

**F**or the last two years, Sweden has ranked number one in the world in its use of information technology, an area in which Canada also has considerable expertise. It is fitting, then, that the business organi-

zation presented by the marketing manager of the Canadian subsidiary of the Swedish company Nobel Biocare, covering the different business and cultural practices in Sweden, Canada and the United States.

*Chamber's Web site gives glimpse into opportunities*

# Swedish-Canadian Chamber of Commerce

*zation promoting trade relations between the two countries is maximizing its use of the Internet. On February 15, the Swedish-Canadian Chamber of Commerce (SCCC) launched its newly designed Web site, to serve as the organization's main tool for helping Canadian and Swedish companies find and do business in each other's country.*

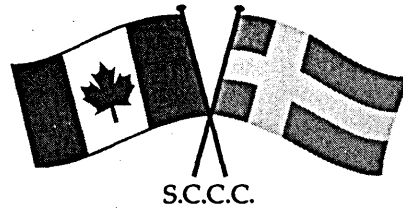
The Toronto-based SCCC, which celebrated its 35th anniversary in 2000, promotes trade, commercial, cultural and social contacts between Canada and Sweden. For its 200 members, the SCCC offers seminars, social and business networking events, company visits, co-operative efforts with other business organizations, and an informal mentoring facility.

## **Enticing glimpse of opportunities**

The new Web site offers Canadians a first glimpse of the possibilities in Sweden. An "About Sweden" section gives a complete overview of the country, including its prime industrial sectors, business environment and business practices.

In addition, the Web site includes news stories, a membership directory, membership information and benefits, and upcoming events. Among recent events were a fall 2000 seminar on business relations between Sweden and Canada and a well-attended lec-

ture presented by the marketing manager of the Canadian subsidiary of the Swedish company Nobel Biocare, covering the different business and cultural practices in Sweden, Canada and the United States.



countries expect business to be conducted in the same manner."

## **Bilateral trade a natural fit**

That said, Wennberg considers trade between Sweden and Canada to be a natural fit. "There are similarities in infrastructure, style of living, and education that make it easier for Canadians to integrate into the Swedish market, and vice versa. There's no huge cultural shock."

Good opportunities lie in the areas of pulp and paper, pharmaceuticals, automotive, forestry, wireless communications, and, of course, information technology. As a member of the European Union (EU), Sweden is also considered a gateway to the Nordic and Baltic markets.

## **Strength lies in networking**

Facilitating networking opportunities is the SCCC's main strength. "Our membership itself constitutes a net-

work that can help Canadian companies looking to become established in the Swedish market," says Wennberg. "Many of our members have parent companies or other associates in Sweden, and through this network, we can put Canadians in touch with the right contacts to help make their venture work."

## **Valuable links in Sweden**

In Sweden, the SCCC keeps in close contact with the Canadian Embassy in Stockholm and has co-operative efforts with organizations such as the Canadian Swedish Business Association (CSBA), also in Stockholm, as well as the 12 chambers of commerce located in the different regions. "Our contact with other chambers in Sweden is a very useful resource. We can get Canadian companies market information specific to a region and save them time and money in doing their own research."

## **Informal mentoring helps new members**

In addition, the SCCC offers informal mentoring that can be particularly helpful for new members. "For companies coming to us for the first time, I can refer them to a company in Toronto that has already gone through the export process, or is in the same industry, or has the contacts or resources to help the new company — as long as they're not directly in competition, of course!"

As Wennberg explains, this is what attracts people to becoming new members — "the ability to increase their contacts and networking abilities, by joining forces with people who are dealing with many of the same issues that they are." A visit to the SCCC's new Web site is an excellent place for interested companies to start.

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*(For the unabridged version, see [www.infoexport.gc.ca/canadexport](http://www.infoexport.gc.ca/canadexport) and click on "Business Chamber/Associations.")*