

EXCELLING IN TRADE: TIPS FROM TRADE COMMISSIONERS

Do you have plans to participate in a trade mission, travel for business, or attend a conference or trade show? We turned to our trade commissioners in Vancouver and Miami for their advice.

PLAN AHEAD FOR BEST RESULTS

"Before you go on a business trip, research your target market and be clear about the purpose of your trip. Do you want to meet with potential customers, agents, partners or someone who can help commercialize your technology? Reach out to the Trade Commissioner Service in your region for advice. We can connect you with trade commissioners in your target market, who will provide market and sector information, along with a list of qualified leads. If you're attending a trade show or conference, build some excitement around your presence before you leave. Send out invitations to your booth and get the word out on social media. When you're on-site, be engaging! Tailor your pitch for each person you meet."

Christian Hansen, Senior Trade Commissioner and
Renee Umezuki, Trade Commissioner, Vancouver

STAY ON MESSAGE AND FOLLOW UP

"The Business Women in International Trade missions put you face-to-face with buyers from large multinationals. If you secure a B2B matchmaking meeting, don't overpromise and make sure you have the capacity to deliver. Meet as many people as you can. Within two weeks of returning home, connect with your new contacts on LinkedIn and Twitter, then schedule quarterly follow-ups in your calendar."

Ximena Pauvif-Machado, Trade Commissioner, Miami

STRONGER TOGETHER: PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE WOMEN

When it comes to assisting business women across Canada, the Business Women in International Trade (BWIT) program takes great pride in being part of a national network of partners that supports women at every stage of business development. Here's what two of our valued partners have to say:

"The Women's Enterprise Centres, which are part of the Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC), have a long history of providing services to women entrepreneurs. While we bring the grassroots development of entrepreneurs to the table, BWIT provides the opportunities and guidance

necessary for our business women to internationalize. The BWIT team helps our clients navigate new markets and prepare for trade missions. The women-focused trade missions they lead create incredible opportunities for entrepreneurs to grow their networks and secure contracts globally. The BWIT team is our go-to resource for information and support."

Sandra Altner, CEO, Women's Enterprise Centre of Manitoba and Chair, WEOC Board of Directors

"To build an 'innovation nation,' we need to work together to support, champion and promote business women. I think BWIT is an amazing program. Startup Canada acts as a pipeline to promote BWIT's initiatives to our 150,000 members so that women entrepreneurs can participate in these incredible opportunities. The more we work together, the more we can unleash the innovative and growth potential of Canadian business women."

Victoria Lennox, Co-Founder & CEO, Startup Canada

? DID YOU KNOW

More and more, women-owned businesses are helping to power our economy. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) owned by women represented 15.7% of all SMEs in Canada, and 11.1% of exporting SMEs in 2014. Female SMEs exhibit a number of characteristics that are common to SMEs more generally: exporters are larger and have owners with more education and experience than non-exporters. Likewise, women exporters are located in export-intensive industries, such as professional and technical services, manufacturing and wholesale trade. As exporters are some of the strongest firms in the economy, it is important that female SMEs look to exporting as an opportunity to expand their businesses.

Read the full report, *Majority-Female Owned Exporting SMEs in Canada*, from Global Affairs Canada's Office of the Chief Economist. businesswomenintrade.gc.ca



Team BWIT is ready to help you: Paige Kirk, Lynne Thomson, Josie Mousseau, Edith Morency and Miriam López-Arbour.