. They can focus on your product or service, how to position it, the most popular search engines, the keywords people use to search for your product or service, and the in-country websites where you should spend your advertising dollars. That kind of knowledge is worth the investment."

Kathryn Aleong, Senior Trade Commissioner
Halifax, NS

SAVE THE DATE!

June 21-26, 2015
**BWIT Trade Mission to
WBENC National Conference
and Business Fair**
Austin, Texas
conf.wbenc.org

September 17-19, 2015
**BWIT Trade Mission to GFTG
Conference and Business Fair**
Orlando, Florida
goforthegreens.org

November 12-13, 2015
**Power the Economy
WEConnect International in
Canada National Conference**
Toronto, Ontario
weconnectinternational.org

March 8, 2016
**International Women's Day
Up-to-date information and
events at:**
internationalwomensday.com

For up-to-date event information, connect with us on LinkedIn at [linkd.in/bwit-faci](https://www.linkedin.com/company/bwifaci). You can also sign up to receive alerts by visiting our website at businesswomenintrade.gc.ca.



BUSINESS WOMEN TAKE FLIGHT

Have you considered participating in a women-focused trade mission? Designed with your global success in mind, these missions bring together dynamic women who want their businesses to take off in new markets.

The BWIT team is leading two missions in 2015. The WBENC mission will take place from June 21–26 in Austin, Texas. WBENC is the largest U.S. business fair for women-owned enterprises and one of the best places to meet buyers from Fortune 500 firms with supplier diversity programs. These programs earmark millions of dollars to source products and services from groups such as women-owned businesses, who are not traditionally included in the supply chain.

Edmonton's Faith Grant, a partner in Rejuvenation Health Services, is planning to attend her third WBENC mission. "With each one, we've learned to be more precise about how we present our value proposition," explains Grant. "This year, I know which buyers I want to meet and I'm designing specific pitches for each of them."

BWIT will also lead a mission to the Go for the Greens Conference in Orlando, Florida from September 17–19. This unique event offers exclusive access to companies, government agencies, non-profits and associations that can help women-owned businesses secure contracts.

"Trade missions such as these give women access to educational sessions and one-on-one meetings with buyers. You'll also identify sales leads and partnership opportunities that will help your business grow," says Josie Mousseau, Deputy Director, Canadian Business Women in International Trade.

For more information about these missions and others, contact the BWIT team at bwit@international.gc.ca.

BUILDING BRIDGES WITH PARTNERSHIPS

Montreal entrepreneur Josée Dufour is ready to grow. Her business, Axiomatech, manages maintenance of commercial, industrial and institutional buildings, helping them meet strict guidelines and identify potential issues before they become problems.



Josée Dufour, President
Axiomatech

Partnerships are enabling Dufour to expand into new markets and land more clients.

"We've partnered with a large women-owned firm with an excellent presence in the U.S. and Europe," explains Dufour. "It makes us a strong force, and it's opening up new markets for us."

Ruth Vachon, CEO of the Réseau des Femmes d'affaires du Québec, says partnerships like these create solid opportunities and lasting relationships.

"Often, the size of their business doesn't permit women to sell to large firms who want to buy from them through supplier diversity programs. When women work together, they can go for much larger contracts."



Ruth Vachon, CEO
Réseau des Femmes
d'affaires du Québec

Are you ready to partner?

New York City based Trade Commissioner Alia Dedhar says that if you're having trouble accessing new markets or signing new clients, it's time for a partner. A local partner – or a Canadian or foreign company doing business in your target market – can offer valuable market intelligence and access to a full network of industry contacts, buyers, investors, suppliers and distributors.

Thinking about partnering?

Dedhar offers these recommendations:

1. Research your partner to confirm they will be a good fit. They should add value and have experience you can leverage.
2. Figure out how much control you're willing to give up. How involved do you need to be?
3. Know your limits. Will the partnership erode your brand? Things change when other people get involved.
4. Work with the TCS. Trade commissioners can introduce you to potential partners and help you figure out how the partnership can work to your advantage.



Everywhere you do business
**The Canadian Trade
Commissioner Service**

tradecommissioner.gc.ca

\$ RAISING CAPITAL: FINANCING YOUR GLOBAL VENTURES

You're on the path to international growth and your next step is to find the funds to make it happen. Sourcing financing takes patience and persistence. Done right, it can yield huge rewards.

Where do you start? Consider these three perspectives from Boston-based Senior Trade Commissioner Thierry Weissenburger, Export Development Canada's (EDC) Etienne Grall, and CEO of Localize, Meghan Dear.



