



**VIRTUAL
TRADE
COMMISSIONER**
PERSONALIZED
INFORMATION AND SERVICES

The Virtual Trade Commissioner puts a world of resources at your fingertips – literally! Password-protected, private and secure, the Virtual Trade Commissioner creates an on-line workspace for you to identify and investigate trade prospects in your industry sector and target markets. Take advantage of personalized services from Canada's trade commissioners all over the globe.

Virtual Trade Commissioner adds trade finance access to its powerful toolkit

Export Development Canada has joined forces with the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service to expand the toolkit of the Virtual Trade Commissioner for Canadian exporters. In addition to the Virtual Trade Commissioner's customized market and business information, the site will have a section devoted to EDC's trade finance and risk management services.

"Canadian exporters who use this site can gain immediate access to trade finance services that are relevant to their particular international deal, whether that means doing a credit check on a potential foreign buyer, or getting a quick quote on credit insurance for a single transaction or multiple exports," says Suzanne Morris, EDC's Vice-President of Small Business Services.

"This service is especially useful for small and medium-sized exporters," says Morris. "They can use the site, on their own schedule, to get international trade information straight from Canada's representatives located right in the markets that they're interested in."

Just as registered businesses can request services on-line directly from a trade commissioner abroad, they will have a direct link to an EDC specialist who can answer questions about EDC's insurance, bonding and guarantees and financing services. Virtual Trade Commissioner users also get access to special on-line services such as EXPORT Check, to order financial profiles on potential foreign customers, and EXPORT Protect, to insure a single export transaction against the risk of non-payment.

"The needs of Canadian exporters vary from deal to deal and country to country. By offering access to EDC services through the Virtual Trade Commissioner, we believe that more companies will learn how EDC can improve their chances of international success and profitability," says Morris.

EDC provides trade finance and risk management services to Canadian exporters and investors in up to 200 markets. Founded in 1944, EDC is a Crown corporation that operates on commercial principles.

 **THE CANADIAN
TRADE COMMISSIONER
SERVICE**

Use your Virtual Trade Commissioner for real-time results

Need to check a potential buyer in an export market before you close the deal? Do you want to insure a single export transaction against 90% of losses if the foreign buyer doesn't pay? Well, now these services are easily available through the Virtual Trade Commissioner.

For a modest fee—starting at \$60—EXPORT Check enables a company to quickly check the credit profile and financial health of potential foreign customers. EDC links you to a database of more than 15 million companies in the U.S. and 24 other key Canadian export markets.

Companies that are looking for a higher level of protection can turn to EXPORT Protect. This accounts receivable insurance for a single transaction can be arranged quickly and securely on-line. EDC recently reduced the pricing for this service to a flat fee of 1.5% of a transaction's value.

Whether you insure a single deal or all of your exports, you can now access all of EDC's insurance and trade finance services through the Virtual Trade Commissioner. EDC's specialists can direct you to the right export service at the right time and in the right context—whether you are looking for peace of mind or access to more working capital.

For more information on the Virtual Trade Commissioner, visit:

www.infoexport.gc.ca

Iran agri-food show biggest in Middle East

TEHRAN, IRAN — May 29-June 1, 2005 — The Canadian Embassy in Tehran, in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), invites Canadian exporters to participate in the Canadian pavilion at **Iran Agrofood 2005**, an international food, food technology and agricultural trade fair.

Last year, with 422 exhibitors from 25 countries (over 50% were foreign participants) and over 50,000 visitors, Iran Agrofood established itself as the Middle East's largest international trade fair in the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Access is key

Iran's 70 million people, and its access to the 300 million people in the Gulf region, the Community of Independent States countries and Turkey, Iraq and

Afghanistan, makes it an important market for agri-food products, agriculture machinery and food packaging equipment. Last year, Iran's imports of agricultural products reached \$3.2 billion while the country's exports were valued at \$1.6 billion.

This show is an ideal venue for Canadian companies to get a feel for business opportunities there and to market themselves to a large and diverse audience. For those companies already active in Iran, the show is an excellent way to enhance existing relationships.

For more information, contact Azar Zanganeh, Trade Commissioner, Canadian Embassy in Tehran, e-mail: azar.zanganeh@international.gc.ca, Web site: www.iranagrofood.com. ★

Nigeria hosts oil and gas fair

ABUJA, NIGERIA — April 18-20, 2005 — The **Nigeria Oil & Gas Exhibition & Conference** has become one of the largest international energy shows in that country.

Hydrocarbons have played a leading role in Nigeria's socio-economic development over the past 50 years. Responsible for more than 95% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings, oil revenues have facilitated the development of the country's infrastructure and other industries.

The first Nigeria Oil & Gas Exhibition & Conference attracted more than 2,000 visitors, 380 conference delegates and 62 exhibiting companies. **For more information**, go to www.nog2005.com. ★

Asian defence show attracts the world

SINGAPORE — May 17-20, 2005 — **IMDEX Asia 2005** is the Asia Pacific's premier maritime defence show and includes an exhibition, seminars, visiting warships and delegations from around the world.

The Asia-Pacific region is forecast to be the only place where new warship construction will expand in the current decade, mainly due to strong acquisition programs in South Korea, Japan,

China and India. Spending there is expected to double to \$16.8 billion annually by 2009.

Last year's edition attracted 42 naval delegations, more than 6,200 trade visitors from 48 countries and 200 exhibitors, including nine from Canada.

As in previous years, Singapore's navy will organize the Naval Platform Technology Seminar (www.mindef.gov.sg/navy/npts) to coincide with the

Work it at B.C. Fashion Week

VANCOUVER — April 10-15, 2005 — Through a diverse, professional and high-quality series of fashion shows and supporting activities, **B.C. Fashion Week Fall/Winter 2005** will put the spotlight on Canadian and international design while facilitating the business of fashion.

B.C. Fashion Week will bring together individuals and organizations that play a vital role in the fashion industry to showcase their upcoming collections to retailers, buying houses, distributors, wholesalers, agents, potential franchisees, the media and individual buyers.

The event will showcase two types of collections: ready-to-wear and diffusion, which is somewhere between ready-to-wear and couture. The objective of this international event will be to draw industry representatives from around the world and create business relationships between designers and buyers. After all, Vancouver offers access to one of the busiest ports in North America, with access to the entire Pan-Pacific region.

For more information, contact B.C. Fashion Week, e-mail: info@bcfashionweek.com, Web site: www.bcfashionweek.com. ★