



Canada 1997

APEC UPDATE: Simplifying Customs Procedures

Trade promotion in the growing markets of APEC economies is doing great things for Canadian business, but complex customs processes can give exporters a challenge they do not need.

Canada has aggressively promoted new ways of simplifying customs processes and Revenue Canada, as the lead department responsible for customs and border services, is playing a key role this year in addressing the problem. As Chair of APEC's Sub-Committee on Customs Procedures, Revenue Canada is heading an APEC effort to liberalize and facilitate trade by harmonizing and simplifying customs procedures between the APEC economies. The 1996 APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) report cited the promise of reduced border restrictions as APEC's biggest benefit in the short term. Following a series of meetings, the work of the Sub-Committee will be reported to the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in November.

Customs Symposium

One of the most significant events linking the concerns of the business community to APEC trade liberalization efforts is the APEC Customs/Industry Symposium which is being held in Montreal, May 7-9. Hosted jointly by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and Revenue Canada, the Symposium, provides business people and customs administrators from the 18 APEC economies with a strategic opportunity to discuss customs issues. This Symposium is a critical event for the APEC business community in that it brings a private-sector viewpoint to APEC's work on customs. The Symposium results will be presented to APEC Trade Ministers during their meeting May 9-10 in Montreal.

Revenue Canada is recognized worldwide as an innovative customs administrator and, through its participation in APEC, is able to share its technical expertise. This means lower costs for Canadian exporters in terms of time and money saved at the border.

The goal: harmonized and streamlined customs policies with business-friendly, modern customs clearance procedures for travellers.

The benefits: lower overheads and easier access to expanded markets for business. In this way, customs administrators will be better able to provide more efficient services at a lower cost to Canadians.

Sharing Export Savvy: Team Canada Business Seminars



Team Canada • Équipe Canada

It was one of the hottest tickets going. From Atlantic Canada to Calgary, the Team Canada Business Seminars played to crowds of business people keen to tap into the Asia-Pacific marketplace. The advice they received came from a host of experts, including some of the most successful Team Canada alumni members who export to Asia Pacific.

The Toronto seminar on March 26 completed the business seminar series, with events in Calgary, St. John's, Halifax, Fredericton, Charlottetown and Quebec City. In all, nearly a thousand Canadian business people participated, including many small and medium-sized business owners. Canada's Ambassadors from Japan and Thailand and trade commissioners from Korea, China, India, Malaysia and the Philippines shared their insights. Canada's Minister for International Trade and the Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) were on hand at a number of the sessions.

The message coming out of the seminars was clear: exporting to Asia Pacific presents unique challenges. Taking the right approach is crucial to success.

Brian Terry, President and CEO of Nautical Data International, Inc. (NDI), participated in the business seminar in St. John's. Terry was part of the Team Canada 1997 trade mission to Korea, the Philippines and Thailand in January. During the trip he focused on an opportunity that he is developing with partners in Korea for the digital marine navigation charts that his company produces and distributes.

"Once you've set yourself a goal, there's an enormous amount of hard work required to reach it. But the opportunities for advanced technology companies like our own are very great," said Mr. Terry. His small business, which has grown from one employee in 1993 to more than 50 to date, is clearly realizing the potential benefits exporting offers.

The Team Canada business seminars were sponsored by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade with a number of private-sector partners like the Pacific Basin Economic Council and the Alliance of Manufacturers and Exporters, as well as public-sector partners, including the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA).



Brian Terry, CEO and President of Nautical Data International Inc. at the company's office in St. John's

SEMINAR TIPS ON EXPORTING TO ASIA PACIFIC

- Recognize that the language, culture and business practices are different. Cultural sensitivity and awareness are key.
- Build personal relationships. Face-to-face contact is often the best approach to ensure comfort levels are high. Be prepared to commit the necessary time to do so, and be patient.
- Contact local trade commissioners. They know the local scene and have the contacts to help your business get started. They can also tell you the areas of most promise for your product or service.
- Consider all your options, whether it's direct trade and investment, joint venture partnerships aimed at third countries, or build-operate-transfer projects.
- Canada's cultural diversity is a tremendous asset. Make multiculturalism your business advantage.



East Asia: Opportunities for Canadian Business

To sustain current rates of economic growth, East Asian developing economies will need to spend about \$1.5 to 2 trillion on infrastructure in the next decade alone. Tremendous prospects exist for Canadian exporters and investors of technology, services and expertise who can anticipate and respond to the requirements of our APEC partners.