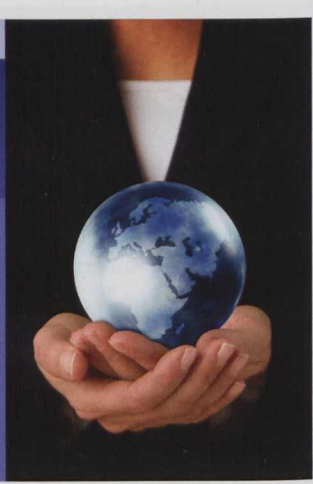


# 1997 Trade Mission

## Biggest Takeaways

Whether women entrepreneurs, sponsors or organizers, these individuals who participated in the first *Businesswomen's Team Canada Trade Mission* in 1997 to Washington, DC, have nothing but praise for the business benefits and still have strong memories of a unique experience that forged life-long contacts and even friendships.



"It gave me confidence and a broader view and was extremely educational in terms of export logistics and business possibilities. The info I obtained on exporting definitely helped me in subsequently penetrating the U.S. market."

**Marianne Bertrand**, *President, Mutluks ([www.mutluks.com](http://www.mutluks.com))*, Toronto, ON, whose export sales now represent 70% of her total business.

"The greatest benefit was meeting other great women exporters with whom I still exchange e-mails. I am now a consultant in trade and the contacts I made in 1997 still serve me well."

**Bianca Battistini**, *President, BB-Focus.com, ([www.BB-Focus.com](http://www.BB-Focus.com))*, Sherbrooke, PQ

"It was extremely beneficial as I learned what support was available for exporters. I don't believe that you can beat talking face to face to the representatives of agencies like Export Development Canada ([www.edc.ca](http://www.edc.ca)). And owning and managing a business, especially if you are female, can be a lonely occupation, so it was great to meet other women entrepreneurs."

**Connie Deckert**, *President, Motivair Canada Ltd., ([www.motivair.com](http://www.motivair.com))*, Elmira, ON, whose U.S. business has been growing steadily.

"Since we did not have the networks that exist today, I went on the mission to do some research on home builders in the U.S. The organizers were excellent about putting me in contact with people I wanted to meet and I was really impressed with the way they listened to me and handled everything."

**Debra Mauro**, *Co-Chair, Albi Homes ([www.albihomes.com](http://www.albihomes.com))*, Calgary, AB, which has forged great relationships with builders south of the border.

"Since 1997 we have put tremendous effort in developing opportunities in the U.S. to acquire raw material which in turn can lead to increase our export efforts."

**Ellen McGregor**, *CEO, Fielding Chemical Technologies Inc. ([www.fieldchem.com](http://www.fieldchem.com))*, Cookstown, ON, who participated in the mission with a goal of establishing recycling loops in the U.S. Last year, between 15 to 50% of Fielding's raw material came from the U.S. or Puerto Rico, compared to less than 1% a decade ago, and it now exports to the U.S. and overseas.

"The businesswomen I met gave me a preview, seven years before I opened my own business, of how tough, how creative, how exhilarating, how challenging, and how ultimately rewarding I could expect the journey to be."

**Judy Bradt**, *President, Summit Insight ([www.summitinsight.com](http://www.summitinsight.com))*, Washington, D.C., who helped organize the 1997 trade mission while she was a trade commissioner in the Canadian Embassy in Washington and who started her company in 2003 to help Canadian firms win U.S. government contracts.

"As a partner, we established many business relationships and connections that have served us well until this day. The combination of a public/private partnership created greater access to ideas and funding than we could have achieved on our own. This event also marked the beginning for the businesswomen and the sponsors to truly understand what a powerful economic force these women were when measured by even the most traditional measures of things like number of jobs created by women-owned firms. Prior to this event, there had not been real recognition of this fact by the government, the banks and others."

**Pamela Davis Heilman**, *Partner, Hodgson Russ LLP, ([www.hodgsonruss.com](http://www.hodgsonruss.com))*, Buffalo, NY

"Everything was amazing – from the export sessions to the events to the business contacts made. The reason that my small business survived and has grown in the millions is due to some of the people I met back then. I still have my directory and refer to it if I need to talk to people or am sourcing any products or services they have. We have a great network and the contacts we made will never be gone."

**Hilda Letemplier**, *President, Pressure Pipe Steel Fabrication Ltd., Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NF, whose 100% Inuit-owned company now imports raw material from the U.S. and Germany.*

## Interested in upcoming trade missions?

Contact **Josie Mousseau** at  
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