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High Tech Opportunities Symposium

MIAMI, FLORIDA — September 13, 2002 — "Discover New Business Opportunities...Catch the Wave" is the theme of the **Networking, Telecommunications, and High Tech Opportunities Symposium** (www.canada-florida-trade.com) during which the results of a study undertaken by the Canadian Consulate in Miami will be presented to Canadian companies.

Check the Business Section of the newspaper for more information on doing business in and with the U.S.



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* Produced by the Market Research Centre of the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service. To consult them, visit:

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In the market for Canadian quality and variety Finland's construction

To maintain steady growth in private and public construction, Finland is looking to foreign markets for cost-effective, innovative building products and services. The Finnish market offers opportunities for Canadian suppliers of competitively priced materials and technologies that will help keep Finland's construction industry operating at peak efficiency.

Market overview

A strong economy and a growing urban population are good indicators that the 5% annual growth in Finnish construction is likely to continue in the near term. The industry was valued at \$26.9 billion in 2001, and was composed of building construction projects (81%) and civil engineering projects (19%).

Vuosaari's new harbour and Helsinki's underground tunnel are among the largest of the public infrastructure projects on the horizon.

In Finland, building structures and materials must weather the same sort of seasonal fluctuations as in Canada. Pre-fabricated concrete is used in the majority (60%) of all apartment buildings, while wood is the primary building material for both detached and terraced houses.

Market opportunities

While there is little demand for additional sources of softwood, Finland's strong economy suggests that there will be a demand for wood-frame construction technologies as well as specialty products for prefabricated buildings, such as hard maple for parquet flooring.

Finland is a nation of home renovators, and several of the national hardware chains, including K-Rauta and Starkki, could prove to be useful outlets for channelling Canadian tools and other products into the Finnish and Baltic markets.

In fact, because there is limited choice in tools and building materials — most retailers sell the same products — a variety of imported products are welcome, provided they are competitive with existing brands.

Finland is a gateway to the Russian and CIS countries, as well as to the Baltic states, Poland and other Nordic



countries. Many of its major construction companies are well established in these markets through partnerships, mergers and acquisitions. Canadian firms that supply Finland also have an open door to the vast EU market.

Market access considerations

The Finnish construction and building material market is highly centralized, with each product category controlled by 3-5 companies. Accessing these major players, or finding distributors who deal with them, is a very important strategy for Canadian suppliers.

Non-EU approved products must also be tested and approved before they can be sold in Finland. In some cases, more stringent national requirements may apply. Finland is currently working to align its product regulations and standards with those of the European Standards Organization.

Useful Web sites

- The Finnish Association of Construction Product Industries: www.rtty.fi
- Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries: www.rtk.fi

- Construction Info & Statistics, Rakennusalan Projektitiedosto: www.rpt.fi
- The National Technology Agency [TEKES]: www.tekes.fi
- Technical Research Centre of Finland [VTT]: www.vtt.fi
- Finnish Standards Association [SFS]: www.sfs.fi
- Building Information Institute: www.rakennustieto.fi

For more information, contact Johan Nyman, Business Development Officer, Canadian Embassy, Helsinki, tel.: (011-358-9) 2285-3354, fax: (011-358-9) 601-060, e-mail: johan.nyman@dfait-maeci.gc.ca Web site: www.canada.fi *

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