

FAF Design of Montreal. Success did not come easily for Fafard, who began her business as a distributor from her home basement in 1992. Five years after developing a niche of clients, she began manufacturing pewter and gold brooches; the company now has 15 permanent employees and 18 manufacturing agents serving more than 1,000 client retailers across Canada and the Eastern United States.

Fafard is quick to recognize the value of this exploratory mission for new exporters. The mission was timely in her plans to choose an agent for the Mid-Atlantic region next year -- to supplement the one she recently appointed in Boston. Stressing that success in the United States hinges on having a first-class agent, she noted the valuable suggestions that the Canadian embassies can make.

Receptivity to businesswomen's concerns

All of the Canadian participants who spoke to *CanadExport* considered the mission valuable in explaining the U.S. market and the need to adapt Canadian products and services to suit American customers. They found the information sessions extremely useful, especially those relating tips on doing business in the United States. All were pleased to discover the ready availability of export information and assistance from the Canadian government.

The participants were particularly impressed by Minister Marchi's receptivity to their concerns as businesswomen and exporters. Sibbitt expressed the group's confidence that Minister Marchi will act on the recommendations put to him to break down the barriers businesswomen face and to improve the business climate for women entrepreneurs.

All believe that the Minister's initiative in creating this mission will help the corporate world to realize that women entrepreneurs are a force to be reckoned with.

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