

# Getting Connected

Links to More Business for Canadian Women Across Borders

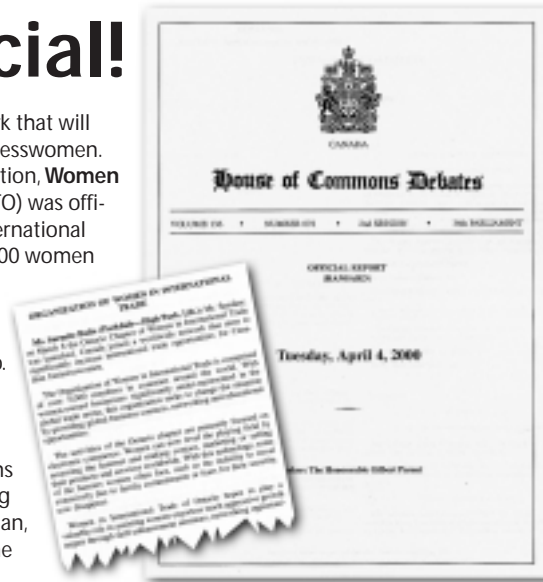
Summer 2000 Issue 1 Vol. 1

## We're Official!

Canada is now part of a global network that will open export doors for Canadian businesswomen. After months of planning and preparation, **Women in International Trade - Ontario (WITO)** was officially launched as part of a special International Women's Day event in Toronto. Over 300 women witnessed WITO's launch on March 8, 2000 at the *Beyond the Web: Putting E-Commerce to Work for Women Entrepreneurs* conference held in Toronto.

As the first Canadian chapter of the **Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT)**, WITO joins 29 chapters around the world, covering North and South America, the Caribbean, Europe and parts of Asia. Formed in the U.S. in 1989, OWIT's primary goal is to expand globally.

In this first year, WITO workshops and this newsletter will focus on delivering practical strategies and tips for developing an e-commerce trade strategy. "The Web is such an ideal medium for women to make contacts and mar-



### WITO was formally recognized in the House of Commons on April 4.

Sarmite Bulte, Member of Parliament for Parkdale-High Park, who heads up the Sub-Committee of International Trade, Trade Disputes and Investment, announced the launch and congratulated us on our role in assisting women to maximize trade in Canada and internationally.

*"Canada is in the forefront of an explosion of women on the global business scene."*

Astrid Pregel, Minister Counsellor (Commercial),  
Canadian Embassy, Washington

ket or sell our products and services globally because it's an equalizer," says Sandra Anstey, WITO President. "No one knows if you're working from Bay Street or your basement."

Membership in WITO is open to women exporters and importers, service providers and government representatives involved in all facets of international trade. So, if you haven't already joined, we look forward to welcoming you on board. Your membership brings you: many **Networking Opportunities** with private and public sector contacts; an **Exclusive Password** to link with other members; discounts on **Educational Seminars and Workshops** to hone your trade knowledge and skills; and ongoing access to practical trade tips and resources through *Getting Connected*, our newsletter.

For membership information, contact Anne Rose at 416. 487-5204 or [anne.rose@sympatico.ca](mailto:anne.rose@sympatico.ca)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Lisa Landy (r), former President of OWIT and founder and President of the Miami Chapter, attended WITO's launch to welcome Canada to the global network and present President Sandra Anstey with the membership plaque.

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Getting Connected*. It's just one of the many exciting initiatives of **Women in International Trade - Ontario (WITO)**, an organization dedicated to expanding global trade links for women.

WITO grew out of the need to carry on the valuable networking established at the first **Women's Trade Mission** to Washington in 1997. Research conducted prior to the launch convinced us that we should focus our initial initiatives on e-commerce. In May, courtesy of Blake Cassels and Graydon, our first seminar addressing the legal and jurisdictional issues of e-commerce was presented to our members and guests.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome new members and to thank the WITO executive founding board whose energy and commitment has made our chapter a reality in Canada.