Meghan Dear, CEO
Localize

When should I think about financing?

Meghan: "Be sure you're ready. I bootstrapped Localize with my own funds for three years, then took a very strategic approach to growing the business. I had interest from investors, but I took my time to see who we wanted at the table."

Why seek financing?

Meghan: "Financing offers a direct route to growth. We evaluated what we needed to do to scale up and enter the U.S.: develop our product, hire more software developers and move our market development from door-knocking to something more strategic."

What are my financing options?

Thierry: "Many entrepreneurs bootstrap and find capital by getting family and friends to invest in their company. For larger amounts of capital, there are other options: financing through your bank or BDC, which recently earmarked \$700 million of existing funds to finance women-owned businesses. For high-growth potential businesses, equity financing or venture capital are also options."

What can EDC offer me?

Etienne: "EDC's financial products help make it easier for companies and their banks to undertake business outside of Canada. EDC's Accounts Receivables Insurance ensures that you will be paid for your sales. Customer financing helps your

international customer buy from you. Delivering on a big contract? EDC's Export Guarantee Program can provide your bank up to a 100% loan guarantee so that they can finance your costs."

What can the Trade Commissioner Service do to help?

Thierry: "We can help you target investment firms that might consider investing in your business. If you join some of our specialized programs such as the Canadian Technology Accelerator, we make sure you have a solid pitch, connect you with Canadian mentors who know the market, and offer advice to help you attract investment."

FIND FINANCING TO SUPPORT YOUR GROWTH

Atlantic Association of Community Business Development Corporations | General business, innovation, social enterprise and youth loans cbdc.ca

Business Development Bank of Canada | Fund for Women-Owned Businesses bdc.ca

Business Women in International Trade | Canada-wide information on government funding and financing programs businesswomenintrade.gc.ca

Canadian Trade Commissioner Service | New funding announced in Budget 2015. Contact BWIT for more information tradecommissioner.gc.ca

Export Development Canada | Financing and insurance solutions for exporters edc.ca

Export Market Access | Global Expansion Program for Ontario businesses exportaccess.ca

Industrial Research Assistance Program | Funding services to support innovation and accelerate growth nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/irap-pari

Industry Canada | Information on government financing for businesses canadabusiness.ca

Women's Enterprise Initiative | Loans for Western Canadian business women wd.gc.ca

“ Sound advice: Be thorough

"My best exporting lessons? Get knowledgeable accountants and lawyers to help you navigate the rules in different markets. Attend trade shows first as a visitor to evaluate their potential. To grow your sales, look for opportunities to team up with non-compete suppliers. Work with distributors when you first enter a market, but don't get caught with all your eggs in one distributor's basket. They are not as passionate about your product as you are."

Cheryl Dawn Smith, Hortygirl
Langley, BC

SERVICES TO SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURS AND EXPORTERS

Canadian Trade Commissioner Service | On-the-ground intelligence and practical advice in Canada and 175+ cities worldwide tradecommissioner.gc.ca or 1-888-306-9991

CanadExport | Articles and the latest news on doing business internationally canadexport.gc.ca

Canada Business Network | Network of 400 business service centres across Canada to support entrepreneurs canadabusiness.ca or 1-888-576-4444 (TTY 1-800-457-8466 hearing impaired)

Free database of women-owned businesses | Promote your products and services to the world. Five million domestic and international buyers, distributors and partners access it each year ic.gc.ca/bwit

Government of Canada | Federal agencies by region

- » Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (see the Women in Business Initiative) acoa-apeca.gc.ca
- » Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions dec-ced.gc.ca
- » Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency CanNor.gc.ca
- » Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario FedDevOntario.gc.ca
- » FedNor (Ontario) fednor.gc.ca
- » Western Economic Diversification Canada wd-deo.gc.ca

MARKET YOUR BUSINESS – FOR FREE – WORLDWIDE

Get instant access to a world of opportunities for Canadian business women. Register with our specialized directory of women-owned businesses – and put your company on the global radar.

“This directory is a great resource for women entrepreneurs. Take advantage of it. Each year, 5 million domestic and international buyers, distributors and partners search the database. Make sure they find you,” says Zoe Hawa, Trade Commissioner, BWIT.

Sign up today at ic.gc.ca/bwit.

