

Success Stories

FROZEN YOGURT COMPANY MAKES SWEET DEALS IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Markham-based Yogen-Fruz Worldwide Inc. is literally taking the Dominican Republic by storm -- after opening its first franchise in Sosua, in the Northern part of the island near Puerto Plata, only three years ago.

With the current "score" standing at another two franchises in the North and three more in the South, the nine-year-old company is expecting to open an additional four franchises in Santiago, in the central west region, before the end of the year.

As President and CEO Aaron Serruya explains, "Yogen-Fruz" success on the island was immediate, so much in fact that the largest local ice cream chain -- Helados Bon, based in Santo Domingo, with 150 ice cream shops throughout the island -- wanted to purchase the master franchising rights for the island from Yogen-

Fruz, but as the Northern half was already sold, they were able to purchase the Southern half only, where they have opened four mini stores within their chain and three full stores.

The company's success, admits Serruya, is due in no small measure to the assistance of the Canadian Embassy.

"When we go into a new territory," says Serruya, "we always call upon the Canadian Embassy. They help us coordinate meetings with local ice cream manufacturers, distributors, and help locate suitable facilities.

"Besides," Serruya advises, "a letter from the Embassy will go a long way for credibility when going into a new territory. That's the only way to do it," he says.

With over 1,000 franchises in 40 countries throughout the world, and another 1,300 under negotiations, the \$100-million company should know.

For more information on Yogen-Fruz, contact President and CEO Aaron Serruya. Tel.: (905) 479-8762. Fax: (905) 479-5235. Or in Barbados, contact Vice President Stephen Bogyay. Tel.: (809) 437-6710. Fax: (809) 437-6521.

COMPLETE COMMITMENT GIVES OTTAWA FIRM THE EDGE IN BARBADOS

What started out as a \$450,000 airport feasibility study in 1993 has just landed Sypher Mueller International Inc. a \$4.1 million contract in Barbados.

Not that the Caribbean Development Bank-funded feasibility study was easy picking as the small Ottawa-based Sypher Mueller was up against world-wide competition -- including giants like British Airports, as well as firms from Holland and others from Canada itself.

So what made the difference for this consulting firm with a staff of just 16 employees?

"We offered a total commitment to systematically look at the whole airport picture -- not just the building," says Sypher Mueller President Gordon Hamilton.

The government of Barbados was so impressed with the feasibility study -- completed last year -- that it awarded Sypher Mueller the contract to design the new terminal and new airfield area for the Grantley Adams Airport.

How did the company get involved in the Caribbean, and in this contract in particular?

"We had been involved in the Canadian International Development Agency's (CIDA) Caribbean Airport Project back in the late 80s," says

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QUEBEC FIRM ADDS GRENADA TO CARIBBEAN CONTRACTS

With Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) projects under its belt in both Dominica and Jamaica, Laval-based Dessau International Ltd. has just won its first non-CIDA contract in the region.

The \$1.8-million contract -- signed a few weeks ago and financed by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) -- calls for engineering design and project supervision for the Grenada Road Improvement and Maintenance project.

"Being familiar with the area obviously helps," admits Dessau International's Senior Project Manager for the Caribbean, Joseph Redhead.

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