Businesswomen in Canada have benefited from public and private sector support on trade initiatives. WITO is no exception. On behalf of the Board, I'd like to express a very special thank you to our founding sponsors, particularly **Industry Canada** and Candice Rice whose vision brought us together as a group.

**Blake Cassels & Graydon**, the **NRG Group** and the Summit sponsors, including the **Royal Bank**, **FedEx**, **Bell Canada**, **EDC** and **IBM**, all played a critical role in providing the human and financial resources necessary to launch WITO.

The goal of *Getting Connected* is to link our members to information, resources and contacts that will result in *more women doing more business across borders*. We look forward to working with you to make that a reality.

Sandra Anstey, President

*"The Internet levels the playing field for women to trade on the global stage."*

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## Success Profile



**Name:** Robyn Gourley,  
Founder & Co-Owner

**Company:** Costa Nada,  
1 888 460-4403  
[ostanada@idirect.com](mailto:ostanada@idirect.com)  
[www.costanada.com](http://www.costanada.com)

**Year Established:** 1994

**# Employees:** 3 full-time plus over 12 sewers and part-time staff

**Description:** Designer and manufacturer of hand dyed original clothing and resort wear for women, men and children. The company sells its product line wholesale and also does custom corporate work, such as t-shirts and hats, for clients like General Electric. Costa Nada was chosen to do the dye work for specialty promotions for Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream.

**How Started:** "I started sewing as a hobby while living on Vancouver Island. My husband, William, dyed the clothes I made, which everyone liked so much that the whole thing grew into a business from our basement. People love the fact that each garment is hand dyed and therefore unique."

**Path to Growth:** "We grew so quickly that, within months, William quit his job to join me full time and we moved back to Toronto. With our rapid growth, it made more sense to be someplace where we

can access everything easier - from fabric suppliers to sewers to cheaper shipping rates. And our four-year-old son is even part of our business. He's our best model and we take him wherever we go."

**Export Sales:** 50%

**Export Markets:** U.S., Caribbean and Japan

**Export Goals:** To expand more into the Caribbean "because that's where a lot of the cruise ships stop and our product is perfectly geared to tourist-driven markets. As soon as there is water and a palm tree, our product is right."

**Help Accessed:** PEMD (Program for Export Market Development); trade mission

**Benefits:** "PEMD was extremely good for helping us expand faster. It allowed us to take on three times as many trade shows than our budget permitted. We were lucky enough to connect with someone at Industry Canada who spent time with us and has been such a good support system. We also went on a trade mission to Chicago to find sales reps. Today we have 12 reps across the U.S."

**E-Commerce Strategy:** "The first step was buying the name and setting up our web site ([www.costanada.com](http://www.costanada.com)). With an on-line catalogue (all prices in U.S. dollars), it's a

good information tool for retailers and it has been customized to attract new wholesale accounts as well. The next step is marketing the site through advertising in relevant publications and then we'll move to on-line transactions through a shopping cart and on-line order form. It will be a great medium, allowing us to market to places we normally wouldn't, like Europe."

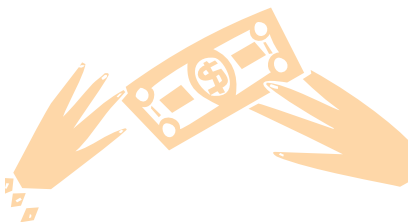
**Biggest Challenge:** "Getting paid."

**Robyn's Export Tips:**

- Get all the information you can before you decide where to export to ensure you understand different regulations.
- Find a good customs broker who'll educate you and show you the ropes.
- Touch base with local governments through the Canadian Consulates and find out what you can do to make your shipments go faster.
- Make sure your paperwork is impeccable. Be diligent and don't try to hide anything.
- Check out the competition in the area you want to export to make sure your product will be competitive there.
- Go on trade missions to find good representatives in your target markets.

