

Make Your Virtual Trade Commissioner Work for You

As little as 15 minutes of your time could make a difference!

When you registered for the Virtual Trade Commissioner, you completed a company profile. That profile is available to every one of our trade commissioners abroad and relied upon every time you request a service. The more current and complete it is, the better we can understand how your firm adds value and the more targeted our assistance and services will be. That's why updating your company profile is key.

What's in it for you?

When you invest your time in your Virtual Trade Commissioner, you're investing in your company's export future. Trade commissioners, who are properly informed about your company, can identify the best business opportunities, the most relevant contacts, and the most appropriate trade events for your firm. In short, they can deliver the kind of targeted services you need to succeed. Just think. You have access to a team of over 800 trade professionals working around the globe, and you'll never have to go through the same song and dance routine about your company. They will all know you!

How to jumpstart your Virtual Trade Commissioner

1. Update your company profile now.
2. Modify your Virtual Trade Commissioner to fit your company's needs. (Go to "Your Account")
3. Visit your personalized page regularly.
4. Request services online.
5. Keep your profile up-to-date.
6. Contact us for help.

When updating your company profile, take time to answer the questions fully. Ensure the information we have about your company—your products or services, your clients, your target foreign markets—is current and correct. This important step will give your business more credibility and make your interests count with trade staff and prospective buyers.

Many Canadian companies rely on word of mouth and introduction to develop their export markets. That makes your trade commissioners valuable allies. Your partnership with us starts with the Virtual Trade Commissioner. Make it work for you!

When you register for your Virtual Trade Commissioner, you receive qualified business leads, market reports, current news, trade event listings, and more, all targeted to your selected industry sector and foreign markets.

For more information on the Virtual Trade Commissioner or to register, visit:

www.infoexport.gc.ca

UPDATE YOUR COMPANY PROFILE NOW

From the main page of your Virtual Trade Commissioner, click on "Your Account" and then follow the prompts. Invest a few minutes now and watch it pay off later.

Arts and Culture at the Virtual Aboriginal Trade Show

When people around the world think about Canada, Aboriginal arts and culture often come to mind. Now, the Virtual Aboriginal Trade Show, or VATS, is becoming the on-line link connecting international buyers with many of Canada's Aboriginal suppliers of arts and cultural goods and services.

Aboriginal businesses that export products or services are using VATS to provide fast access to information about their products and services through links to their own Web sites. Potential buyers and partners around the world are turning to VATS for information—in any of seven different languages—on

Aboriginal businesses in the cultural sector: design, publishing, crafts, heritage, film and video, music and sound recording, performing arts, new media, television and broadcasting, and visual arts.

VATS works because it is a one-stop access point. The descriptions on the VATS Web site outline the products and services that those Aboriginal suppliers can offer to customers around the globe, whether those are traditional crafts and artistry or ones that draw on the latest technologies. Visitors to the site can learn more about Aboriginal customs and traditions, as exhibitors often list the history behind their companies

and information on the Aboriginal heritage tied to their products or services. Visitors can also discover how artists are fusing traditional and contemporary Aboriginal cultures.

Barbara Hager of **Arrow Productions**, a Victoria, British Columbia-based film and video company, is already using VATS to reach potential new clients and partners: "I was really impressed by the VATS Web site. I know that many international buyers are interested in working with Aboriginal arts and cultural organizations in Canada, they just don't know where to find us easily. VATS is the answer, both to promote our cultural products and services to the world and to make it simple for potential partners and buyers to learn about what we offer."

For more information, go to www.vats.ca.

Mission to Qatar, Yemen and Egypt a success

Mark Eyking, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade, and Dwayne Lingenfelter, Chairman of the Canada-Arab Business Council (CABC), led a 30-member CABC mission to Qatar, Yemen and Egypt last December.

The CABC trade mission helped participants to make contact with potential partners and customers, established and reinforced relations between the CABC and regional chambers of commerce, and highlighted the interest of Canadian firms in economic and commercial relations with the region.

The mission focused on the oil and gas, consulting, project management and education sectors and included Canadian consultants wishing to attract investment to Canada.

Qatar continues to have one of the fastest-growing economies in the world. After expanding at a rate of 8% in



Drumming up business were, from left: Dr. Mohamed Azzam, President, CABC; Mohammed Bin Khalid Al-Mana, Chairman, Qatar Chamber of Commerce; and Mark Eyking, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Trade.

recent years, the country's economic outlook remains very positive, based on Qatar's vast natural gas reserves, high oil earnings and foreign capital. Also, more than \$55 billion in infrastructure projects are planned for the next few years, including \$200 million for the City Centre commercial complex expansion, \$100 million each for a national museum and library, as well as oil and gas refineries, highways, a new airport, colleges, hospitals, tourism developments and many more exciting projects.

In Yemen, where Canadian companies have already been successful, a particularly strong oil and gas sector has been established. What's more, Yemenis would like to see more Canadian companies take advantage of the opportunities there.

The mission's activities in Egypt left participants with an appreciation for the Egyptian government's commitment to economic reform and of the existing market potential in many sectors. In fact, several companies are planning return trips to solidify deals made during the mission.

Like other CABC missions, Canadian companies were pleased with the access they got to major decision makers and senior officials. An expanded schedule of CABC missions to the Middle East and North Africa is planned for 2005.

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