

There are many winners under the FTA's government procurement provisions. Five years ago, Ellis-Don Construction Ltd., a 43-year-old company headquartered in London, Ontario, launched a U.S. operation in Seattle, Washington.

"We won government contracts by bidding on public projects. The competition was fierce," says John Begley, Vice-President of Ellis-Don's U.S. operations. "Our edge," adds Begley, "comes from our people power, construction approach and method of doing business."

The size of the U.S. projects varies from US\$92 million for the Native Medical Center in Anchorage, Alaska, to two projects worth US\$70 million at the University of Washington in Seattle, and US\$20 million for the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma.

Two years ago, the company opened two additional U.S. offices (in Detroit, Michigan and Atlanta, Georgia). The Atlanta office is building a station for the Metro Atlanta Rural Transit Authority, and has just won a US\$60-million contract to build the Olympic Village housing facilities on the campus of Georgia Tech, for the 1996 Olympics.

PCL Constructors Inc., Canada's largest general contractor, opened its first U.S. operations in Denver, Colorado in 1975. Headquartered in Edmonton, the company now has seven offices throughout North America, which employ 1050 salaried and approximately 2000 hourly workers. In March 1994, the company opened an office in Mexico City.

"Over 50 percent of our business comes from the U.S. market," says Joseph D. Thompson, Chairman, CEO and President of PCL. "We've been working on projects for the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamations for years."

The company is presently working on close to 50 projects, including the construction of a new visitors centre at Hoover Dam, the Denver airport expansion, and the renovation and expansion of the Convention Center of Long Beach, California.

"Over the past 20 years we have been able to expand gradually in the U.S. market. This has allowed PCL to weather the economic downturns of the early 1980s and more recently," says Thompson.

All systems are go for the Canadian services industry to build its future in the new North

America. Whether they have accessed markets in the U.S. and Mexico in partnership or solo, the companies featured here — and many others — are leading the way in the expanding services economy. Livelihoods are built on what people and businesses can offer each other. Today, more than ever, what they can offer is service. Whether it's software advice, construction engineering or easing the movement of products through customs, the services industry — increasingly knowledge-based — is a cornerstone of the new North American market.

Gail Rockburne is a writer and consultant who specializes in business development and trade relations in North America. Rockburne Associates Strategic Connections North America is based in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Interested in selling services in the new North America?

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) makes a wide range of information available to Canadian business people interested in the United States or Mexico. DFAIT also has the Services Industry and Transportation Division, responsible for promoting international trade in services.

DFAIT has developed a comprehensive export information kit entitled, *The Road To Success: Exporting Services to the United States*. Geared primarily to the services industry, this kit contains many features of interest and importance to any potential exporter. (Order forms are available from InfoCentre, below; the kit costs \$29.95 plus GST.) A new kit on selling to the U.S. federal government will be available in late June, free of charge. As an introduction to programs designed for the Mexican market, DFAIT has published *The New North America: Opportunities for Canadians*.

For further information on accessing the Mexican, U.S. or other services markets, contact the Department's InfoCentre at 1-800-267-8367 (Ottawa area: 944-4000); fax: (613) 996-9709.