*"It's naive to think the Web is not going to be a major part of your marketing strategy. People can find out about your business 24 hours a day, seven days a week. What a great opportunity!" Robyn Gourley*

## Ask the Experts



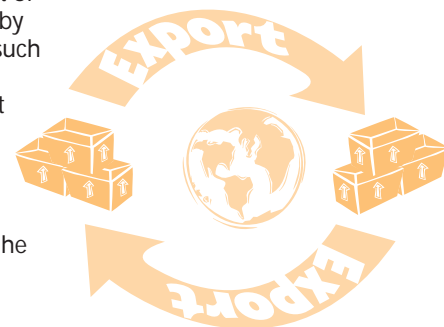
*Tips and advice from our sponsors to tackle export challenges. This month's guest expert: Candice Rice, Trade Commissioner, Industry Canada, International Trade Centre 416.973-5157 or [candice.rice@ic.gc.ca](mailto:candice.rice@ic.gc.ca)*

**Q:** I have just started the process of exporting my goods and would like to participate in several trade shows in the United States. I need advice on which shows would be best suited to my product. I would also like to know if there are any programs to tap into to help offset the higher costs of shows in the U.S.

**A:** Trade Officers in Industry Canada's **International Trade Centres** across the country would be pleased to assist you with advice on trade shows and marketing your goods and on the mechanics of getting your goods across the border. The trade officers are familiar

with many of the trade shows. In addition, they can access the expertise of the Canadian Trade offices around the world.

The International Trade Centres are also your contact for the **Program for Export Market Development (PEMD)**, the federal government's cornerstone export assistance program. The objective of PEMD is to increase the export of Canadian goods and services by sharing the risk of activities - such as trade show participation - that a company normally can't undertake alone. You can get more details on this program and obtain the contact details for your local International Trade Centre at the Team Canada Inc. website [www.exportsource.gc.ca](http://www.exportsource.gc.ca)



## Trade Clips

### New research sheds light on women service exporters

Although over 86% of women-owned businesses in Canada are in service industries, little has been known about their activities in global markets. A groundbreaking survey conducted by the **Foundation of Canadian Women Entrepreneurs** with 124 business women exporting everything from legal advice to software found:

- On average, women are exporting to more than seven international markets.
- It takes an average of eight months and two market visits to close a new contract. Face- to-face meetings with potential clients make international travel a necessity.
- Exporting services is different and more difficult than exporting goods. The vast majority had learned how to deal with the differences on their own. Only 26% had ever participated in a provincial or federal trade promotion program.
- Women rely on personal networks and referrals to succeed abroad. At least half relied mainly on referrals from strategic partners and a larger number (68%) also relied on referrals from customers to identify market opportunities and contacts.
- Women rely on internal financing , such as retained earnings (87%) and credit cards (57%) to support growth.
- Managing growth was the major challenge, and women lack mentors for balancing international travel with the need to keep domestic clients satisfied.

*The study was conducted by Dr. Dorothy Riddle of Service-Growth Consultants Inc. in Vancouver (DRiddle@compuserve.com). To receive a copy of the executive summary, contact Deborah Pape at (416) 963-4950 or [deborah.pape@sympatico.ca](mailto:deborah.pape@sympatico.ca)*

*"This landmark study reveals why 370,000+ women service exporters are successful."*

Dr. Dorothy Riddle



### Success Keys of Women Service Exporters

- Patience and persistence.
- Innovative services meeting unmet needs.
- Wide networks of well-connected contacts.
- Willingness to adapt to local culture.

## E-Commerce Roundup

### The Legal Challenges

*First in a series designed to help our members develop and enhance their e-commerce trade strategy. This month we focus on legal issues, courtesy of Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP.*

In the rush to enter the dot.com world, don't forget to architect your web site to take legal issues into account. To limit liability, follow these strategies when designing your e-business model:

**1. Specify web site terms, conditions and limitations.** Just because you're in Canada doesn't mean you won't be subject to laws abroad. Make sure your site clearly establishes the jurisdiction and contractual terms that apply. Will products sold to Hungary, for example, be taxed there or in Canada? Remember, people around the world rely on your site for error-free information. Without clear jurisdiction and contractual terms or technical access controls, you may be legally liable in other locations.

