

British Columbia

Import/Export Guide 2009



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

British Columbia Import/Export Guide 2009

October 2009 Edition



Ministry of
Small Business,
Technology and
Economic Development

This guide is also available electronically at:

Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development
www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/pdf/ImptExptGuideEng.pdf

Printed on 100% post-consumer recycled stock.
By using recycled paper for this project we saved...



62,912 gallons of water



6,671 lbs of solid waste



12,942 lbs of greenhouse gases



42,787 lbs of wood

Contents

This guide	1
Your primary resource	1
Starting up and running an import business	2
Starting up and running an export business	3
Promoting your export business	6
Asia-Pacific Initiative	7

Internet Access

Many of the resources listed in this guide are web-based only. If you do not have your own Internet connection, try your local library or Community Futures Development Corporation (call **604 685-2332** to find the location nearest you) for free Internet access.

This guide

Expanding to the world-wide marketplace can be good for business, but both you and your company must be prepared. There are a number of rules and regulations you must follow to bring goods into this country or to send them abroad. This guide introduces you to the information that is available to help you navigate the exciting world of international trade.

Your primary resource

Many helpful resources appear throughout this guide. While most offer information on a topic or area, Small Business BC has been created to specifically assist British Columbia entrepreneurs with all aspects of business start-up and growth.



Small Business BC

www.smallbusinessbc.ca

82–601 West Cordova

Vancouver, BC V6B 1G1

Tel: 604 775-5525 or 1 800 667-2272

Fax: 604 775-5520

E-mail: ***askus@smallbusinessbc.ca***

As your primary resource, Small Business BC's province wide TradeStart program provides just about everything you need to know about importing and exporting including trade seminars, one-on-one advisory services, business plan reviews and online resources.

www.tradestart.ca

Starting up and running an import business

Before you launch into the import business, we recommend you download the *Importing Business Sourcing Guide* at www.smallbusinessbc.ca/pdf/importing.pdf. This detailed guide provides information related to importing, regulatory and legal issues, funding and financing, contacts and directories, market data statistics, import how-to seminars, and educational programs.

Small Business BC's TradeStart program offers import seminars, one-on-one trade coaching and business plan review services. For more information contact TradeStart at 1 866 926-5545.

In addition, we recommend you visit Canada Business at www.canadabusiness.ca. Canada Business is a national point of service where entrepreneurs can go for government information, advice and support to help build their business, and to access selected government programs, services and frequently requested forms for importers.

If you are going to import goods, you will need to register with the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). You can do this through the OneStop Business Registry at www.bcbusinessregistry.ca/registrations.htm.

The CBSA's website www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/import/menu-eng.html offers useful tools tailored to small- and medium-sized businesses, including *Importing: A Step-by-Step Guide* www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/sme-pme/i-guide-eng.html, which will help demystify the process for importing commercial goods into Canada. It is designed to help people who have never or rarely imported before, guiding them through the necessary steps for complying with the various laws and regulations.

CBSA also offers import-related seminars and events – go to www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/events-evenements/menu-eng.html and click on "British Columbia." Here you can sign up for e-mail updates on CBSA programs for importers.

Thinking about starting a new small business?

If you have not yet decided whether starting a small business is right for you – or you simply want more information about it – see our **Starting a Small Business** guide. This guide will lead you through the basic steps of starting a small business and tell you where you can find more information to make sure your new business is a success. It's available through the Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development: www.resourcecentre.gov.bc.ca/pdf/Start_SmlBusiness.pdf.

Small Business BC provides links to interactive online tools that assist in business start-up and planning. The **Business Start-up Assistant** at www.smallbusinessbc.ca/bizstart-faq.php is your one-stop site for useful information for launching your business in Canada, and the **Interactive Business Planner** at www.smallbusinessbc.ca/bizstart-bPlanning.php will explain in simple terms the concept of the business plan and show you how to put your own plan together.

Starting up and running an export business

If you are thinking of exporting, Small Business BC is your key resource for information on how to sell goods and services outside of British Columbia. Small Business BC provides up-to-date information, links to key information resources and one-on-one export coaching by appointment.

If you are thinking of exporting but don't know where to start, check out Small Business BC's export planner at www.smallbusinessbc.ca/bizEstablished-exportPlan.php. Small Business BC's export planner asks a series of questions to help you determine if your company is ready and able to export. Small Business BC offers an FAQ page that will answer many common questions about exporting goods to other countries. The Small Business BC website also provides additional exporting resources and guides such as:

- ▶ Exporting Business Sourcing Guide, which addresses basic questions on exporting. Visit www.smallbusinessbc.ca/pdf/export.pdf.
- ▶ Exporting to the United States, which provides practical information that will make your export business to the U.S. easier to start, maintain and expand. Visit www.smallbusinessbc.ca/pdf/USGuideEnglish.pdf.

