



Wolfsburg last October. The Canadian pavilion featured 23 of Canada's leading parts manufacturers, a host of automotive R&D organizations and several jurisdictions promoting themselves as investment locations.

"With the help of our industry and government partners, we were able to convince a blue-chip Canadian team to come to Wolfsburg and provide them with the venue and the tools they needed to shine," says Singleton. "By being a partner country, we were able to grab the limelight and get the Volkswagen executives to take notice of Canadian capabilities. Ever since, we've been very busy following up on leads, and we fully expect Canada to play an increasingly important role in Mach 18's future."

Meanwhile, at the Rockefeller Centre in New York, Miriam Leia Bekkouche, a trade commissioner in technology partnering, working closely with her colleagues, organized a one-day Venture North event that brought 18 Canadian companies to the law offices of Chadbourne & Parke in midtown Manhattan to deliver pitches to potential investors and strategic partners. Many of the companies—especially those dealing in Internet and digital media, cleantech and life sciences—were graduates of the "boot camps" of the Technology Growth Initiative, a unique DFAIT program that identifies up-and-coming Canadian firms and prepares them for going global.

"It's a real-life version of the CBC program *Dragons' Den*," says Bekkouche. "It's not every day that we get to help companies hone their pitches to some of the biggest venture capital firms in New York."

Just up the eastern seaboard, at the Canadian consulate in Boston, Jamie Huget is a trade commissioner with a twist. He is on a four-year assignment from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), one of six federal departments and agencies under DFAIT's North American Platform Program that promotes advocacy and international business development in the United States and Mexico. His focus on investment from Boston is strategic in New England, where there are a number of agri-food businesses of interest to Canadian firms. The consulate benefits from his many years of experience on AAFC's international team.

"Of course, the reverse will apply upon my return to AAFC, in that I'll have first-hand knowledge of post operations and will be able to advise colleagues in my home department on how to engage posts abroad to make best use of the Trade Commissioner Service," says Huget.

On every continent, trade commissioners are inventing new ways to help Canadian companies succeed, says McGovern.

"The essential role of the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service has remained unchanged since the first trade mission set sail for Australia over a century ago. It is to help Canadian businesses succeed outside Canada. Implementing the role is always evolving, always changing. And that is where the creativity and resourcefulness of the trade commissioners is key. Matching the creativity of the trade commissioners with the drive of the Canadian entrepreneur leads to a stronger and more prosperous Canada."



David Valle at the Mexican Institute of Finance Executives Forum in Monterrey, Mexico