

1. Stay in touch regularly with your current network through a combination of direct methods (e.g., phone calls) and indirect methods (e.g., email and direct mail) about once every six weeks. This deadline is best followed for your top 20-30 key contacts – a looser agenda may be adopted for your whole network.
2. Set a goal for the number of networking events you will attend each month. Next, decide how many new people you would like to meet at each event.
3. Consider setting up an email list. Set up a targeted and personalized email marketing campaign to meet potential new contacts for Canada, and then follow up by phone. For instance, this e-mail campaign could showcase trade and/or investment opportunities between local contacts and Canadian partners.
4. Ask members of your current network for referrals. Make a list of all the companies or people you would like to meet, and approach any existing contacts who might know them.
5. Make a habit of having breakfast, lunch or coffee with at least one new person every week. Share ideas and give your contacts any leads that might help them.
6. Write articles for relevant online or print publications that your contacts might read. After your article has been published, send a personalized email or a mail-out to your contacts inviting them to read your article(s). Ensure that you run those articles through the geographic and/or Communications bureau first.
7. Speak at trade shows and conferences. As a rule of thumb, you should take the opportunity to speak at every trade show that you attend. This will increase your credibility and drive traffic to your booth, workshop, or directly to you.
8. If possible, meet with the trade associations or organizations that your contacts belong to. To build a successful network, be sure to attend the meetings as often as possible.

This is not a complete list of all the possible ways to build your local network or to find new additional service providers. At any one time, you should be involved in at least four of these techniques. Make sure that the four techniques you choose change as your networks evolve.

Be sure to maintain relationships with local contacts that have previously benefited from relationships with Canadian companies. These companies will be good sources of reference and could provide testimonials. Decision makers at these companies may also move on from time to time, and the companies they move to may also be candidates for new relationships.