Mainframe Entertainment Inc., Vancouver

www.mainframe.ca

Mainframe Entertainment Inc. is one of the world's most prolific producers of computer animation for television and direct-to-video features and is expanding into long-form computer graphic images (CGI) for feature films, commercials and interactive entertainment. The company is best known as the pioneer of computer-animated television with the groundbreaking "ReBoot" series. Mainframe has produced over 200 half hours of computer animation since its inception in 1993. In addition to its critically acclaimed "Barbie as Rapunzel" direct-to-video feature, the company is currently producing 13 episodes of "Spider-Man" for Sony Pictures Television. Mainframe has worked with such names as ABC, IMAX Corporation, Hasbro Toys Inc., Columbia Tristar, Mattel, Alliance/Atlantis Communications, Cartoon Network, YTV Canada, Fox Family Channel, Fox Kids Network and Harvey Entertainment. The company employs over 200 artists, animators, technicians and production personnel, and has won many prestigious awards for its creative and technical innovations, including an induction into the Smithsonian Institute in 1998.

MARKET ACCESS AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Both the federal and provincial governments manage programs that encourage business to expand beyond Canada's borders. Within the federal government, 22 departments and agencies have merged their international business development activities under the banner of Team Canada Inc. The members of Team Canada Inc cooperate in providing international business intelligence, market access information and marketing advice to Canadian business through a single window, via the Internet (*www.exportsource.ca*) or via telephone at 1-888-811-1119.

Another network, led by Investment Partnerships Canada, supports companies, trade associations and municipal and regional development agencies looking to attract new investors. Canada offers investors a highly skilled workforce, a productive and dynamic economy, a competitive domestic environment, and close access to the main international markets with preferred access to the United States. Investments Partnerships Canada can be contacted via the Internet (*www.investincanada.gc.ca*).

The Trade Commissioner Service, with officers in 140 Canadian embassies and consulates throughout the world, is the international antenna for both these networks; it understands the regulations, policy issues and barriers that Canadian business may face in exporting goods and services or making a direct investment in a foreign market. The trade offices are a direct point of contact for Canadian business people in foreign markets. Officers are trained to help companies deal with a foreign environment and to help resolve trade policy issues that negatively influence commercial transactions. This international business development network is one of the main sources of information for Canadian trade policy initiatives that seek to expand access for Canadian firms in international markets.

The International Business Development Branch of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) is the domestic side of the Trade Commissioner Service. The branch publishes general market information on almost every country in the world, specialized reports on industrial sectors in most foreign markets, and timely sales leads through an International Business Opportunities Centre. Links to this branch and to each of the trade offices abroad are available at the Trade Commissioner Web site (*www.infoexport.gc.ca*). This site is also the gateway to a new subscription service, the Virtual Trade Commissioner, which offers personalized electronic access to the full range of services with a direct link to trade commissioners in the field.

Several members of Team Canada Inc provide direct assistance to Canadian business needing a source of finance, or a way to overcome administrative or credibility constraints—a particular issue for small or new exporters. Export Development Canada (*www.edc.ca*) offers credit and political risk insurance and direct financing. The Canadian Commercial Corporation (*www.ccc.ca*) provides access to difficult markets where government-to-government contracts are useful. And the Business Development Bank (*www.bdc.ca*) has financing packages for small and medium-sized enterprises.