

What does a highly adjustable bed have in common with a 3-D color digitizer or a device that holds a laptop computer? The answer is "Canadian innovation" and there was plenty of that on display at this year's Home Care and Rehabilitation

Canadian companies show they care

Home Care and Rehabilitation Show

Show, held October 24-26, 2001 at Tokyo Big Sight in Japan. The trade section of the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo made use of the Show to support Canadian firms specializing in long-term care products.

The Embassy's trade representatives squeezed extra value into the Show on behalf of 11 Canadian firms (see below), creating a cost-effective and informative program that included on-site product demonstrations, a pre-show visit to a local geriatric facility and a cocktail reception held at the Embassy. Each company had originally planned to attend the Show independently, but thanks to Embassy support they were able to create a solid Canadian presence — at minimal cost — before an audience of potential Japanese business partners.

Pre-show warm-up

The tour of a geriatric hospital in Sagamihara on October 22 presented attendees Broda Seating, Vision Wheelchair Seating Systems, and Bi-Op Inc. with a valuable opportunity to assess the market potential for their products in Japan. The Embassy arranged for companies to make presentations at the hospital, a prime example of a Japanese western-style modern facility which focuses on rehabilitation and social interaction between patients.

Show time

Given Japan's aging population, the long-term care industry in the country represents one market that is sure to grow. Despite the fact that Canadian products are competing with well-known American and Scandinavian

brands, cheaper manufactured goods from southeast Asia and high-tech Japanese products, Embassy reps nevertheless proceeded with their plan to capture the attention of the Japanese. They made the most of the Show's venue by arranging to visit the participating companies and view their product demonstrations, and by encouraging companies to share their business experiences and knowledge.

And now presenting...

Most of the eleven Canadian participants can attest to the show's success: Here's a peek at their products.

- **Bi-Op Inc. (www.bi-op.com)** — foot orthotics;
- **InSpeck Inc. (www.inspeck.com)** — 3-D digitizing system that creates and transmits accurate digital images of a foot, eliminating the need for cumbersome plaster models;
- **Broda Seating (www.brodaseating.com)** — specialized chairs and beds for patients suffering from aggressive conditions such as Huntington's disease;
- **Daedalus Technologies Inc. (www.daessy.com)** — wheelchair attachments to support communication devices such as laptop computers and voice synthesizers;
- **Garaventa (Canada) Ltd. (www.garaventa.com)** — stair lifts;
- **Vision Wheelchair Seating Systems**

- Inc.** — wheelchair cushions, head and neck rests and table assemblies;
- **Carroll Healthcare (www.carrollhealthcare.com)** — adjustable beds that can be lowered to 17 cm from the floor;
- **Verg Inc. (www.verg.com)** — pressure mapping systems;
- **BHM Medical (www.bhm-medical.com)** — easy-to-use patient lift and transfer systems for home and institutional use;
- **AbsorbPlus (www.absorb-plus.com)** — adult incontinence products;
- **Ackerman International Inc.** — rocker gliders.

After the show

At the end of day, the Embassy arranged yet another demonstration of its support for the industry — a cocktail reception hosted by Minister (Commercial/Economic) Peter Campbell to facilitate networking between the Canadian companies and current or potential Japanese partners. Canadian firms hoping to enter the market were introduced to independent trade consultants and key players in the Japanese industry.

Encore

The trade section of the Embassy plans to continue working on behalf of Canadian companies, helping them form strong business relationships by connecting them to reliable Japanese representatives. These companies may not be household names today, but with this kind of support — and an aging population — they could well become tomorrow's corporate stars.

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