

EXPORT TO CANADA NEWS

INFORMATION · ADVICE · CONTACT

DIGITAL MARKETING AND E-COMMERCE DURING COVID-19

IN THIS ISSUE

1. MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
2. SELLING IN A NEW WORLD: IT'S ALL ABOUT E-COMMERCE
3. NEW STAFF
4. ACCESS CANADA: A Guide on Exporting to Canada
5. PROGRAM UPDATES
6. SPOTLIGHT ON TFO CANADA ACTIVITIES
7. MAMBO STUDIOS: GROWING ONLINE



The Future is NOW!



STEVE TIPMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TFO CANADA

The theme for this edition of our newsletter is all about digital marketing and electronic commerce. This is not the first or last time we will highlight these important tools. When done well these online tools will boost your exporting success!

In the March 2018 edition of our newsletter, I talked about how TFO Canada sees e-commerce as transforming the global business and trade landscape at an unprecedented rate, opening up the international market to small and medium-sized enterprises -- and micro enterprises too! In fact, since COVID-19 hit the world and was declared a global pandemic on March 11th, 2020, we are seeing that digital marketing, online interactions and e-commerce are accelerating at lightning speed. Technology is becoming forever linked with commerce and the pandemic has truly underscored the important role it plays in how consumers live, work, shop and play.

It is anticipated that consumers, post-crisis, will have some very different priorities, values and attitudes and a lasting impact on how they want to spend their time and money. Understanding these shifts in consumer behaviour and spending habits will be critically important for exporters.

When looking at digital marketing, we see that these forms of communications are also gaining importance. The good news is that virtual forms of promotion tends to be an economical option for Small and Medium Enterprises and, when done well, can yield a strong return on investment.

When it comes to business-to-business practices, recent analysis (marketingcharts.com) using data from McKinsey indicated that the shift to online buying will continue to grow post-COVID. In fact, areas such as online/web support interactions will increase from 63% to 73%, while in-person/field sales teams will drop from 57% to 20%. These facts alone demonstrate how important your online sales strategies will become in the future. Understanding how technology can bring the world to your doorstep, these trends speak to opportunities that exist for businesses in all four corners of the world.

Being aware of these global trends and how they continue to shift is vital to future success in international trade. TFO Canada will continue to act as your partner and trade facilitator by adapting its programs and providing services that reflect what is happening in the marketplace. We want SMEs from developing economies to take advantage of these newer ways of doing business and expanding into foreign markets.



Tipman's Trade Tip

Do not underestimate the power of the internet. Having a strong website that shows your company in a positive light can be an important step towards making a favourable impression. Think of it as your storefront to the world.

SELLING IN A NEW WORLD: IT'S ALL ABOUT E-COMMERCE



By Susan Baka, TFO Canada Ontario Regional Representative

COVID-19 has massively impacted our world both socially and economically. While there has been so much devastation, there may be a bright spot for international sellers. In North America, online sales have done extremely well, increasing 70% from the same time last year and raking in \$3.2 billion. Additionally, 33% of Canadians expect to shop more online post-COVID.

And the new online shopper is more open minded and impulsive, more willing to try new products, and more willing to buy a different brand. These changes can be good for savvy international sellers who want to grab a piece of the competitive pie. With travel restricted during the pandemic, digital trade is more important than ever.

To be successful requires a good digital presence, including a website that is easy to navigate and one that can drive sales. If you are not selling online yet now is the time to jump in. The main e-commerce sales channels include your website, online marketplaces and social media. Bear in mind that Canadians have high expectations when shopping online, with many expressing dissatisfactions when surveyed.

