

As summer approaches, we are once again sending out our e-newsletter to let you in on all the exciting new events and initiatives planned for the near future! Take a moment to read through this e-mail, and we'll see you at the next networking event! Until then...

Susan Baka,
Editor

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1. Upcoming Events

Virtual Trade Mission Reception & Videoconference
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Everyone is invited to join in this celebratory reception for the first videoconference of the Canadian-Australian Businesswomen Connexions Virtual Trade Mission (VTM). The event is scheduled for Thursday, June 12 at 5:00 pm, at RBC Royal Bank at 200 Bay Street, 40th Floor.

Attendees will share in the excitement as Canadian businesswomen ready themselves to explore trade opportunities and exchange valuable information and best practices online with Australian counterparts.

The Videoconference will follow beginning at 6:30 pm and is open only to VTM participants. The VTM will culminate in the fall with an actual trade mission to Canada by Australian businesswomen as part of the Global Banking Alliance for Women 3rd Annual Summit taking place from September 24-26 in Vancouver and from September 29-30 in Toronto. (See upcoming item for more information and visit www.womentradingglobally.com)

All are welcome at the reception! A fee of \$20 will be charged for those not registered as VTM participants. To register, contact Candice Rice 416-973-5157, e-mail to rice.candice@ic.gc.ca

Casual Networking!

Come join us on June 25 at 5:00 pm at the Bier Market on the Esplanade! If networking with old and new friends in a casual atmosphere interests you, meet us there and we'll see if we can make this a monthly date! How do 'martinis and manicures' sound? We'll tell you more on the 25th!

Annual Networking BBQ & AGM

Mark September 4 on your calendar as the day to attend the Annual Networking BBQ & AGM taking place at the Toronto Island Yacht Club with featured guest speaker **Kerry Mitchell**, Publisher of *PROFIT* magazine. She will share the secrets of some of Canada's Top 100 women business owners – from the annual ranking sponsored by *PROFIT*, so it promises to be a stimulating evening. And if you haven't been to this annual event, you will thoroughly enjoy the relaxed atmosphere at the Club...not to mention the spectacular view of the city skyline. Don't miss out! The evening's festivities are set to start at 6:00 p.m.

More details will follow.

Virtual Trade Mission Lessons

Ever considered participating in a virtual trade mission (VTM)? In collaboration with the International Trade Club, our October 30 luncheon will cover the do's and don'ts of using virtual connections to make real business connections. Hear how Canadian businesswomen successfully established links with Australian business owners using a VTM.

Holiday Reception

Save the date of December 11 for our annual Holiday Reception. We are planning a marvellous evening and will share details as they unfold.

Annual OWIT Conference in Calgary – our newest chapter.

Our newest chapter in Calgary, Alberta is pleased to be hosting the 2003 Annual Conference from September 10 to 12 and welcomes delegates from over 25 OWIT chapters around the world. This year's theme is "*Innovations: Your Competitive Edge in a Global Marketplace.*" Conference participants will have plenty of opportunities to share, learn, network and have some fun! There will also be a trade show component. For more information, tel: (403) 807-7746, e-mail leann@concreteglobal.com or visit www.owit.org

Women Trading Globally Trade Mission

The Women Trading Globally 2003 Trade Mission and Forum, hosted by RBC Royal Bank, is scheduled for September 24 to 26 in Vancouver, with events in Toronto from September 29 and 30, and is sponsored by the Global Banking Alliance for Women (GBA). If you are export-ready and interested in expanding your business with like-minded women entrepreneurs from Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, and the United States, then plan to participate. The Mission will appeal to the full spectrum of Canadian women entrepreneurs, from all sectors, who operate and own small to large-sized enterprises. The main focus is to increase trade between entrepreneurs among the GBA communities, with an emphasis placed on business matching.

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet women entrepreneurs from around the world and is a logical extension of our Virtual Trade Mission with Australian businesswomen currently underway. Register now to maximize business matching benefits. Simply visit www.womentradingglobally.com

2. News and Reviews

Web Site Enhancements

You may have noticed the new, refreshing look of the Web site home page – if you haven't, then it's been too long since your last visit to www.wito.ca

Thanks go to Nina Menezes and members **Kerri Beaulieu** and **Cindy Mark** for their hard work on revamping the site. In fact, renovations are still ongoing on the rest of the pages, so stay tuned!

Check out the new look of our home page at www.wito.ca and get instant updates on all Upcoming Events!

Members Honoured

Our own OWIT-Ontario President **Candice Rice** and fellow Board member **Donna Messer** were among the finalists for the *ExtraOrdinary Woman of the Year Award* this spring, sponsored by the Canadian Association of Women Executives & Entrepreneurs (CAWEE). As a Senior Trade Commissioner with Industry Canada, Candice's early initiatives assisting women in developing their trade potential go back to the mid 90s. She was instrumental in launching our chapter of OWIT and assisted in organizing the first Canadian businesswomen's trade mission to Washington and the first Canada-U.S. Businesswomen's Summit. Candice continues to be an active force in today's global landscape on behalf of Canadian women exporters.

