



“ One of the best things you can do is use the tools available. ”

Jill Anderson
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Year Established: 1978
Employees: 50
Export Sales: 90%
Export Markets: U.S., Japan, China, India, Saudi Arabia, South America

BUSINESS: A designer, manufacturer and supplier of industrial combustion equipment and systems worldwide, Aecometric captured the 2006 Ontario Global Traders Gold Award for Innovation for its high intensity fuel burner that reduces nitrogen oxide emissions by more than 90% and improves air quality by reducing smog.

BACKGROUND: Educated in the Fine Arts, Jill – who had worked in accounting for Aecometric – took the helm in 1983 after her husband, Larry Anderson, suffered a stroke. “I had a choice of selling or taking it over. Necessity is the mother of invention.” Larry had started the company as a burner manufacturer 30 years ago, becoming an expert in combustion engineering and always moving forward in innovation and R&D.

COMPETITIVE EDGE: Aecometric’s energy-efficient burners use up to 40% less fuel, so are cost-effective and pollute less.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS: Quality products, confidence and commitment to building and maintaining strong relationships in global markets.

BIGGEST EXPORT CHALLENGE: “Financing rapid global growth and sourcing strategic partners and sub-vendors in countries like Saudi and India where so many suppliers are already at their limit due to all the refinery work being done.”

LESSON LEARNED: “Breaking into new markets like China is a long haul. We had done installations through large engineering companies but our first direct Chinese sale took months of making contacts and travelling widely to small plants in the petrochemical industry. Then it took five years to establish our own plant there.”

RESOURCES USED: Export Development Canada (EDC) pre-shipment financing, bonding and export insurance and Canada’s Trade Commissioner Service for market intelligence about India and Saudi Arabia.

MAJOR EXPORT BENEFIT: “Exporting gives you a bigger market. And with downturns in the economy, you’re not at the mercy of a single market.” Jill’s decision to expand to China came when the after-effects of 9/11 hit her business hard. Ironically, the U.S. market has rebounded in the past two years, especially in the ethanol industry,

where Aecometric is becoming a world leader in developing solutions. “The ethanol market has become the first major user of the advancements we made to our high intensity burners, for which we received the award.”

BEST MOMENT: “The realization that we, as a small Canadian company, have gained world recognition as the leader in the energy sector. Opening our own shop in China was very gratifying.”

EXPORT TIPS: “Respect whatever country you are in and be committed to servicing, rather than just making the sale and leaving. If you can’t have your own people there, use the EDC and Canadian Embassy to lead you in the right direction and help you find a good agent, rep or, even better, an established company similar to yours that can represent you. One of the best things you can do is use the tools available.”

EXPORT GOALS: “To keep our new China plant that we opened last November on target, to not only sell but produce in India and the Middle East, particularly Saudi Arabia, and to continue rebuilding our U.S. sales (which had plummeted after 9/11) with our solutions for the growing ethanol industry.”

ON WINNING EXPORTER AWARD

“ We’ve been doing R&D work in fuel savings and environmental concerns for many years, so it’s great to be recognized. The award is a good morale booster for all our employees and it attracts good new talent as people see how exciting working in an innovative atmosphere can be.”