Here are some tips and best practices you can use to ensure you provide a good experience for buyers if you are selling via your site:

- **Write enticing product descriptions.** It may be true that a picture says a thousand words, but a good product description can land the sale. Include size of product, special features (e.g. wording like: made from organic fabric, locally sourced), and reasons your customer would want to own it (e.g. easier to use, limited supply, for discerning tastes, you won't beat this price).
- **Add beautiful product images.** Visuals are extremely important – especially for online buyers who can't see or touch products before making a purchase. If you can, add context by incorporating images of models using the product and videos that give customers a 360-degree view or show how to use it.
- **Add a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page.** This helps potential customers quickly and easily find the information they need to complete a purchase.
- **Reduce image sizes for quick load times.** More than half of website visitors expect a page to load in less than two seconds. At more than three seconds, they leave the page.
- **Leverage user-generated content.** Include customer reviews, images from social media, and testimonials on your site. That way, it's not just you who is saying the product is great...it's your happy customers who are saying it. That is far more powerful!

Continues on the next page

02

- **Include shipping info** (Free? Shipping options? Do you ship to all countries? Return info?) Note: 62% of Canadians think free shipping is important because of the country's vast geography.
- **Add an upsell option at bottom** (e.g. matching skirt to the sweater someone just bought)
- **Have a countdown timer** on check out page so people don't abandon

Webinar Access

On July 14th, 2020 we hosted a webinar "Selling in a New World: It's All About Digital Marketing" presented by Susan Baka.

The webinar covered:

- Understanding digital marketing trends in North America- Email marketing, social media, websites, customer data collection
- Recognizing COVID-19 impacts - online platforms, need for e-commerce
- Creating website content that works
- Incorporating e-commerce - benefits, best practices, keeping costs down

To access the full webinar, click [here](#)



NEW STAFF

Mohamed Elmi

Mohamed Elmi joined TFO Canada as Director for Finance and Administration in September 2020. He has oversight responsibility for the financial management of the organization and as a trusted business partner to program teams, supports the organization in fulfilling its mission.

Prior to joining TFO Canada, Mohamed was the Regional Finance Director for Africa region with Relief International, based in Nairobi, Kenya providing direct finance oversight of Africa country offices. Before that, he was with ActionAid Secretariat based in Johannesburg supporting European member countries. Mohamed also worked with Care Canada HQ office in Ottawa for over a decade and held Director of Contract Management unit before moving on to international assignments. Mohamed is a Certified Professional Accountant with a Certified General Accounting designation and holds a Bachelor of Commerce Degree from Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario.

ACCESS CANADA: A Guide on Exporting to Canada

We are pleased to announce the release of our updated version of Access Canada guide. This updated guide includes information of the Canadian market including the impacts of COVID-19 on the market. The full guide will be available on our [website](#) October 5th 2020 in English, French and Spanish. You must be registered with us to access the full document.

Executive Summary

With a population of 37.6 million, Canada is the 10th largest import market in the world. Canada depends on foreign trade which is reflected in the many bilateral and multilateral trade agreements Canada has negotiated and continues to negotiate with countries around the world.

The top consumer markets are located in three provinces: Ontario (Toronto), Quebec (Montreal) and British Columbia (Vancouver). Most importers are in the Toronto and Montreal areas. More than 85% of all imports are cleared in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec and then are distributed throughout Canada.

Growth in imports has been increasing steadily before the COVID -19 pandemic hit the country, like most other countries in the world. Before the pandemic, Canada's GDP average yearly rate was approximately 2% and other economic indicators suggested a stable economy. It remains unclear what medium and long-term impact the pandemic will have on imports as well as the general economic conditions in the country.

The United States remains Canada's largest trading partner and accounted for more than half of all imports into Canada in 2019. China is also a major exporter to Canada as well as many other Asian countries. Mexico is the largest exporter to Canada within Latin America (due largely to the Canada US Mexico Agreement (CUSMA)).

