
Japanese awareness of Canada as a sophisticated business partner will also be raised through Canadian efforts to attract Japanese FDI. DFAIT is working closely with Investment Partnerships Canada, other federal government departments, and provincial and municipal authorities to maintain and attract Japanese investment into Canada. Toyota's decision in 2000 to produce its Lexus RX 300 luxury sport-utility vehicle in Canada, starting in 2003, is a testament to increasing Japanese recognition of Canada as a good place to do business. The Toyota plant in Cambridge will be the first to manufacture the Lexus RX 300 outside Japan.

In support of efforts to "rebrand" Canada in Japan as a technologically sophisticated society and to encourage diversification of our traditional commodities-based trade relationship, the 1999 Team Canada trade mission to Japan emphasized the strengths of Canada's high-technology sectors. These efforts have begun to bear fruit, with signs of increased business activity, especially in the high-tech sectors. Despite a worldwide slowdown in the information and communications technologies (ICT) sectors, Canadian companies continue to take advantage of opportunities in the huge Japanese ICT market. During the past two years, many Canadian ICT companies have entered the market directly or indirectly through partners, agents and distributors, and the share of manufactured goods and value-added services exports to Japan continues to increase.

Collaboration with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) is ongoing and productive. For example, JETRO and Industry Canada are working on a formal agreement to link their respective databases for the benefit of the Japanese and Canadian business communities. The partnership will focus upon increased levels of data sharing, technical cooperation and improved electronic access for Japanese and Canadian firms to information on each other's markets.

Examples of Government-Supported Market Development Activities in 2002

Following the success of the IT trade missions that visited Canada in 2000 and 2001, JETRO sent an unprecedented third IT trade mission to Canada in October and November 2002. This one-week tour of Canada, with stops in Montreal, Toronto and

Vancouver, brought 15 Japanese companies into contact with dozens of interested Canadian companies in each of the cities visited. Two journalists from Japanese business publications also accompanied the mission to report on the Canadian IT sector and the opportunities it affords Japanese firms.

In October 2002, the Canadian Embassy hosted a fuel cell seminar attended by representatives from the Canadian private sector, government, academia and industry associations. The seminar introduced the potential of the Japanese market to Canadian participants and helped position Canada as a leader in this emerging field with Japanese industry and government decision makers. It also established and further secured links between the two nations at the industry and government levels. Attendance and media exposure far exceeded expectations, with over 650 Japanese companies participating.

In June 2002, the Canadian Embassy organized a week-long biotech mission to Canada—visiting Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver—for a delegation of 49 representatives from 30 Japanese biotechnology companies. The goal of the mission was to expose a broad cross-section of the Japanese life-sciences sector to Canadian biotechnology and to seek out ways for Japan and Canada to share biotechnology expertise through investment and commercial partnerships.

In March 2002, the Canadian Embassy worked with the Consulate General in Osaka to organize an event called the "Multimedia Showcase." Seven participating Canadian companies had an opportunity to introduce their products and technology to a selected Japanese business audience, including potential partners, agents and distributors. The event helped to give greater profile to the leading position of Canadian companies in this segment of the ICT industry. The subsequent ICT related mission to Japan, in February 2003, focused on ICT security.

The aerospace sector has also been active. In February 2002, a large Japanese delegation visited Canada, led by the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Society of Japanese Aerospace Companies. The delegation, which included over two dozen leading Japanese aerospace manufacturers, participated in a symposium in Montreal before visiting sites in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. The Japanese, impressed by the quality and quantity of