Donna, who is President of ConnectUs Communications and editor of *Businesswoman Canada* magazine, is Canada's networking guru, who encourages and mentors women and teens in their career and life goals. She connects women locally, nationally and internationally through her networking sessions, travelling seminars and publications and is passionate about helping people exceed their own expectations.

Congratulations to you both!

Mentoring our Australian Chapter:

Our chapter is mentoring the first Australian chapter of OWIT, launched in Sydney in January and officially voted into OWIT at the International Board Meeting in Geneva in May. In January, two of our members - **Susan Baka** and **Kim McArthur** - travelled to Sydney to be part of the launch celebration, sharing best practices in chapter set-up, conducting workshops on exporting to help facilitate knowledge sharing and announcing the Virtual Trade Mission between our two chapters.

A reception, hosted by Westpac Bank in Australia and the Canadian Consulate in Sydney, featured Kim as guest speaker along with her number one Australian import, best-selling author Bryce Courtenay. In their remarks, they both mentioned the Canadian government's partnership role in ground-breaking initiatives for women entrepreneurs to encourage exporting.

The Sydney event was very well-received and well-attended, and Australia's new Board members, headed by President **Deborah Kuchler**, were most appreciative of the material and best practices shared with them from our chapter. OWIT's International President, **Monique Roske**, based in Washington, DC, lauded our Canadian chapter for the initiative in encouraging and mentoring the first Australian chapter. The Canadian government and RBC Royal Bank were acknowledged throughout the event for their leadership role in helping women entrepreneurs grow their businesses by supporting and/or sponsoring unique trade-related initiatives.

Many collaborations made this event a success, including:

- The collaboration between OWIT-Ontario and OWIT-Australia, and the behind-the-scenes support from our President, Candice Rice, and Krista Robertson, Trade Commissioner, from DFAIT in Ottawa,
- The collaboration between Westpac and the Canadian Consulate to sponsor the Sydney launch reception for OWIT, in particular, the support from Amanda Ellis and James Galloway of Westpac and from John Mundy and Jeff Blackstock at the Consulate in Sydney.

We look forward to continuing to foster the relationship with our friends 'down under' and to welcoming some of them to Canada as part of the Women Trading Globally trade mission this fall.

Start-Up Export Award

Details about our new annual award to honour women-owned businesses that have successfully begun to export in the past five years and that have reached a significant sales level will be announced at our annual BBQ in September.

Submission to Federal Task Force

OWIT-Ontario made a submission to the Prime Minister's Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs earlier this year, as part of the cross-country consultations, chaired by MPP **Sarmite Bulte**. The task force will advise Prime Minister Chretien on how the federal government can advance the contribution of women entrepreneurs to the Canadian economy.

Covered in our submission are the unique challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in exporting their products and services.

Among our recommendations are:

1. More financial support for women's trade initiatives such as virtual trade missions, face-to-face trade missions, and conferences.

These kind of initiatives (eg. Canada-U.S. Trade Summit, Virtual Trade Mission with Australia, etc.) play a valuable role in helping women develop global contacts and links and should be continued and enhanced. Women's business associations, like our's, and their volunteers often shoulder a great deal of the organizational work; more financial support from the government to increase promotional efforts and to ensure professional business matchmaking would increase the awareness of these valuable initiatives so that more women could participate and would ensure that matchmaking is indeed effective, leading to new business.

2. Enhanced support to women through assistance similar to programs available in the U.S. from the Small Business Administration.

OWIT International Update

OWIT held its semi-annual spring board meeting in Geneva, Switzerland in May. This was the first board meeting held outside of North America and a trend that they hope to continue as the organization grows internationally. Board members welcomed OWIT's newest chapter in Sydney, Australia.

New OWIT chapters may soon be developing in other cities in the U.S. as well as in both Western and Eastern European centres. The OWIT Board discussed their efforts to assist in these projects. The board also discussed the various ways in which it is working to increase its support of chapters, including growing the organization and increasing the communication and cooperation between chapters and the strength of OWIT as a whole. In particular, the international Web site at www.owit.org is constantly being enhanced to make it more valuable to all members. The OWIT job bank is continuing to grow and members are encouraged to post jobs and to visit to check out potential jobs in their area.

3. Membership

Some statistics to contemplate:

We have now reached a total of 64 members in the Ontario chapter – and worldwide there are over 1,000 members who belong to OWIT. There are a total of 30 chapters: 20 in the United States and 10 abroad, including two in Canada.

