

To help companies seek these opportunities, the federal and provincial governments offer a broad range of trade support programs and mechanisms. Many of you recall Marketplace 85, which we brought to the Sault back in February. The stars of Marketplace 85 were our Trade Commissioners, who came back from their posts abroad to meet business people one-on-one. During Export Trade Month, the accent is on our trade support programs, and the object is to reach business people who might be thinking of exporting, to let them know that they don't have to go it alone. Our trade-support mechanisms are practical, and they are focused to the needs of our exporters.

Our trade commissioners provide all kinds of overseas services. They can offer advice on import and currency regulations, on rules about joint ventures and local labour content. They can answer questions about access and a variety of other issues and problems which exporters may confront. Three of my Trade Commissioners are here today, in fact, in a sort of replay of Marketplace 85. They have set up an information booth, and they'll be happy to give you specific advice on export markets. All you have to do is ask.

Another service available to the exporter is the Program for Export Market Development. PEMD can provide funding for exploration of new markets on a "pay it back if you succeed" basis. Trade fairs are another vehicle: our trade professionals can assist you in making your product or service better known, via the hundreds of trade fairs Canadians participate in annually around the world. And assistance is offered to those who may benefit from "incoming" tours of foreign buyers, or "outgoing" Canadian missions to foreign markets. Export insurance and financing are other means by which government supports trade development efforts.

The global marketplace is astonishingly large and diverse, and new technologies and other advancements make it bigger and more diverse every day. So, the opportunities are there.

But to exploit these opportunities, we need to be aggressive. We need to be alert to developments that create opportunities. Above all, we need to be competitive -- in price, in quality, in the range of products and services we offer.