

Exporting your services

When it comes to services, Canadian businesses are world-class. It only makes sense that people around the world benefit from our knowledge and expertise. Abundant export opportunities exist for Canadian service firms and increasing numbers of these businesses are exporting their services to lucrative foreign markets.

Governments and businesses around the world are confronted with diverse challenges that require innovative solutions. In a knowledge-based economy, knowledge-intensive services represent one of the fastest growing components of world trade. Canada's service sector must become export-ready to take advantage of these opportunities.

Exporting has its benefits...

The benefits of exporting are clear. There is the opportunity to increase sales and generate higher profits, particularly if all the fixed costs of the company are covered by domestic operations. Foreign markets offer diversification, thereby reducing the company's dependence on traditional markets. When one economy is struggling, another may be booming. This diversification also presents opportunities for growth in new directions, as well as new experiences that can translate into greater domestic competitiveness.

...and challenges

Yet, exporting services can present a number of challenges as well. Services are often intangible. Creating awareness of your company and its services, establishing your credibility and demonstrating your competence outside of your home territory is critical. So, too, is demonstrating a high level of commitment to foreign clients and building relationships. This demands time and effort, as well

as willingness to research and respect differences in culture, language and business practices.

Exporting services is not the sole domain of large businesses. Whether you are a sole proprietorship with expertise in wastewater treatment facility management or an engineering firm with offices across Canada, exporting is a viable option. In fact, the general profile of a service firm in Canada reveals a company with fewer than 15 employees, limited resources, and little or no export experience or knowledge. These

service providers usually operate in a niche market, with specialized skills and capabilities. The profile also reveals that such businesses are not aware of assistance available to service firms seeking to explore opportunities outside of Canada.

Get started

Service firms looking to enhance their export skills can attend half-day Going Global workshops, delivered by Team Canada Inc in conjunction with the Forum for International Trade Training (FITT). The workshops are also available on-line at www.fitt.ca. FITT also offers a more intensive international

continued on page 7 — Exporting services

Canada, Panama sign technology MOU



Hugh O'Donnell (first from left), Executive Vice-President, Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC), and Dominador Kaiser Bazán (second from left), Vice-President of the Republic of Panama, signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Ottawa in December 2003, to facilitate access to Canadian technology and help Panama to identify and develop new business opportunities, among which are those related to the introduction of e-commerce and e-government services to its citizens.

CCC provides Canadian exporters with preferred access to government procurement markets and specialized contracting services, to help them win export sales. Through its government-to-government contracting role, CCC helps Canadian exporters sell into public sector markets in an average of 30 countries each year.

When CCC acts as prime contractor, buyers gain confidence from CCC's ability to provide a government-backed guarantee of contract performance. The credibility of a government guarantee helps to enhance the Canadian proposal and win the contract.

For more information on CCC's services, go to www.ccc.ca.

Infrastructure mission to Gulf Countries

QATAR, THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND KUWAIT — April 14-26, 2004 — Ontario's infrastructure services sector is invited to explore the export potential offered by today's burgeoning growth in the Gulf Countries by joining a trade mission to Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Doha and Kuwait City.

The mission will be hosted by Ontario Exports Inc., the export development agency of the Government of Ontario, in conjunction with the Canada-Arab Business Council, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Export Development Canada. This is a great opportunity for Ontario companies to promote their expertise to buyers supplying goods and

services for new capital projects in these booming economies.

Opportunities include the recently announced "Dubailand" featuring the Mall of Arabia—the largest shopping mall in the world when completed—as well as several new hotels, an art gallery, a water amusement park, an indoor ski slope, a complex of sports stadiums and the largest zoo in the Middle East.

Ontario companies have already enjoyed considerable success in exporting their engineering, architectural, planning, medical and educational services to the Arabian Gulf region, so don't miss this opportunity.

For more information, contact Al Hinton, Area Director, Middle East, Ontario Export Inc., tel.: (416) 325-6782, e-mail: al.hinton@edt.gov.on.ca, or Aida Viveiros, Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, tel.: (905) 568-8300, ext. 288, e-mail: aida.viveiros@cme-mec.ca.

Exporting services

— continued from page 1

trade program that can lead to a professional designation as a Certified International Trade Professional (CITP).

If you are uncertain about your ability to export, the Export Readiness Diagnostic from ExportSource (www.exportsource.ca/diagnostic) is the on-line tool to help you identify your strengths and weaknesses, as well as your objectives and possible strategies. Coupled with the Interactive Export Planner (www.exportsource.ca/iep), service firms will have the background they need to identify sources within Team Canada Inc who can help them reach the next stage in the export process.

Once a service firm is ready to export, registering for the Virtual Trade Commissioner is a must. Trade Commissioners in Canada and abroad use this confidential database of Canadian exporters to identify qualified Canadian suppliers with export capability. The Virtual Trade Commissioner can be accessed on-line at www.infoexport.gc.ca.

Whether establishing financial services in Latin America, consulting on mining or forestry projects in Australia, or managing agri-food programs in the Baltic States, Canada's diverse service industries can compete around the globe. To find out more about exporting your services, go to www.exportsource.ca/worldview and read Take a World View: Export Your Services, or call Team Canada Inc at 1 888 811-1119.

Trade Commissioner Service award handed out

Former International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew presented the Robert L. Richardson Trade Commissioner Service Award for Excellence in International Trade Studies to Evan Lewis. The award was presented at the Canada Export Awards ceremony held in conjunction with the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) conference on trade in Toronto on November 24, 2003.

Lewis, from Deep River and Kincardine, Ontario, is a graduate of the University of Guelph. He is currently enrolled in the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University in the International Trade Policy stream. His award winning essay is entitled *Trade Liberalization and Development: A Case for Capacity Development*.

The award was established by CME in 1992 to honour the years of service and dedication of Robert Richardson, a former top public servant who started his career as a trade



Former International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew congratulates Evan Lewis, this year's winner of the Robert L. Richardson Trade Commissioner Service Award.

commissioner. From 2002 to 2004, DFAIT will sponsor a bursary for the award recipient.

For more information about the award, contact CME, tel.: (613) 238-8888.