Do you know any individuals who might like to join our chapter? We have a new membership brochure and would be happy to send it along to prospects. Contact Gail Morris at gail.morris@sympatico.ca A reminder that your membership renewal comes due on the anniversary of the date that you originally joined.

4. Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers for our various committees, including programming, membership, sponsorship, and communications/public relations. This is a great opportunity to get involved with OWIT, learn about the organization and gain valuable knowledge and contacts! Please let Candice Rice know if you are interested.

Tel: (416) 973-5157; e-mail to rice.candice@ic.gc.ca

5. Event Summaries

Accessing Capital – May 2003

At this breakfast roundtable were three financial experts who presented their practical strategies for sorting through the myriad of capital alternatives available for your businesses' growth needs. Here is a summary of their advice:

Janie Frank, Senior Account Manager, RBC Royal Bank of Canada (tel: 905-286-7213, e-mail: janie.frank@rbc.com) outlined the fundamentals of traditional bank financing.

What banks require to assist companies with expansion:

- Have a business plan. Banks expect clients to understand and explain their vision, goals, strategies and expectations.
- When the bank completes your Business Banking Financial Risk Rating, it considers three key ratios – current ratio; debt/tangible net worth ratio; and debt servicing surplus. The addition of pledged security, usually from assets, now owned by the business can offset weaker ratios. The “rule of thumb” is that past behaviour predicts future behaviour, which is why the bank uses this worksheet as its basic tool for entrepreneurial business with credit needs of less than \$500 million. Over \$500 million, it uses a more sophisticated model that takes into account over 25 components and other financial ratios.
- Provide a statement of affairs of the business owner/guarantors. Be prepared to provide, at the very least, a partial personal guarantee to support your lines of credit and the last two years of your personal tax assessments from CCRS. Remember that you are the business.
- Have current copies of aged accounts receivable, accounts payables and accruals on hand as well as a detailed list of inventory. The bank also require the particulars of your present financing, i.e. balances owing, payment terms and collateral pledged, including leases.
- Insurance is an important factor in mitigating risk. Inquire into business insurance, accounts receivable insurance, key person insurance and disability/life, if you have not already done so.
- Be able to provide proof that your potential priority credits are up to date, i.e. WSIB, GST, PST, Canada Customs Revenue Service, business taxes and property taxes.
- There is a fee involved in order to go forward with an application for credit.

What you should expect your banker to provide:

- A clear understanding of a turn-around time.
- An understanding of costs: including application, ongoing monthly/annual fees and legal fees.
- What financial reporting would be required, why and when – monthly, quarterly, etc.
- What are the collateral security requirements and why.
- Why she recommends the structure, rates and fees and collateral security and covenants. What would be needed to reduce interest rates, fees, financial reporting and covenants and within what time frame and under what conditions.

- What other options would be open in lieu of traditional bank financing - i.e., asset-based lending, EDC insurance, the Business Development Bank and personal resources financing.

Recommendations on other services to minimize your administration costs and time such as appropriate electronic banking/cash management solutions; service charge package; referrals to experts within the bank; direct foreign exchange treasury services; and referrals to experts outside the bank, including lawyers, accounts, associations and government departments.

Odette Corbu, Trade Commissioner, Industry Canada (tel: 416-973-5056, e-mail: corbu.odette@ic.gc.ca), explained Industry Canada's Program for Export Market Development (PEMD) which offers financial assistance in the form of a conditionally repayable contribution.

There are three kinds of assistance available:

1. **New-to-Exporting.** For first-time exporters, it provides funding for a single activity/event such as a market visit or participation in an industry trade show. It covers 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum contribution of \$7,500. Repayment is made on sales into target market at a rate of 4% for two years after contract date.
2. **Market Development Strategies.** Supporting a well-developed marketing plan for a specific target market for up to one year, funding under this program covers 50% of eligible costs up to a maximum of \$50,000. Covers multiple activities in that target market including trade-show participation/visits to market; web site development; product testing; labelling compliance; and training. Repayment is based on incremental sales into target market, at a rate of 4% for four years after contract date.
3. **Capital Projects Bidding.** For companies bidding or preparing proposals against international competitors for major capital projects outside Canada, a contribution up to a maximum of \$50,000 (minimum \$5,000) is available with repayment expected in full if the bid is successful.

Eligibility criteria for PEMD funding:

1. **Must be incorporated (federal or provincial).**
2. **Should have a sales track record.**
 - Domestic or foreign sales (preference given to companies with current sales of at least \$100,000 for US markets and \$250,000 for overseas markets).
 - Review of potential contracts.
3. **Should be committed to exporting.**
 - Solid business plan with an international component.
 - Demonstrated knowledge of challenges of market and competitors.