**2. Make your electronic contracts enforceable.** To ensure virtual trade contracts are as binding as those in pen, design your site so that users must scroll through the entire contract before accepting. Highlight onerous terms such as disclaimers and clearly describe the actions users must take to demonstrate understanding and acceptance of the contract's terms. This will help you enforce the terms of the contract if necessary. Don't forget to keep records of user acceptance for tax and evidentiary purposes.

**3. Guarantee privacy.** Unless privacy can be assured, Canadians are not comfortable buying online. That's why the federal government recently passed the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* \*, to be phased in over the next few years. To prepare, begin by establishing policies and procedures that are reasonable for the collection, use and dissemination of information. Identify the purposes for collecting personal information and get the individual's consent when you collect the information either on or off line.

*\* The purpose of the Act is to recognize a right of privacy of individuals with respect to their personal information and the business need to reasonably use such information.*

**4. Build in consumer protection.** Although not law, federal guidelines are extremely useful in helping you incorporate consumer protection initiatives into your web site. The guiding principle? If you give clear and full disclosure about your product or service, you are less likely to have any consumer complaints. Visit <http://strategis.ic.gc.ca> to view mockups of web sites you can model.

**5. Understand patents.** Almost any idea is patentable if claimed correctly, so you can quite innocently infringe on another's patent without ever intending to do so. To avoid legal problems, check whether competitors have patented their e-commerce advertising methods, pricing or selling strategies, etc. Keep a record of your own methods for your own defense, or better still - patent them.

**6. Heed copyright.** Make sure your web site developer signs a *written* assignment that transfers copyright in the site to you. An oral agreement is not enough. And although you assume others won't copy your material, it's worth specifying what third parties are permitted to do with your content (e.g. review but not distribute externally). Get written permission to hotlink to other sites, and check that they are not infringing on any one else's copyright.

**7. Search and register trade-marks and domain names.** Trade-marks are normally national but e-commerce is global. Since trademark laws vary across nations, you need to search and register trade-marks used abroad. When it comes to domain names, these may be treated differently. The key - get there first!

Although you must consider the legalities of e-commerce, don't let them overwhelm you. You don't want to end up with an electronic fortress that discourages more business than it attracts. The key is to identify the real risks for your company and balance these with a marketing-oriented, user-friendly site.

*Extracted from a WITO seminar presented by Blake, Cassels, Graydon LLP. For more information, contact Monica Kowal at (416) 863-5816 or [monica.kowal@blakes.com](mailto:monica.kowal@blakes.com)*

# COMING UP Calendar

## Summer/Fall 2000 WITO Events

**August 24:** Summer BBQ, Toronto Island Yacht Club

**September:** Trade & Services

**December:** Financing Your Exports  
(sponsored by Royal Bank)

Details coming soon! Member discounts apply.

Events held in Toronto.

Info: Candice Rice (416) 973-5157 or rice.candice@ic.gc.ca

## Other Trade Events

**Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT) 11th Annual Business Conference,**

**October 11-13, 2000,** San Diego. Fee for members: \$195 U.S. (before Sept 22).

Info: Andrea Migdal at (858) 552-2964 or e-mail to amigdal@dotwireless.com

**Canada-U.S. Women in Trade E-vent, October 19,**

**2000** Windsor. A business partnering forum bringing together over 200 North American women executives and business owners. Sessions will focus on business growth through e-commerce strategies. Fee: \$125 U.S. Info and registration: [www.WomenInTrade.com](http://www.WomenInTrade.com)

**The Women Crossing Borders Women in Business Trade Mission, February 5-9, 2001**

London, England. Organized by the Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade and the High Commission of Britain at Canada House, this mission is for export-ready companies and women looking to expand export opportunities. A unique feature will be professional matching to find three to five business opportunities for Canadian business women to pitch their products or services.

