

business WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE



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Do business with Fortune 500 companies

As one of Canada's nearly 1 million women entrepreneurs, you're in a unique position if you want to do business with large multinationals and governments in the United States and other markets. You can choose to pitch directly to their buyers or you can access opportunities specifically set aside for minority businesses through supplier diversity programs.

Supplier diversity first emerged in the United States nearly 15 years ago. Today, 97 percent of Fortune 500 firms have programs in place that set aside a specific percentage or dollar amount for purchases from diverse under-represented groups such as women, visible minorities and disabled entrepreneurs. For example, AT&T's supplier diversity spend was \$6.9 billion in 2009—a \$2 billion increase in two years. That same year, Walmart's supplier diversity commitment was \$9.2 billion.

To access these supplier diversity contracts, you need to be certified as a women's business enterprise through WEConnect Canada. This internationally-recognized certification offers privileged access to corporate and government contract opportunities in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, China, India and South America. While you can do business on your own with large corporations and governments everywhere, only certification opens the door to contracts set aside for diverse suppliers.

Ready to get started? In the next several pages, we will:

- unlock the secrets of accessing supplier diversity contracts
- introduce you to women who've made it
- offer tips to help you build your global business

Whether or not you choose to get certified, you always have the support of the Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) on your side. With trade commissioners located in more than 150 cities worldwide and right across Canada, the TCS is ready to serve you—everywhere you do business.



Shift your global success into high gear

Do you want to maximize your global potential? Explore the possibilities—and the opportunities—in this edition of the *Business Women in International Trade* newsletter.

As we celebrate the Year of the Entrepreneur, it gives me great pleasure to present the 2011 edition of the *Business Women in International Trade* newsletter to assist women interested in global markets.



Canada's success in weathering the economic crisis and its strong recovery depends on the efforts of entrepreneurs from coast to coast, assisted by our government's low-tax plan for jobs and growth. These small and medium-sized enterprises make up 98 percent of all businesses in Canada, and hundreds of thousands of them are owned by women.

By actively pursuing global opportunities and demonstrating their spirit of innovation, business women in international trade are making valuable contributions to Canada's economic prosperity.

The focus of this issue is on supplier diversity, and what it means for your business. We look at stories involving supplier diversity and explore strategies for success in this growing market. I encourage you to use the resources in this newsletter, tap into the great value that WEConnect Canada certification provides, and work with the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service to take on new opportunities abroad.

The road to economic recovery presents many possibilities—and I know that Canadian women in international trade are in a strong position to seize them.

Foreign Affairs and Int. Trade
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