- ▶ BC Opportunities Profile – Small and Medium-Sized Exporters, which provides a statistical profile of small and medium-sized exporters in British Columbia based on data for the years 1996 to 2000. Visit www.smallbusinessbc.ca/pdf/sm&med_exporters.pdf.

In addition to these web-based tools, Small Business BC's TradeStart program offers export seminars, one-on-one trade coaching and business plan review services. For more information contact TradeStart at 1 866 926-5545.

We also suggest you visit:

Canada Border Services Agency

www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/export/menu-eng.html

Tel: 1 800 461-9999

E-mail: CBSA-ASFC@canada.gc.ca

The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) website offers a range of useful tools tailored to small and medium-sized businesses, including *Exporting: A Step-by-Step Guide*, www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/sme-pme/e-guide-eng.html, which explains export rules and an up-to-date list of export-related seminars and events.

Go to www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/events-evenements/menu-eng.html and click on "British Columbia" to sign up for e-mail updates on CBSA programs that apply to exporters.

Trade Team BC

www.bctradeevents.com

Another valuable resource for exporting is Trade Team BC. Trade Team BC is a group of 25 export service organizations in British Columbia and the Yukon that provides information, programs and services for companies interested in expanding internationally into new markets. The Trade Team BC website provides an up-to-date calendar of events and workshops as well as a list of contact details for each of the organizations that make up Trade Team BC. For contact information, visit www.bctradeevents.com/Contacts/Contacts.asp.

TradeStart

www.tradestart.ca

Tel: 1 866 926-5545

Small Business BC's TradeStart program helps BC entrepreneurs realize their business potential and presence in the global marketplace. TradeStart's goal is to ensure businesses achieve long-term international success by offering trade seminars, one-on-one trade coaching and business plan review services. TradeStart is powered by Western Economic Diversification Canada and Small Business BC.

Export Development Canada

www.edc.ca

Tel: 1 866 283-2957

Export Development Canada (EDC) provides Canadian exporters with financing, insurance and bonding services as well as foreign market expertise to help offset the risks of doing business in other countries.

EDC's website contains sections on such topics as "Understanding Exports" and "Growing Your Exports" as well as the latest on global markets, economic trends analysis and successful export strategies.

Export Controls Online

www.international.gc.ca/controls-controles/index.aspx?404%3B

Tel: 1 877 808-8838

E-mail: eics.scei@international.gc.ca

Export Controls Online (EXCOL) is a web-based tool that creates a user-friendly environment for submitting online applications to the Canadian government. Through EXCOL, you can submit applications for new export permits and certificates or request changes to current ones. To use this service, you must first register with the Export and Import Controls Bureau, Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada. The form is available online.

About the OneStop Business Registry

www.bcbusinessregistry.ca

Help Desk: 1 877 822-6727

E-mail: OneStop.Help@gov.bc.ca



For years, businesses across the country have called for governments at all levels to work together and reduce red tape. The OneStop Business Registry does exactly that. Through the OneStop Business Registry, businesses in British Columbia can apply to a number of different public agencies for such things as a Provincial Sales Tax number (Ministry of Finance), a Good and Services Tax number (Canada Revenue Agency) and local government business licences quickly and easily.

Promoting your export business

There are a number of services available to help you find new export opportunities and promote your export services internationally, including:

Canadian Company Capabilities Database

www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/ccc-rec.nsf/eng/Home

Tel: 1 800 328-6189

Register with Industry Canada's Canadian Company Capabilities Database to make sure buyers in Canada and around the world know about your products and services. The database profiles more than 60,000 Canadian companies. Over 500,000 domestic and international companies browse the database every month looking for Canadian businesses. You can register your business through the OneStop Business Registry at ***www.bcbusinessregistry.ca/registrations.htm***.

Virtual Trade Commissioner

www.infoexport.gc.ca/eng/virtual-trade-commissioner.jsp

Tel: 1 800 267-8376

The Virtual Trade Commissioner (VTC) is the online arm of the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service. By registering with the VTC, you will gain access to market information and international business leads and news. Your business information will also be passed on to

Canada's Trade Commissioners working in locations around the world. Over 30,000 Canadian exporters of goods and services are currently registered with the VTC.