PLAN YOUR NEXT BUSINESS TRIP.
VISIT TRAVEL.GC.CA



READY, SET, GO! YOUR EXPORTING CHECKLIST

- » Assess your export potential
- » Develop your export plan
- » Identify your target market(s)
- » Seek advice from the experts
- » Prepare your marketing strategy
- » Secure export financing
- » Find a partner (or decide if you need one)
- » Determine your market entry strategy
- » Get your export permits
- » Confirm your distribution channel(s)
- » Obtain legal advice on contracts
- » Purchase export and transportation insurance
- » Prepare your product/service for export

This checklist was adapted from the *Step-by-Step Guide to Exporting*, which is available online at tradecommissioner.gc.ca



BWIT led the panel session, From Domestic to International: Your Gateway to Success, at the Women Entrepreneurs Forum on March 24, 2015 in Ottawa. The event was hosted by the Honourable Dr. K. Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Minister of Status of Women. Its goal? To connect women entrepreneurs to networks, information and resources to support their growth.

“ Sound advice: Be strategic

“I’ve learned to be conscious of the markets we serve and to stay true to what we know works for our products. We don’t innovate for the short-term, flash-in-the-pan trends. Innovation in our environment is not about the big one-time idea that will change the world. It is about consistency of product innovation, like adding certified gluten-free desserts to our line, which was wholly driven by consumer demand.

My advice? Foster local PR and consumer demand, and research local delivery, distribution and retail objectives. Make your products available to the right people in the right place. In the world of desserts and chocolates, that means supermarket sampling programs, international pastry competitions and trade show awards. It means getting samples into the mouths of influential food critics and editors, bloggers and other social media influencers.”

Daniele Bertrand, Dufflet Pastries
Toronto, ON

WOMEN'S BUSINESS NETWORKS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Start here to connect with organizations and groups dedicated to working with women in business.

Alberta Women Entrepreneurs
awebusiness.com

**Association des femmes
d'affaires francophones**
afaf.ca

**Canadian Aboriginal and
Minority Supplier Council**
camsc.ca

**Canadian Association of Women
Executives and Entrepreneurs**
cawee.net

**Canadian Association of
Women in Business Network**
womeninbiznetwork.com

Canadian Women in Technology
canwit.ca

Catalyst catalyst.org

Centre for Women in Business (Nova Scotia)
centreforwomeninbusiness.ca

Company of Women
companyofwomen.ca

DigitalEve (New Media)
digitaleve.org

Forum for Women Entrepreneurs
fwe.ca

**Newfoundland & Labrador Organization
of Women Entrepreneurs**
nlowe.org

**Organization of Women
in International Trade (OWIT)**
owit.org

OWIT-Ottawa owit-ottawa.ca
OWIT-Toronto owit-toronto.ca

**PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise
(Northern Ontario)**
paro.ca

**Prince Edward Island Business
Women's Association**
peibwa.org

Professional Women's Network
pwnCanada.ca

**Réseau des Femmes d'affaires
du Québec**
rfaq.ca

Réseau Femmessor
femmessor.com/eng

**Rotman Initiative for Women in
Business - University of Toronto**
women.rotman.utoronto.ca

**Society for Canadian Women
in Science and Technology**
scwist.ca

WBE Canada
wbcanada.org

WBOM Women in Business (Manitoba)
wbom.ca

WEConnect International in Canada
weconnectinternational.org

**Women Advancing
Microfinance Canada**
waminternational.org

**Women Entrepreneurial
Center of Québec**
cefq.ca

**Women Entrepreneurs
of Saskatchewan**
womenentrepreneurs.sk.ca

Women in Aerospace Canada
wia-canada.org

**Women in Business
New Brunswick**
wbnb-fanb.ca

**Women in Communications
and Technology**
cwc-afc.com

Women in Film & Television Toronto
wift.com

Women in Leadership Foundation
womeninleadership.ca

Women of Influence
womenofinfluence.ca

Women Presidents' Organization
womenpresidentsorg.com

Women's Business Network (Ottawa)
womensbusinessnetwork.ca

Women's Enterprise Centre (BC)
womensenterprise.ca

Women's Enterprise Centre (Manitoba)
wecm.ca

**Women's Enterprise Organizations
of Canada**
weoc.ca

Women's Executive Network
wxnetwork.com

Young Women in Business
ywib.ca

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STAY CONNECTED WITH BWIT

BWIT's Information Coordinator, Miriam Lopez-Arbour, invites you to stay connected with the BWIT website and LinkedIn Group. Sign up for our mailing list at businesswomenintrade.gc.ca, and access the expertise of our 1,400 LinkedIn members at linkd.in/bwit-faci. Remember, there is strength in numbers!

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