

U.S. ICT officers come to help

On February 3 and 4, 2003, in Winnipeg and Saskatoon respectively, eleven information and communication technology (ICT) officers from various consulates across the United States (U.S.) came to help local companies looking to export to the U.S. The events were hosted by the International Trade Centres (ITC) in Winnipeg and Saskatoon, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Saskatchewan Advanced Technology Association, and the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership.

IT opportunities

The Northwest U.S. is positioning itself to be a leader in wireless technologies forging new ground in wireless networks, fixed wireless technologies and carrier-class operations and software. The region also boasts some 150 companies in the aerospace sector—Boeing is a major employer—involved in maintenance, repair and overhaul, structural metal and composite fabrication, machine shops, engineering and avionics.

In the Western U.S.—with the Silicon Valley and greater San Francisco Bay area at its core—opportunities centre around computers and communications (i.e. networking), semiconductors, software, and bioscience. In the Southwest U.S., information technology experts see wireless and software-imbedded chips and systems as offering the best growth prospects while in the Southeast U.S., the flourishing high-tech industry offers opportunities for strategic alliances in specialized niches such as biotechnology and site remediation. The area also supports a strong manufacturing industry producing electronics, lasers, automotive parts, aviation and avionics,

boats, medical equipments and computers.

In the Northeast U.S., IT is a major sector with a focus on telecommunications and fibre optics, electric and electronic machinery and computer-related equipment. In the Midwest, opportunities exist in the wireless technology sector for Canadian firms that



Brian Vescovi, Business Development Officer, Canadian Consulate General in Seattle (second from left), meeting with business people at the Saskatoon event

can supply the necessary hardware and software to sustain the paging infrastructure and for firms operating in paging-related niche markets and corresponding new technology markets.

Winnipeg

Some 75 people and over 30 ICT companies from Manitoba attended the Winnipeg event.

The morning activities included presentations on being export-ready. Later, panel discussions and presentations gave attendees a handle on how other Canadian ICT companies are doing in the U.S., and a networking lunch allowed them to connect with trade commissioners and other local firms.

Not only did the event provide local firms with pertinent information on exporting to specific parts of the U.S., but it also gave participants the opportunity to meet one-on-one with trade commissioners in the ICT sector and exchange information—an opportunity

normally reserved for those who travel to the posts. According to results from surveys handed out to participants, 71% of respondents said that they will pursue exporting to the U.S.

Saskatoon

Over 30 companies from Saskatchewan turned up to hear the U.S. officers speak about the opportunities available to them in their respective regions. As was the case in Winnipeg, companies had the chance to participate in one-on-one meetings with trade commissioners to discuss their company and the opportunities available to them.

This was one of the first times that such a large number of U.S. officers were able to gather for an outreach of this sort. According to one participating Saskatchewan company, "The event was informative, well done, and a number of relationships—with future value to our business—were established that day."

The posts represented at these events included: Atlanta/Miami, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, Dallas, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York City, San Jose/San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.

For more information on the ICT showcase, contact Mona Taylor (ITC in Saskatchewan), tel.: **(306) 780-6124** or Nathalie Leroux (ITC in Manitoba), tel.: **(204) 983-7140**, Web site: www.itc.gc.ca *

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Opportunities for Canada China's dynamic Pearl River Delta

China's Pearl River Delta (PRD), an area roughly the size of Nova Scotia, encompasses a network of booming cities along the Pearl River estuary, including Guangdong's provincial capital, Guangzhou, and the Shenzhen and Zhuhai Special Economic Zones that border Hong Kong and Macau respectively.

Market overview

Since China's introduction of market reform policies in 1978, the PRD has transformed its primarily agricultural economy into one of the world's leading export-processing platforms. The PRD's 40 million people—3% of the national population—contributed 9% of the national gross domestic product (GDP), or \$152 billion, in 2001. Residents of this region are among China's most affluent consumers, with a per capita GDP of \$5,610 in 2001, four times the national average. The PRD produces 34% of China's exports (\$136 billion in 2001) and absorbs 25% of China's

foreign direct investment (FDI) (\$17.6 billion in 2001).

Hong Kong has been the source of \$135 billion in FDI in the PRD since 1978—80% of the total—and has had a profound impact on the PRD's development. The economies are becoming more closely integrated, with improvements being made to transport links and border facilities.

The PRD, linked with Hong Kong, is a significant and growing market of opportunity for Canadian businesses, both large and small. Key business potential exists in the information technology, environment, urban transportation,

infrastructure and construction sectors. Increasingly, Canadian firms that are active in Hong Kong are pursuing new business leads in the PRD to build on their regional presence.

Nansha Economic and Technological Development Zone

A significant infrastructure project currently under development is the Nansha Economic and Technological Development Zone (ETDZ), which is designed to boost the economic strength of the PRD. The main components of the ETDZ are an IT park, a heavy industrial zone, a deep-water port and residential areas.

Nansha, which covers an area roughly equivalent to the City of Toronto, is at the geographical centre of the PRD, where one-tenth of the world's consumer products are manufactured. The plan is to not just develop another satellite city or high-tech park for Guangzhou—

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China & Hong Kong Trade Action Plan (TAP)

The **2002 China & Hong Kong TAP** is your tool for entering the China and Hong Kong markets. Over 25,000 clients have already downloaded this comprehensive business resource. We will soon be updating this document and we want to know what you think. Your participation will help us to improve this product and focus on serving our clients better. To receive a copy of the survey, e-mail: pcm@dfait-maeci.gc.ca or go to the China and Hong Kong TAP Web site: www.chinahktradeactionplan.ca *

Canada's Braintech Inc. shines in Japan

North Vancouver's **Braintech Inc.** has announced that Marubeni Corporation of Japan has ordered multiple application runtime licences for Braintech's 3D-Vision Guided Robotics ("3D-VGR") platform software ("eVF™") for Marubeni's automotive customers. Marubeni is ranked 25th in the Fortune Global 500.

Braintech's VGR technologies are revolutionizing manufacturing by giving industrial robots the "eyes" to handle and assemble parts with consistent quality and productivity. The addition of this visioning capability to industrial robots means that expensive fixturing devices can be eliminated and costly factory downtime (due to improper part positioning) significantly reduced.

Braintech's scientific capabilities and engineering expertise are also available via the Internet to provide secure remote support and diagnostics.

Braintech Chief Executive Officer Owen Jones says, "This is an excellent way to penetrate the market, and we are presently collaborating on several different 3D-VGR total solutions for Japanese automakers and auto parts manufacturers. We are very fortunate to be partnered with Marubeni; their commitment to being the Asian market leader in 3D-VGR is accelerating Braintech's technology dominance by

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