

# Selling Canuck biz deals abroad like a dating game, experts say

By CHARLENE SAGLER  
*The Daily News*

Selling international joint ventures is like running a dating club, except stakes are much higher and the salespeople are called consuls or counsellors.

Consuls or investment counsellors match needy companies with other needy companies with the logic they complement each other and grow more quickly.

Several consuls, on a cross-country tour, were in town yesterday to check out Nova Scotia's most attractive features — aerospace, marine and defence technology and food processing for the most part.

International joint ventures have become especially popular for two reasons — the Canada-U.S. free trade deal and the 1992 European Accord. These two events inspired the federal government to create investment promotion programs in 43 Canadian embassies around the world.

The bottom line is to increase long-term investment and jobs in Canada, said David Lenihan, Canadian consul and senior investment adviser in New York.

How consuls go about selling a joint venture is a different thing — attitudes must be tailored to the country where they're based.

For instance, in New England, a big drawing feature to locate in Nova Scotia is the availability of government grants.

"It's a hook. We bait people with the opportunity to invest money in Canada — tax credits, loan guarantees — using these inducements to take advantage of the package plus other things that make Nova Scotia an attractive place to live," said Lenihan.

With the Dutch, on the other hand, counsellors keep government incentives out of the sales pitch, said Loepy Ten Hoopen, investment counsellor for the Canadian embassy in the Netherlands.

"We don't use grants as a hook. But that's the first question the business people ask," said Ten Hoopen.

One of Canada's most attractive features is its next-door neighbor, the United States.

"Free trade is a great sales point," said Pierre Bejanger, Canadian consul in Paris. "Companies can come here and get into the U.S. market."

The Halifax Daily News

Friday, April 21, 1989