

# OWIT-Ottawa Newsletter

Fall Edition, Vol. 6

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[REGISTRATION NOW OPEN](#)

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## OWIT International Webinars

For more details on the webinar program of OWIT International, [visit them online](#).

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**Partner Event: [Your Future in Global Markets 2017 international business conference](#)**

Presented by [FITT](#) - celebrating 25 years of creating high performers in international trade

October 2-4 at Hilton Lac Leamy

Greetings!

We've had a busy spring and summer, enjoying Canada's 150th anniversary and following Canada's preparations for NAFTA negotiations with great interest!

We were delighted to see many of you at our June events. At our start up event, we received great advice and insights from Sonya Shorey, Invest Ottawa and Bayview Yards, Victoria Lennox, Co-Founder & CEO, Startup Canada, Erin Engelhardt, Patent Agent, President, Ovodenovo and Els Vanbeckevoort, CEO of SanEcoTec Ltd. Many thanks to our panelists and our moderator, Nathalie Bradbury, OWIT-Ottawa board member.



Many thanks to our excellent panelists and moderator.  
Photo by Sorin Judet

This was followed later in the month by an event featuring H.E. Mr. Kenjiro Monji, Ambassador of Japan to Canada, who spoke about women at work in his country.



OWIT-Ottawa board member Anca Sattler and H.E. Mr. Kenjiro Monji.  
Photo by Sorin Judet

On June 13th, OWIT-Ottawa attended the *Trade and Social-Economic Empowerment of Women* seminar organized by Women Heads of Mission, hosted by Her Excellency Marie-Anne Coninsx, Ambassador of the European Union to Canada.



Participants hosted by H.E Marie-Anne Coninsx

## Quick Links



[info@owit-ottawa.ca](mailto:info@owit-ottawa.ca)

[www.owit-ottawa.ca](http://www.owit-ottawa.ca)

The seminar gathered 30 women business leaders, including ambassadors from foreign diplomatic missions, representatives of the Government of Canada, businesses, and Canadian women-led coalitions. There were discussions about current initiatives and shared practices, both from a business and policy perspective, aimed at ensuring that trade contributes positively to the empowerment of women.

We look forward to continuing these discussions this Fall and hope to see you at our events. We will be meeting and beer tasting at 3 Brasseurs on Sparks Street on Thursday, September 7th.

We also cordially invite you to a concert and reception at the Mexican Ambassador's residence on Tuesday, September 26th to discuss an upcoming trade mission

to support women entrepreneurs. We took the liberty of sharing EDC's tips for doing business with Mexico in preparation for the occasion.

All our best,

Mila Pavlovic & Ainsley Butler  
Co-VPs Communications  
OWIT-Ottawa

## **Doing business in Mexico: 12 essential tips**

By Jennifer Campbell for ExportWise



Mexico City

Canada's economy has been intimately connected to Mexico's since 1994 when both countries signed the trilateral North American Free Trade Agreement. Mexico is the world's 13th largest economy and the 12th most populated country with 127.5 million people.

While the renegotiation of NAFTA may change the relationship, there's no question Canadians and Mexicans will continue to do business together. To that end, we consulted Nathan Nelson, Chief Representative for EDC in Mexico, to give us some tips on doing business there.

1. Learn the lingo: Learn a little Spanish. The Mexicans appreciate any effort you make on this front, but stick with the basics, such as "good morning," "pleasure to meet you." If you don't speak Spanish, don't try to do your pitch in Spanish. "Keep it to simple phrases," Nelson said. "If you make a mistake, it's not an issue. You can share a laugh about it."

2. Embrace the country: Mexicans are proud people and will appreciate your appreciation of their country. Talk about their beautiful city and culture. "You can become familiar with the landmarks in the city and talk about those, for example," he said.

3. Visit often: There's no substitute for face-to-face

encounters and this is particularly true in Mexico. Mexicans will expect you to make multiple visits and take the time to build the key relationships.

4. Ace the small talk: Before getting down to business, Mexicans tend to start business conversations with small talk about culture, the city you're in or the weather. Learn a little about the culture, including researching famous Mexicans and knowing a bit about Mexico's sporting passion - soccer. You can also expect some questions about your culture. Nelson has received many questions about Canadian winter sports, for example.

5. Engage local help: In Mexico, having a local representative or partner will be invaluable to solve problems and issues. "Good relationships with local contacts can help in getting responses, dealing with logistical issues and following up. "You need someone on the ground," Nelson said, "to know the local processes and thinking."

6. Mind the clock: Never show up late to a meeting, but fully expect that your Mexican counterparts might. Traffic disruptions in big cities, such as Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, are very common. In addition, there tends to be a more relaxed view toward time in Latin America, though it's more common in rural areas than in the big cities.

7. Keep an eye on queues: Try to get to meetings early because the security process always seems to take longer than expected and can be extremely strict. In some cases, particularly in a factory or plant, visitors are asked for a passport. In 95 per cent of the cases, he said you don't have to leave your passport at the security gate, but they will ask you to leave photo identification, so it's important to have another option. "I would suggest you challenge having to leave your passport," he said. "Ask if you can just show it and leave your other photo identification, such as a driver's licence or health card, behind."

8. When yes means no: Mexicans do not like to say no, so understanding body language is important and it will come with time. There are, again, regional differences on this tip. It's more common to get a straight no in larger cities, but even there, it happens that your counterpart might say yes when they mean no. "That's why face-to-face is best," Nelson said. "You can walk away from a conference-call thinking everything is

splendid, but if you'd seen their face and body language, you'd know better."

9. Bureaucracy abounds: Negotiations or processes can sometimes be slow. The government and even some large private enterprises can have extremely cumbersome bureaucratic processes. "Again, that's why it's good to have someone on the ground, getting the information you need," he said.