Company's eligibility assessed on:

1. **Financial capacity**

- Could/would approach the market without PEMD assistance
- Positive working capital
- Positive net worth

2. Capacity

- Production capacity
- Marketing capacity/experience
- Full management support
- Human resource capacity

3. Registered in WIN Exports

Kathrin Ohle of F Capital, a new, private venture capital fund for women (tel: 416-925-5535, e-mail: kathrin.ohle@sympatico.ca), discussed the pros and cons of seeking investment from venture capital firms.

What you gain with a venture capital firm:

- Money
- Networking/contacts
- Information/knowledge (especially regarding financing)
- A different business perspective

What you lose with a venture capital firm:

- Some independence – you must be prepared to not be the 100% owner.
- Administrative freedom – which can actually be an asset if it's a more disciplined approach.
- Choose your venture capital firm wisely by visiting Web sites, reading profiles and talking to others who have had success.

Here are four URLs to begin your search:

Canadian Venture Capital Association (www.cvca.ca) Click on “Members” and you will find a list of many venture capital firms with short profiles of each.

Toronto Venture Group (www.tvg.org) This group organizes breakfast meetings, seminars and other events and is great for networking and gathering information. There is also a link to the Toronto Angel Group.

Springboard (www.springboardenterprises.org) A U.S.-based organization for women entrepreneurs, it produces programs that educate, showcase and support female entrepreneurs as they seek capital and grow their companies.

CATA (www.cata.ca) Canadian Advanced Technology Alliance (*CATA Alliance*) has finalized a partnership with Springboard to create a Canadian version of Springboard. A

joint educational workshop will be held at the National Club in Toronto on September 24, 2003.

Make sure you ask for enough money the first time. Think strategically and long and hard about the amount of investment you need in order to succeed so you don't have to go back to the table and ask for more. Investors lose confidence if you haven't thought ahead.

Most firms make investments based on a 7-10 year term, but it does vary, and most look for a 25% return. Some may want to see a return on their investment quicker than you are prepared to offer, so ask questions.

What to provide to a venture capital firm:

Company profile.

Business plan: the "full-blown" edition and be sure that you understand the details.

- Executive summary of your business plan: should outline the highlights of your company, your market, peers and competitive advantage, your clients, a financial summary, risks, the management team and their background.
- Show up for your initial meeting prepared with a PowerPoint presentation.
- And remember to follow-up!

Australian Wine Tasting – March 2003

Ken Hayden of Appellation Wines (tel: 416-253-5987, e-mail: ken.hayden@primus.ca) was on hand for this event and provided a "crash course" in wine tasting while attendees enjoyed the bouquets of a number of wines from Australia. As a wine connoisseur, Ken imports in conjunction with the LCBO and can deliver wines by the case to either home or office. Here are his tips on buying Australian:

- Australian wines are generally higher in alcohol content, the reason being that the warmer climate produces a grape with a higher sugar content, which in turn increases the alcohol level.
- Seeking out grapes from other plots, not just one, provides for the best blend and a continuity from year to year.
- Chardonnay is the most widely grown grape in Australia and works well with chicken, pork and veal. It is a relatively easy grape to grow and producers often mix it with the Semillion Sauvignon Blanc to gain structure and fruit enhancement. Lately, producers have been decreasing the "oakiness" of the wine.
- Semillion Sauvignon Blanc is the second most widely grown grape in Australia and works well in white sauces and as an accompaniment to seafood. It should be consumed at a young age – a maximum of three to four years – and is not aged in oak.
- Tasmania is *the* Pinot state. Their Pinot Noir is a beautiful little wine. The grape requires a cooler climate to grow well, one that Tasmania provides, and the wine should be served slightly chilled. This light red goes very well with salmon, chicken and red meats.

- Australia is also well known for its Shiraz that is grown across the country. It lends itself to satay, curry, steaks, game, wild mushrooms and lamb.

6. Suggestions

- If you have a suggestion for a future event or topic you would like covered, please let our VP of Programming, **Patricia Cosgrove**, know.

She can be reached at 416-212-1030 or e-mail patricia.cosgrove@eoi.gov.on.ca We welcome any suggestions regarding member activities; after all, it's your association!

- If you have content or suggestions for future editions of **Getting Connected**, please pass them on to Susan Baka, VP Communications, at tel: (416) 410-1654; e-mail: sbaka@baycomm.ca
I'm always happy to hear from you!

This E-Newsletter is produced for members of the **Organization of Women in International Trade – Ontario**, P.O. Box 715, 31 Adelaide Street East, Toronto, ON M5C 2J8 (www.owit-toronto.ca)

The Organization of Women in International Trade – Ontario is a non-profit professional organization to promote women doing business internationally and to provide networking opportunities, export education and global business contacts. Members include women exporters and importers, service providers and government representatives. It is the first Canadian chapter of the worldwide Organization of Women in International Trade (OWIT) www.owit.org.