RFPSource

www.rfpsource.ca/E/index.cfm

RFPSource is a free electronic matching service provided by the Government of Canada to help Canadian companies find global business and partnering opportunities. RFPSource will match your profile against the thousands of opportunities received daily and e-mail you directly the ones that meet your business needs.

Canadian Commercial Corporation

www.ccc.ca

Tel: 1 800 748-8191

Since 1946, the Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC) has helped thousands of companies across Canada capture more than \$30 billion in export sales. The CCC gives Canadian businesses access to international markets, facilitates trade with buyers in other countries and even sits down at the table to sign contracts with foreign buyers on behalf of Canadian firms. The CCC also provides export-related assistance and advice to small businesses.

Asia-Pacific Initiative

The Asia Pacific Initiative is our government's vision for strengthening British Columbia's competitive position as the preferred economic and cultural gateway between North America and the Asia Pacific region.

For small businesses in British Columbia, the path to a stronger, more vibrant relationship with Asia begins in our principal strengths – our strong and open economy, unique geographical location, spectacular natural environment, and diverse, multicultural community. Today, we are building on those strengths by:

- ▶ gathering strategic advice on marketing British Columbia products and services to the Asia Pacific through the recently created Asia Pacific Trade Council; and
- ▶ making key infrastructure investments in our ports, rail, road and air infrastructure to move people, products and services to their destinations more quickly and efficiently.

To learn more about the Asia-Pacific Initiative and how it supports small business in British Columbia please visit, www.gov.bc.ca/ecdev/down/asia_pacific_initiative_out.pdf.

The Ministry of Small Business, Technology and Economic Development has also partnered with Small Business BC to develop a comprehensive web-based, Asia-Pacific Export Planning Tool for use by small businesses with an interest in expanding their operations to Asian markets. The export planning link to this website will be posted on both the ministry and Small Business BC websites.

In addition to the Asia-Pacific Initiative, there are a number of services available providing information on the Asia-Pacific market, including:

Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada
www.asiapacific.ca

Tel: 604 684-5986

Canada Export Centre
www.canadaexportcentre.com

Tel: 604 685-7823

Canada China Business Council
www.ccbc.com

Tel: 604 630-1545

**Department of Foreign Affairs
and International Trade**
[www.international.gc.ca/
international/index.aspx](http://www.international.gc.ca/international/index.aspx)

Tel: 1 800 267-8376

Gateway to Asia
www.gatewaytoasia.ca

Tel: 604 732-3278

**Ministry of Small Business,
Technology and Economic
Development**

Asia Pacific Business Centre
[www.tted.gov.bc.ca/apti/Pages/
default.aspx](http://www.tted.gov.bc.ca/apti/Pages/default.aspx)

Tel: 604 660-9727

Toll free: 1 888 880-ASIA (2742)

Email: asia.pacific@gov.bc.ca

Western Economic Diversification
www.wd.gc.ca

Tel: 1 888 338-9378



**Ministry of Small Business,
Technology and
Economic Development**
PO Box 9822, Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9N3

Phone: 250 387-4699
Fax: 250 952-0113
E-mail: smallbusinessbranch@gov.bc.ca
Web: www.gov.bc.ca/tted

Small Business BC

Comprehensive business information and business planning resources for starting and growing a business in British Columbia
1 800 667-2272
www.smallbusinessbc.ca

Canada Business

The Government of Canada's main site for business information
1 888 576-4444
www.canadabusiness.gc.ca

OneStop Business Registry

Online business registration and change of business address
1 877 822-6727
www.bcbusinessregistry.ca

eBC eBusiness Connection

e-business information resources for small and medium-sized businesses
1 604 775-7532
www.e-bc.ca

FrontCounter BC

A single window service for natural resource clients of provincial natural resource ministries and agencies to obtain all the information and authorizations they need to start or expand a business
1 877 855-3222
www.frontcounter.gov.bc.ca

Service BC

Province wide access to government services including key government transactions for business
1 800 663-7867 (Enquiry BC) to be transferred to the nearest Service BC Contact Centre
www.servicebc.gov.bc.ca

Community Futures Development Corporation of British Columbia

Business counselling and assistance for new and existing businesses in rural British Columbia
1 604 685 2332
www.communityfutures.ca/provincial/bc

BizPaL Business Permits and Licences

Online tool to help quickly and easily identify permit and licensing requirements for business activities
bizpal@gov.bc.ca
www.bcbizpal.ca

La Société de développement économique

The Francophone Economic Development Organization enhances the vitality of minority language communities and assists with economic development
1 877 732-3534
www.sdecb.com

