

## Texas computer giant sets up new site in Edmonton

On July 14, 2004, Texas-based computer giant Dell Incorporated announced its decision to establish a customer contact centre in Edmonton, Alberta. The culmination of a year of economic development challenges, dedication and stamina, the Dell deal was sealed with successful teamwork among several levels of government and the private sector that included International Trade Canada, Alberta Economic Development, the Edmonton Economic Development Corporation and the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology.

Determined to make a Canadian site location work, the team—led by Canada's Consulate General in Texas—returned several times, articulating a commitment and belief that Canada is the place where Dell can be successful and gain traction toward its ambitious \$60 billion revenue target. The team connected with Dell's business plan and coordinated a Canada-wide approach that spoke to the company's needs.

### "Edmonton has it all"

With its Canadian corporate headquarters in Toronto, Dell Canada chose Edmonton for its newest site because the city met all the necessary criteria. "We looked for a location in Canada that offers a good quality of life, highly skilled workers and world-class training programs. Edmonton has it all," said Ro Parra, Senior Vice-President, Dell Americas. "We are also very impressed with the incredible cooperation we have received from the all levels of government. Canada is a very important market for Dell. Our success here makes this expansion possible." During the first quarter of 2004, Dell unit shipments to Canadian customers increased by 26%.

Since their doors opened in July 2004, Dell has worked closely with the Northern Alberta Institute of Tech-

nology to recruit and train approximately 500 new Dell employees from the Edmonton area. At the recent ribbon cutting ceremony in early January 2005, Dell committed to another 250 jobs to staff its Edmonton customer contact centre by July 2005, a 50% increase from its initial employment projection. Dell's decision is the result of its successful Edmonton start-up and an increased scope of work, which now includes sales and customer care functions. The Edmonton centre provides technical support, customer care and sales to enterprise customers throughout Canada and the Americas.

"We are grateful for the outstanding response we have received from the community since announcing our new centre," said Lawrence Pentland, Vice-President and General Manager, Dell Americas International.



From left: Marcy Grossman, Consul and Senior Trade Commissioner, Dallas; Lawrence Pentland, Vice-President, Dell Americas International; Deputy Prime Minister Anne McLellan; and Kip Thomson, Vice-President, Dell International Services.

Dell's investment will impact the Edmonton metropolitan area by at least \$900 million over the next twenty years. It diversifies the area's oil and gas economy and helps Greater Edmonton more substantially position itself going forward as an innovative, educated and cooperative place where Canadian partners are ready to do business. In addition to the promotion of Canadian exports, International Trade Canada's mandate is to attract and retain foreign direct investment to Canada—creating jobs and strengthening the Canadian economy. This project's positive outcome is evidence that service and teamwork are definitely worth the commitment for the benefit of Canada, its workforce and its citizens.

**For more information**, contact Marcy Grossman, Consul and Senior Trade Commissioner, Canadian Consulate General in Dallas, tel.: (214) 922-9806, fax: (214) 922-9815, e-mail: marcy.grossman@international.gc.ca, Web site: [www.international.gc.ca/dallas](http://www.international.gc.ca/dallas).

## International Builders' Show 2005

The 62<sup>nd</sup> annual International Builders' Show (IBS) took place in Orlando, Florida, from January 13 to 16, 2005. Taking advantage of the second-largest convention center in the U.S., the event boasted a record of more than 1,600 exhibitors. The IBS is the housing industry's largest new-product showcase, with suppliers spanning more than 300 categories ranging across every niche of the residential and light commercial construction fields.

IBS 2005 marked Canada's silver anniversary at the show, with 25 consecutive years of participation by the Canadian industry. This year, over 100 Canadian firms and organizations exhibited and approximately half of those were located at the highly visible Canada pavilion, which fully integrated the Brand Canada motif.

The conference featured more than 200 educational seminars covering issues ranging from housing and the economy and home financing to cutting-edge design, innovative technologies and trends. Leading experts in the housing industry, including executives from the host U.S. National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) also were available to answer questions in daily news conferences.

### Additional highlights

A Market Orientation Program was held prior to the official opening of the IBS, under the stewardship of the Canadian Consulate General in Atlanta. Canadian industry participants got an incisive view of the U.S. marketplace, and learned how to capitalize on emerging opportunities in the building products sector. The impressive roster of speakers included Larry Zarker, President, MarketEdge Consulting; Bill Hofius, Senior Vice-President, PlyMart Inc.; Paul Bertram, President & CEO, PRB Design, and Mo Modani, Manager, Florida Office of Building Codes and

Standards. The Canadian firms attending this session were uniformly impressed with the breadth and depth of the market intelligence provided.

### Softwood lumber advocacy

A softwood lumber advocacy lunch was also held on the margins of IBS 2005. The event primarily targeted local builders, particularly in light of the hurricanes that ravaged Florida in 2004 and the pressures associated with the shortages of construction materials, which have combined to raise the profile of the softwood lumber dispute and its negative impact on U.S. consumers. Turnout was excellent. Approximately 20 U.S. representatives, mostly from Florida-based homebuilders associations, attended the lunch, along with ten Canadian participants from the Canadian Council of Forest Ministers, la Société d'Habitation du Québec, the Quebec Wood Export Bureau, International Trade Canada, Industry Canada, and from Canadian missions in Washington, D.C., Miami and Atlanta. The Canadian Embassy took the lead in organizing this event. Paul Bailey, Counsellor at the Canadian Embassy, provided an overview of the Canadian position in the softwood lumber dispute; Len Tylka, Vice-President of the Florida Home Builders Association, spoke about the impact of the dispute on homebuilders; and Susan Petniunas, Managing

Principal of the Alliance of American Consumers for Affordable Housing (ACA), discussed ACA's lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill to date. Barry Rutenberg, National Vice President of the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), moderated the session and commented on the importance of ending the dispute.

The Canadian barbecue, a premiere networking event, was extremely well attended and provided additional networking opportunities for Canadian participants. The outdoor venue, good weather and high turnout combined to make this event a rousing success and put an exclamation point on Canada's presence at IBS 2005.

The International Builders' Show for 2006 will take place from January 11 to 14, also in Orlando.

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## Correction

On page 1 of the March 1 issue of *CanadExport*, in the photo of Minister Peterson and the Vice mayor of Shanghai, the Vice mayor should have been identified as Yang Xiaodu.

## Canada's Response to the Tsunami: Information for Canadian Companies

Canadian companies have responded quickly and generously in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami. As reconstruction efforts increase, companies will be seeking information on how they can become involved. International Trade Canada has designed a Web

site to provide Canadian suppliers of equipment and services with information on commercial developments related to the reconstruction phase.

**For more information**, go to [www.itcan-cican.gc.ca/tsunami/tsunami-response-en.asp](http://www.itcan-cican.gc.ca/tsunami/tsunami-response-en.asp).