Info: Sandra Anstey (416) 979-1792 or [anstey@istar.ca](mailto:anstey@istar.ca)

**Roadmap to Exporting:** A practical guide to connect potential, prepared and experienced exporters with export programs and services offered by the federal government. Available free by calling 1 800 850-9626 or visit

[www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp](http://www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp)



## Trade Resources

### Where to Go: 5 Women-Friendly Trade Resources

Check out our top picks for Canadian women exporters:

#### 1. Women in International Trade - Ontario

**(WITO):** The first Canadian chapter of the Organization of Women in International Trade, in 29 countries and growing. Info: (416) 487-5204 or [anne.rose@sympatico.ca](mailto:anne.rose@sympatico.ca) or visit [www.owit.org](http://www.owit.org)

#### 2. Beyond Borders - Canadian Businesswomen in International Trade:

A report full of statistics, insights and advice from women exporters, based on landmark research. For a free copy, call the Department of Foreign Affairs & International Trade at 1 800 267-8376, ext. 5 or visit [www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp](http://www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp)

**3. International Trade Centres:** Industry Canada's cross-Canada network of Trade Commissioners. Info: Candice Rice at (416) 973-5157 or [rice.candice@ic.gc.ca](mailto:rice.candice@ic.gc.ca)

**4. [www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp](http://www.infoexport.gc.ca/businesswomen/menu-e.asp)** A comprehensive and easy-to-use Businesswomen in Trade site for both new and seasoned exporters. Info: Elizabeth Lahey at (613) 992-8050 or [elizabeth.lahey@dfait-maeci.gc.ca](mailto:elizabeth.lahey@dfait-maeci.gc.ca)

**5. WomenAsia.com:** An all-inclusive site connecting North American and Asian businesswomen who want to do business in the global marketplace. Provides business advice, contacts, funding information and more. Info: Rosemary Brisco at (650) 654-6926 or visit [www.womenasia.com](http://www.womenasia.com)

## Sound Bites

### Global Links

WITO Board Member **Andrina Lever** will lead a Canadian team which will include WITO members **Anne Rose** and **Maxine Westaway** to the fifth meeting of the APEC Women Leaders' Network (WLN) in Brunei this June. In 1996, Canada spearheaded the launch of the WLN in Manila as a special forum in APEC to raise awareness of women's economic contribution throughout the region of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, to highlight the impact of trade liberalization on women and to put forward a women's agenda for policy discussions. Watch our next issue for highlights of the Brunei meeting.

### Members On the Move

WITO's First Vice President, **Vicki Saunders**, merged her Internet incubator company, NRG Group, with 2FundEcom, a \$40-million private venture fund headed by veteran investment bankers. The new company, which kept the NRG Group name, just went public on the Toronto Stock Exchange. **Andrina Lever**, WITO Director and President of Lever Enterprises, was appointed Honorary Consul for New Zealand in Toronto, earlier this spring.

### E-Business or Bust?

Cyberlawyer **Margo Langford** ([cyberlaw@sympatico.ca](mailto:cyberlaw@sympatico.ca)) kicked off the official launch of WITO on International Women's Day in March. Her overriding message: "The Internet is the first technology simultaneously overhyped and underestimated!" Here is her advice for women entrepreneurs:

1. Focus your Internet efforts on the business-to-business market which is exploding.
2. Form an online company as a separate corporation and legal entity.
3. Clearly state the jurisdiction of your operation and post rules that apply.
4. Keep records of transactions and user supplied data.
5. Use best of breed technology to protect yourself.

TRADE PAPERBACK

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Getting Connected is published by WITO Women In International Trade - Ontario Editor: Susan Baka, Bay Communications Design: DUO Strategy and Design Inc.

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