10. Breaking bread (or tortillas): Breakfast, lunch and dinner meetings are common, but meals are rarely offered at a first meeting. When they do happen, lunches and dinners can be very long engagements. "It's not uncommon for people on Thursdays or Friday to go out for lunch at 2 or 3 p.m. and not return to the office," Nelson said.

11. Dress for success: It's always better to be overdressed than underdressed. In business centres such as Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey, one should dress formally for meetings, whereas in other smaller cities, the dress code is often more relaxed, mostly due to extreme heat. On the coast, men often wear very lightweight long-sleeved white shirts called a guayabera.

12. Business cards are boss: Business cards are still readily exchanged so keep them handy. "You might want to bring some extras," Nelson said. It is also important to have your cellphone number on your card and don't hesitate to ask for potential clients' cellphone numbers as well.

<http://exportwise.ca/doing-business-mexico-12-essential-tips/>

### Save the Date: Upcoming OWIT-Ottawa Events

#### *OWIT-Ottawa Fall Mixer*



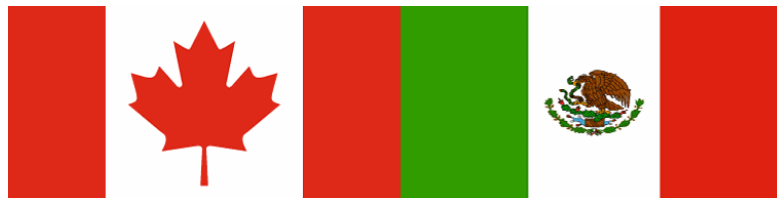
\*Mixing, mingling and beer tasting\*  
Join OWIT-Ottawa on September 7th for an evening of networking and beer tasting!

September 7, 2017 @ 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm  
at 3 Brewers (Les 3 Brasseurs), 240

Sparks St, Ottawa - [Tickets now available](#)



**Trade Mission to Mexico - Supporting Women  
Entrepreneurs: Concert & Reception**



OWIT-Ottawa invites you to a concert and reception at the residence of the Mexican Ambassador to Canada. The keynote speaker of the evening will be H.E. Dionisio Pérez Jácome, Ambassador of Mexico to Canada.

The reception is prepared by the Embassy of Mexico to Canada and Global Affairs Canada (Business Women in International Trade, BWIT), in collaboration with OWIT-Ottawa.

The event will take place on Tuesday, September 26th from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Mexican Ambassador's residence (470 Island Park Drive, Ottawa, ON K1Y 0B2). [This is a free event, but registration is required.](#)

2017 Holiday Social - November 23, 2017  
Check our [website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for more details to come!

***Rock Solid: The fascinating jewellery supply chain***



OWIT-Ottawa members and friends are invited to learn about the jewellery industry and the global supply chain of precious metals and minerals on Thursday, February 1st 2018 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm at [Heist Jewellery](#), 343 Richmond Rd, Ottawa

Please check our website for more details about each event: <http://www.owit-ottawa.ca/>

Interested in sponsoring an event? Please contact us, we'd love to hear from your organization.

**MEMBER PROFILE: Praveeni Perrera**

*We interviewed OWIT-Ottawa's newest board member, Praveeni Perrera. She told us about what she is currently up to, her interest in trade, her book and her many volunteer engagements.*

*Where do you work?*

I work as a Business Analyst in the Planning Office at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. I'm also a part-time instructor at Algonquin College in the International Business program.



*Tell us about your current position/role:*

I'm currently involved with projects surrounding automation. As many of our processes are paper based, we are moving to online management systems. This is especially important when dealing with our international partners as it makes everything more accessible.

In terms of my work at Algonquin, I will be teaching a course on International Market Entry Strategies this Fall. I'm really looking forward to it as it complements my consulting work.

*What is your interest in trade?*

I've always had an interest in international trade and decided to pursue this interest through my studies, completing a MBA in International Business.

Prior to starting at the College I co-owned a consulting and training company specializing in international expansions. I'm also a certified International Protocol and Business Etiquette consultant.

*How did you come to join OWIT and what is your role on the board?*

I had heard about OWIT from many different contacts in the past and joined this January on the recommendation of a Co-worker. I would have liked to become a member sooner but my consulting work required quite a bit of travel so I was rarely in town for OWIT events.

I am currently the VP Outreach for OWIT and liaise with current and potential partners. In this role I'm always on the lookout for organizations that OWIT can partner and work with. Partnerships help provide better resources and opportunities for our members, who are our key stakeholders.

*What advice would you share with our members?*

I would advise members to take advantage of the resources OWIT provides through our events, webinars and conferences. OWIT offers great opportunities for professional development and networking. Whether

you're looking to gain some knowledge about international trade or seeking out like minded individuals OWIT is a great organization to be a part of. Watch our events calendar and note the events that interest you; it's important to maximize the benefits that come with your membership.

*Tell us more about yourself!*

Writing is something I enjoy and I've published my first book Cocktails & Conversations: a guide to networking which can be found [here](#). I also contribute to [Canadian Small Business Women](#) on a monthly basis. I currently sit on two other boards; I'm a Co-Chair at [Sri Lankan Young Professionals](#) and a Committee Member at [South Asian Fest](#).

**Would you like to partner with or sponsor OWIT-Ottawa?**

**If so, please contact us at [info@owit-ottawa.ca](mailto:info@owit-ottawa.ca)**

**Join the OWIT-Ottawa conversation at...**



[www.owit-ottawa.ca](http://www.owit-ottawa.ca)

For any questions, comments or submissions, please contact us:

[info@owit-ottawa.ca](mailto:info@owit-ottawa.ca)