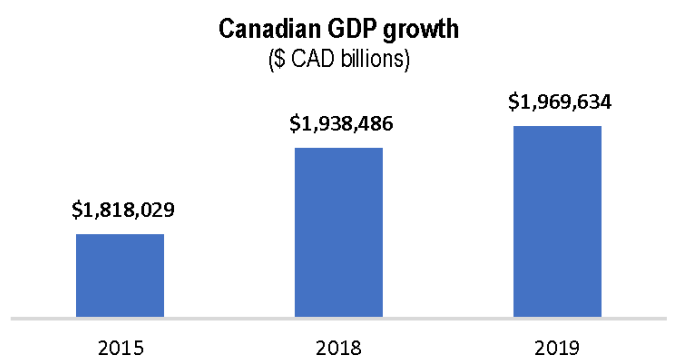
There are three key sectors in the Canadian import market of interest for developing country exporters: agri-foods, textiles and clothing and home décor. Agri-food imports totalled \$11.2 billion in 2019, Textiles and clothing imports reached \$14 billion in 2019, Home décor imports reached \$540 million in 2019, with the U.S. and the EU being important suppliers.

Canada has its own Customs Tariff Structure based on the World Customs Organization Harmonized Tariff System (HS). The Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) is the Canadian government agency responsible for customs services and compliance with Canada's borders legislation. The CBSA also provides the list of countries with the applicable tariff treatments.

Canadian and international certifications are an important consideration for SMEs contemplating Canada as an export market. In addition to complying with Canadian laws and regulations, exporters may wish to pursue additional third-party certifications such as Global G.A.P., Rainforest Alliance and ISO as some importers may require such certifications.

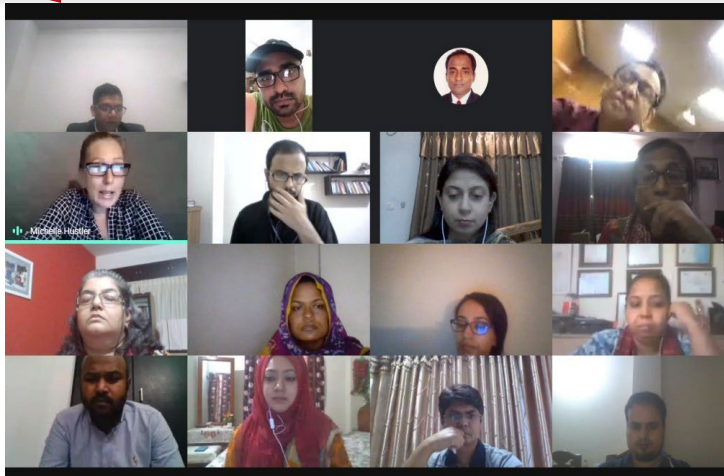
A number of options are available to exporters wanting to sell to Canada. SME exporters must decide whether to export directly to an importer, distributor, or retailer in Canada, or to export indirectly through intermediaries either in their country or in Canada such as distributors, brokers and agents or trading houses. There are several ways to identify buyers in Canada. Trade shows have traditionally been a great source to find buyers although with the pandemic, the future of this type of activity remains uncertain. Trade magazines and directories are also a good tool to identify buyers. Exporters can use a number of tools (such as the Canadian Importer Database) to identify buyers. They can also contact their Embassy (or High Commission) and Consulate in Canada to get assistance.

In summary, the first step for exporters to take when contemplating to sell to Canada is to develop a market-entry strategy with the following components: analyze the market demand for your products, understand the regulatory environment in Canada and identify potential buyers. To become export ready for Canada, it is important that exporters do their homework diligently and thoroughly.



PROGRAM UPDATES

Asia



During July-August 2020, the Asia team worked actively with stakeholders in adapting program activities through online delivery mechanisms to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

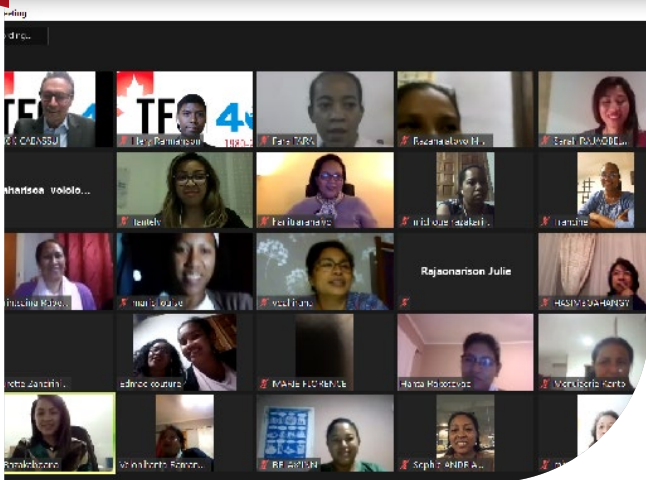
Under Export Launchpad Bangladesh, the first virtual Training of Trainers (ToT) took place during July 12-22, 2020. The ToT was facilitated by TFO Canada's Associate based in Barbados for 32 participants in Bangladesh including 17 women. The next step of this project is for the trained trainers to train SMEs from jute and processed food sectors during September and October of 2020.

