



BUSINESS WOMEN TAKE FLIGHT

Have you considered participating in a women-focused trade mission? Designed with your global success in mind, these missions bring together dynamic women who want their businesses to take off in new markets.

The BWIT team is leading two missions in 2015. The WBENC mission will take place from June 21-26 in Austin, Texas. WBENC is the largest U.S. business fair for women-owned enterprises and one of the best places to meet buyers from Fortune 500 firms with supplier diversity programs. These programs earmark millions of dollars to source products and services from groups such as women-owned businesses, who are not traditionally included in the supply chain.

Edmonton's Faith Grant, a partner in Rejuvenation Health Services, is planning to attend her third WBENC mission. "With each one, we've learned to be more precise about how we present our value proposition," explains Grant. "This year, I know which buyers I want to meet and I'm designing specific pitches for each of them."

BWIT will also lead a mission to the Go for the Greens Conference in Orlando, Florida from September 17-19. This unique event offers exclusive access to companies, government agencies, non-profits and associations that can help women-owned businesses secure contracts.

"Trade missions such as these give women access to educational sessions and one-on-one meetings with buyers. You'll also identify sales leads and partnership opportunities that will help your business grow," says Josie Mousseau, Deputy Director, Canadian Business Women in International Trade.

For more information about these missions and others, contact the BWIT team at bwit@international.gc.ca.

BUILDING BRIDGES WITH PARTNERSHIPS

Montreal entrepreneur Josée Dufour is ready to grow. Her business, Axiomatech, manages maintenance of commercial, industrial and institutional buildings, helping them meet strict guidelines and identify potential issues before they become problems.



Josée Dufour, President
Axiomatech

Partnerships are enabling Dufour to expand into new markets and land more clients.

"We've partnered with a large women-owned firm with an excellent presence in the U.S. and Europe," explains Dufour. "It makes us a strong force, and it's opening up new markets for us."

Ruth Vachon, CEO of the Réseau des Femmes d'affaires du Québec, says partnerships like these create solid opportunities and lasting relationships.

"Often, the size of their business doesn't permit women to sell to large firms who want to buy from them through supplier diversity programs. When women work together, they can go for much larger contracts."



Ruth Vachon, CEO
Réseau des Femmes
d'affaires du Québec

Are you ready to partner?

New York City based Trade Commissioner Alia Dedhar says that if you're having trouble accessing new markets or signing new clients, it's time for a partner. A local partner - or a Canadian or foreign company doing business in your target market - can offer valuable market intelligence and access to a full network of industry contacts, buyers, investors, suppliers and distributors.

Thinking about partnering?

Dedhar offers these recommendations:

1. Research your partner to confirm they will be a good fit. They should add value and have experience you can leverage.
2. Figure out how much control you're willing to give up. How involved do you need to be?
3. Know your limits. Will the partnership erode your brand? Things change when other people get involved.
4. Work with the TCS. Trade commissioners can introduce you to potential partners and help you figure out how the partnership can work to your advantage.



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