

Industry: Transportation

Marie-Chantal Goyette VP, Mexuscan Cargo



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Years Exporting: 9

International Sales: 85%

International Markets: U.S. and Mexico

International Services: Provider of road transport services to both exporters and importers between Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, with a fleet of 125 trucks and 400 trailers.

Competitive Edge: One of the few Canadian transport companies that provides door-to-door service between

Quebec/Ontario and Mexico without trans-shipment, which minimizes transit times and reduces warehousing and trans-shipping costs as well as the possibility of loss or damage.

Greatest Challenge: "Staying on top of weekly costs versus revenue and watching the exchange rates are difficult but necessary, because margins are small in this industry and it's easy to lose money on some accounts if you are not vigilant."

Resources Used: Marie-Chantal was a first-time participant in a trade mission to Monterrey, Mexico, in 2008, hosted by the Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT), where she met with logistics contacts. "Building these relationships is important because people don't switch carriers on a dime."

Best Advice: "You can better weather tough economic times if you have both national and international customers to reduce your dependency on a single market. The more markets you are active in, and the more diversified your customer base, the better you will do."

"Increasing our international business is the most efficient way to grow."

FACTOID: Marie-Chantal learned how to drive a truck at 16.

Industry: Chemicals

Isabel Alexander, President, Phancorp Inc.



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Years in Trade: 20

International Sales: 92%

International Markets: U.S., Asia, Europe, South America

International Services: A global chemical wholesaler with expertise in procurement, logistics and international finance that serves chemical distributors and producers.

"Vision wildly and go for it. Borders really are invisible."

Biggest Benefits: "Operating globally means you don't have all your eggs in one basket."

Personal Rewards: "I learn something new everyday about chemicals, raw materials, geography, new cultures and languages...and I make partnerships and friends all over the world!"

Greatest Challenge: "To operate as efficiently as possible in order to leverage all the opportunities I uncover."

Best Advice: "Avail yourself of the services paid for by your tax dollars, like the Trade Commissioner Service (www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca) as well as regional and local resources. And joining associations like OWIT (www.owit-toronto.ca; www.owitalberta.org) and I.E. Canada (www.iecanada.com) will allow you to network and tap into the expertise and resources of others who can help you."

Next Goal: To create an overall Latin America plan. "We are developing supplier and customer relationships in South America and Mexico where more opportunities on the buy and sell side exist now."

FACTOID: Qualified by experience, this self-taught dynamo grew up on a Quebec farm and had no background in the chemical business.

For more profiles, visit www.businesswomenintrade.gc.ca

10 Tips to Market Internationally

Our featured women exporters share this advice to catapult your business onto the global stage:

- 1 Ensure your website appeals to prospects globally
- 2 Introduce yourself to Canada's trade commissioners at home and abroad (www.tradecommissioner.gc.ca)
- 3 Attend industry trade shows in other countries
- 4 Network through business associations
- 5 Establish alliances with international partners
- 6 Use distributors in your target markets
- 7 Play up the Canadian angle
- 8 Consider TV shopping networks for consumer product promotion
- 9 Become a member of a trade association like OWIT (www.owit-toronto.ca; www.owitalberta.org) and I.E. Canada (www.iecanada.com)
- 10 Sign up for a trade mission at www.businesswomenintrade.gc.ca

How These Trailblazers Practice Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- Make eco-friendly products
- Practice fuel conservation
- Ensure minimal packaging
- Select business partners that share commitment to CSR
- Integrate environmental consciousness into culture and operations
- Participate in educational initiatives
- Donate to charities and foundations that support the environment and other causes