Under Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WITISG) project, the Asia team held several online meetings with all stakeholders in the target countries (Jordan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Cambodia) in order to finalize the implementation agreements.

TFO Canada has signed a 2-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Directorate General for National Export Development (DGNED) of the Ministry of Trade in Indonesia to facilitate cooperation in export development activities in Indonesia. In view of the COVID 19 pandemic, the MoU Signing Ceremony (Jakarta and Ottawa) took place online on August 18, 2020 witnessed by the Indonesian Minister of Trade, representatives of the Canadian Embassy in Jakarta, the Indonesian Ambassador to Ottawa and representatives of Trade Support Institutions in Indonesia. To watch the ceremony, click [here](#).

PROGRAM UPDATES

Africa & Haiti



TFO Canada Africa team has been working on two projects: Making Trade Work for Women in Sub-Saharan Africa Least Developed Countries (LUME) and Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WIT).

By August, partnership agreements were signed with 8 partners from Madagascar, Lesotho, Uganda and Ethiopia. Initial activities are ready to start in all four LUME countries providing training on Gender Equality and Social Inclusive for senior management and boards from partner organizations.

Local market research is also ongoing in Uganda, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Egypt, Morocco, Mozambique, and Haiti; the research will inform our programming and specific needs for

each country involved particularly related to exportable products for new markets.

Program Updates – Africa & Haiti Cont'd

Local market research is also ongoing in Uganda, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Egypt, Morocco, Mozambique, and Haiti; the research will inform our programming and specific needs for each country involved particularly related to exportable products for new markets.

During this time, the Africa team participated in various webinars to contribute on how SMEs and TSIs can overcome the challenges due to lock down and limited transport and tap into digital markets. These included UNECA African Trade Policy Centre: Women and the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (September 15), Trade plus Impact's Handmade Futures Summit 2020 (September 24), and TFO Canada's webinar on digital tools in French (September 29). If you missed any of these, please check out the recordings on our website! Our team also conducted several Exporting to Canada webinars for partner countries, including Madagascar.

TFO Canada renewed its partnership with OWIT International in August. In this regard, the Africa program collaborated with OWIT Chapters for capacity building and networking events including OWIT Nairobi's virtual International Trade Conference in September.

PROGRAM UPDATES *Latin America & the Caribbean*

Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WIT)

The Latin American team at TFO Canada has continued closely monitoring the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic in all project countries. During the pandemic, the different measures undertaken by respective countries and partners to support SMEs have been monitored and documented to adapting project strategies accordingly. The team is initiating the design of local gender-sensitive country research that will identify specific environmental and human rights/governance issues in the selected economic sector involved in the projects. The findings will be incorporated in the export readiness trainings for beneficiary SMEs.

SPOTLIGHT ON TFO CANADA ACTIVITIES

Canada: trends in the agri-food sector post COVID -19

July 23, 2020

The Guatemalan – Canadian Chamber of Commerce organized a webinar on trends in the agri-food sector post COVID -19. TFO Canada Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean and Trade Support Services delivered a presentation about TFO Canada and its online services to Guatemalan exporters interested to access the Canadian market. It focused on changes in consumer trends as result of the COVID 19 pandemic in the Canadian Agrofood sector.

