

# Export Awards

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The Minister added, "Canada's export performance in 1994 was truly remarkable. Although exports now account for one third of our gross domestic product, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. Exports and investments generate new and challenging jobs for Canadians throughout the country.

"Trade agreements open doors; they do not ensure that Canadian companies will walk through them. To succeed, Canadian firms, and particularly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), must strive to take advantage of these agreements. To that end, they can count on the advice and support of Canada's Trade Commissioners located in 128 countries around the world. They can count on government programs and services which have been refocussed to better meet the needs of Canadian SMEs."

Canada's geographical and industrial diversity has been well represented throughout the 13-year history of the Canada Export Awards. This year was no exception, with winning companies from coast to coast and with products and services ranging from sophisticated communications programs to unique family games.

## **THE 1995 CANADA EXPORT AWARD WINNERS**

### **ADVANCED GRAVIS COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY LTD.**

Advanced Gravis Computer Technology Ltd. of Burnaby, B.C., has a mission -- to build a better joystick.

In its 10 years of existence, Gravis' sales have grown from \$250,000 in its first year to \$43 million by the end of January 1995. Exports make up 90 per cent of sales. Gravis employs 234 people, a 285-per-cent increase from 1991.

"We're successful because we focus on two essential components

of any product -- quality and durability," said Michael Cooper, president. "Our overseas distributors have peace of mind because they know our products are built to last."

As long as home computers continue to proliferate, Advanced Gravis will keep on designing and manufacturing high quality game and entertainment accessories, said Cooper. "People want to get the most out of their computer investment. We help them realize this goal."

### **BELL HELICOPTER TEXTRON**

For a second time, Bell Helicopter Textron, a division of Textron Canada Ltd., has won a Canada Export Award.

Based in Mirabel, Quebec, Bell Helicopter designs, manufactures and assembles seven types of helicopters. In just 10 short years it has become one of the world's largest suppliers of commercial helicopters.

Exports are Bell's mainstay, making up 94.2 per cent of its total 1994 sales. Last year, exports comprised \$501 million of total sales, an increase of 77 per cent from 1992. The company employs 1,750 people.

"We've done well because we've established a strong name for ourselves overseas," said Dell Young, the company's president.

### **EICON TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION**

Having won a Canada Export Award a record third time, Eicon Technology Corporation of Montreal, Quebec, was presented with the first *Canada Export Lifetime Achievement Award*.

The 11-year-old, 560-employee company designs and manufactures software and hardware for corporate information systems.

In 1994, Eicon's export sales were \$74.9 million, a 70-per-cent increase from 1992. Almost 95 per

cent of its sales are from exports to more than 70 countries.

"Almost 45 per cent of our staff are devoted to research and development. It's the lifeblood of our business," said Peter Brojde, Eicon's president and one of its founders.

"Our biggest edge has been our ability to consistently identify changes in our markets -- new trends, major shifts, and especially, emerging technologies -- and developing or modifying products to address them," said Brojde.

### **KL GROUP INC.**

Being the first in the world to define a niche market isn't enough to stay on top. You must continue to provide the most technologically sophisticated products to your customers.

This philosophy has made KL Group Inc. of Toronto, Ontario, a consistent world leader in its field. KL, founded in 1989, designs and builds graphical user interface components for software developers.

"At KL Group, we're dedicated to constantly being first to market with the best technology," said Greg Kiessling, the company's president and one of its founders.

In 1995, KL's exports grew by 1,708 per cent over 1992 and now make up 96.5 per cent of its total sales, primarily to the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Japan.

### **MACRO ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY INC.**

Moving aggressively into a new marketplace helped Macro Engineering & Technology Inc. of Mississauga, Ontario, boost its export sales by 333 per cent in just three years. Exports now account for 88 per cent of total sales.

"We realized the vast potential of moving into China," said Mirek Planeta, the company's president.

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