Canadá: tendencias de consumo de alimentos (post COVID-19)

Conozca sobre:

- Rutas y accesos / comportamiento ventas antes y durante COVID-19.
- Cadena de ventas / tendencia de consumo de alimentos.
- Nuevos regímenes alimenticios, commodities, tendencias a futuro-



En alianza con



Jueves 23 de julio, 10:0am. Acceso libre con previa confirmación al correo laura.lainfiesta@cancham.org.gt

PBX 2207-1983 / info@cancham.org.gt

www.cancham.org.gt

eMarket Readiness Program - Helping you Navigate the Evolving Handmade Market

August 11th – 14th

TFO Canada's project management team attended the e-Market Readiness Program delivered by Aid to Artisans. The program offered opportunities for networking with buyers, producers and sector experts as well as for gaining knowledge on the current state of the US Retail Market, distribution channels and trends in the handmade sector; the 2020/2021 color trends and the steps to develop artisan product collections; formula for costing and pricing artisan products and export pricing terms; and the importance of storytelling in artisan marketing and branding. The team will be transferring this knowledge to artisans we will be working with in WIT and LUME projects.



How to export to Canada

August 18, 2020

TFO Canada Program Director for Latin America and the Caribbean and Trade Support Services participated in a webinar on How to Export to Canada organized by the Embassy of the Republic of Paraguay in Canada. A presentation on how to use TFO Canada's online services was delivered to ninety-five participants from different Paraguayan government departments, Chamber of Commerce and Paraguayan SMES in the agri-food sector attended the webinar.



Marco Legal/ Requisitos de Licencias/ Procesos para la Exportación / Acceso al mercado canadiense/ Facilitación de comercio/Búsqueda de socios comerciales

Día: Martes 18 de Agosto
 Hora: 10:00 a 12:00 horas.
 Reunión Zoom:
<https://zoom.us/j/94473416131?pwd=eVB4enFPbHR0RGRCZnRBeDlVRXpXZz09>
 ID de reunión: 944 7341 6131
 Código de acceso: 662824

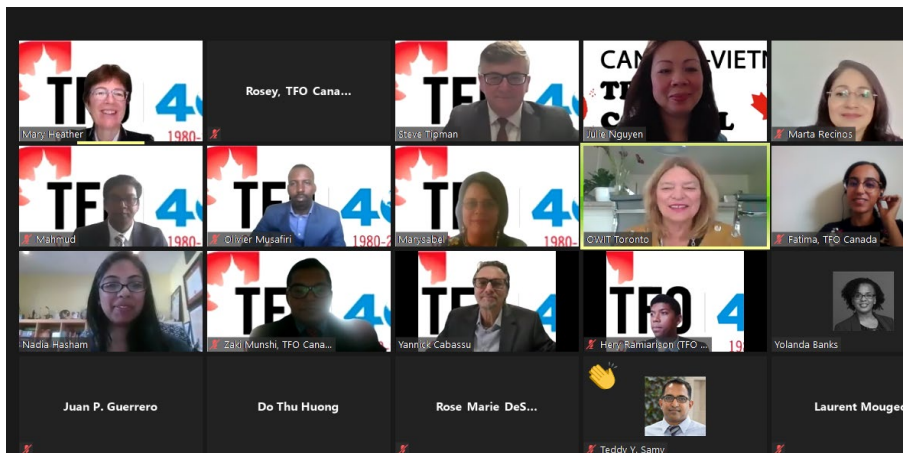
Disertantes:
 Marysabel González
 Directora del Programa de Latinoamérica y el Caribe de la Oficina de Facilitación del Comercio de Canadá
 Daniel Burgoyne
 Gerente Nacional de Alimentos importados de la Agencia Canadiense de Inspección de Alimentos
 Nikolaus Oslaw
 Director de Inteligencia Competitiva, REDIEX

SPOTLIGHT ON TFO CANADA ACTIVITIES

Women and the AfCFTA Webinar

September 15, 2020

TFO Canada hosted a webinar entitled: “Women and the AfCFTA: How women entrepreneurs and traders can leverage the benefits of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement” on September 15th, 2020. Three gender and trade policy experts from UNECA’s African Trade Policy Centre joined us to share their perspectives on and the opportunities from the newly signed trade agreement. By and large, the discussion centered mainly on: basic understanding of the AfCFTA, multiple barriers to women entrepreneurs in the integrated market context, the importance of gender-sensitive policy implementation approach and the necessary actions to be taken in the long run.



Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WIT) Launch

September 17th, 2020

TFO Canada celebrated the virtual launch of the Women in Trade for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (WIT) project. The event included opening remarks from the High Commissioner to Mozambique, Caroline Delany. It included a presentation from Steve Tipman, Executive Director at TFO Canada as well as remarks from Dr. Bouba Housseini Program Officer from International Development Research Centre and Mr. Nasser M. Al-Thekair, General Manager, at the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation. The event also hosted a panel discussion on the Experience of Women in Trade: How Inclusive Trade Strategies contribute to Sustainable Growth. The event panelist were Marcia Mendez, Economic Counsellor, Embassy of Guatemala; Do Thu Huong, Commercial Counsellor, Embassy of Vietnam; Nadia Hasham, Trade Policy Expert, Africa Trade Policy Centre, UN Economic Commission for Africa.; Susan Baka, Organization of Women in International Trade, OWIT Toronto.

To access the press release for the event, click [here](#)

MAMBO STUDIOS: GROWING ONLINE

Juan Manuel Duque is the CEO of [Mambo Studios](#), a company that offers creative service and produces advertising for corporations including animations, videos, graphics, motion graphics and innovative services. Like many places in the world, Colombia underwent lock down procedures to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. While this presented a challenge for many SMEs, Mambo Studios has been fortunate enough to continue business. *"It's one of the benefits of being a service provider that works mainly online. The lock down has to some extent affected our clientele in Colombia, however overseas we still have work from the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico."*



"Prior to the lock down we had clients mainly from the United States and Panama. We always wanted to tap into other international markets and Canada seemed like a great opportunity. Through ProColombia, Mambo studios was introduced to TFO Canada and the Gateway to Trade program in 2018. Through this program we received training sessions in Colombia about the Canadian market and client base. We were one of 14 companies to be selected to come to Toronto to attend B2B meetings and meet potential clients. This was a great opportunity because we had scouted out a production company called Double Barrel that fit the profile of services we offer. Through TFO Canada we arranged meetings with them and from there Double Barrel became a partner. The second part of the program was bringing Canadian buyers to Colombia; when Double Barrel came to Colombia, we brought them to Cali to visit our offices and signed an MoU."

During these COVID times, many businesses have suffered losses. However, E-commerce and digital/online presence has proven to be a powerful tool for some. Here are some Mambo Studio's tips for companies that cannot go back to their offices or work at full capacity:

- Ideally try to produce content that does not involve moving people. For example, if you must do trainings make virtually animated training materials. They are easy to share and distribute and can be accessible for everyone.
- Start exploring animated content (it is very relevant right now) and moving things online. You can sell your services online through a website, you can make a video at home or create animations about your products or services, this way you can reach far bigger audience from all corners of the world.
- Using a video to explain what you are selling allows you to have a good online presence.
- If you can afford it try creating a Virtual Reality or an Augmented reality experience. Virtual reality is good for people in the environment or tourism sectors where you can create virtual experiences for the services you offer. Augmented reality also helps sell specific products, for example, using the Nike App lets you see what a shoe will look like on you. Using these types of online tools will help exporters bring a different experience to everyone.

"Overall, my hope for the future is that Mambo studios can create more partnerships in different parts of the world. We want to create an international network of partnerships that will allow us to redevelop our content and grow as a business."



TFO Canada improves lives through the creation of sustainable trade partnerships for exporters from developing countries with Canadian and foreign buyers. We facilitate access to the Canadian marketplace and share Canadian trade expertise for the benefit of smaller male and female owned/managed exporters from developing countries and for the men and women they employ.

Founded in 1980, TFO Canada is a non-governmental, non profit organization.

This newsletter is produced with the financial support of the Government of Canada provided through Global Affairs Canada.

© Trade Facilitation Office Canada / Bureau de promotion du commerce Canada 2020