

An Excerpt from the
Export Development & Investment Attraction Strategy:
Action Plan

Prepared for

Corner Brook & Area Gateway Committee

By Market Access International Canada, Inc.

Integrated Action Plans for Trade & Investment Initiatives

Action Plan: Trade Development Strategy

1. **Leadership Team:** Form a leadership team to implement the Trade Development Strategy, which consists of hands-on individuals representing the key organizations having a mandate relating to trade development and / or economic development. Work that is done within the trade development action plan ideally fits well within an individual organization's activity calendar. The premise is that the action plan, and the team that drives it, are sustained by the support of their organization's legitimate objectives.

Representatives of the following organizations are recommended as likely participants: Corner Brook Port Corporation, City of Corner Brook, Humber Economic Development Board and Greater Corner Brook Board of Trade. Government partners like ACOA, INTRD, Department of Business, would be strategic allies who have their operational responsibilities within their own organizations.

Time Frame: Immediate

2. **Exporters Network:** The communications campaign with partner organizations and the initial Export Awareness sessions will help expand the list of interested companies. Once enough companies become eager to collaborate in promoting business development, form an Exporters Network. Once the players are identified, it is possible to communicate with them regarding export subjects. It does not matter how big the network is, rather it matters that companies and organizations can become more effective through participation and are committed to giving it an honest try. Companies can join when they are ready. The Corner Brook Exporters Network would be the delivery mechanism for programs to help companies move along the export continuum, from Export Awareness, to Export Readiness Assessment, to Export Preparation to Export Market Development Activity. This paper describes Export Readiness and a program has been identified to cost effectively lead a group of companies into a state of export readiness. .

The leadership team, especially those with INTRD, ACOA and the Board of Trade who are in routine contact with companies can help spread the word and recruit participants to the Exporters Network.

Timeframe: Within Q2 2009.

3. **Events Calendar:** Host events which profile exporters and export opportunities, outline export markets, share information on exporting, introduce service providers to export oriented companies, identify training opportunities, resources for exporters, and encourage participation from people interested in exporting from anywhere within Corner Brook and the surrounding area. Also engage people involved in training at colleges & universities, logistics and transportation partners, customers and channel partners from export markets and trade & investment officers from various Consulates. Organizations represented on the trade strategy leadership team could sponsor events that fit within their mandate, and that add an export flavour to existing events.

Examples of potential events include:

- **Going Global Workshops & Company Export Marketing Plans:** Host a series of six workshops as prepared by FITT, with an additional module on selling to the Canadian market outside of Newfoundland & Labrador. These are available with materials at minimal cost, and can be delivered by Internet as a self-learning tool for those companies that cannot attend the sessions in person. Add custom coaching for participating companies on the day of the workshop, such that each participant can complete the sessions having completed a viable export marketing plan. The company would be export ready and able to begin export market development activity.
- **Port Days:** Sponsored by the Corner Brook Port Corporation, this is an opportunity to inform the public and the business community about the Port activity and plans. For the benefit of shippers and importers, Port days can feature Oceanex as a transportation partner. Representatives of Oceanex markets from St. John's, Halifax, Montréal or any port beyond, could be invited to attend and promote their community. An exporter's session could put companies from Corner Brook together with the markets and the logistics partners, and could help build business for the Port's major shipping line. Trade & Investment partners and prospects could be invited to visit Corner Brook during Port Days as this would be an ideal environment to see the potential.
- **Export Showcase and Exporter Recognition Event:** An annual opportunity for the Greater Corner Brook Board of Trade to get exporters and service providers and the many organizations that support exporters to get together to hear about new programs and services and information as well as acknowledge those who are experiencing success in increasing exports. This could be a stand-alone event or a most interesting highlight of an existing Board event.
- **Corner Brook Community Profile:** The current profile, developed by the City of Corner Brook and posted on the web site, has excellent information and should be updated annually and presented to the trade & investment community, within Newfoundland & Labrador and in markets abroad, through the web site or PDF file. As discussed, it will be important that this be consistent with the standard, format and depth of document which the Department of Business envisions for major communities within the province.
- **Exporter Profiles:** INTRD could help expand the number and variety of exporters from the Western Region, profiled in the *Getting the Message Out* web site and promotional materials. More companies from the region could be recruited for Provincial and Federally sponsored Trade Missions. As more company profiles are available, they can be integrated into proactive marketing within sector strategies, and made available to partner agencies.
- **Corner Brook Board of Trade Familiarization Visits:** This on-going program where Board of Trade members visit other Boards and Chambers and, likewise, host visits from other chambers. These can be coupled with other events like the Oil &

Gas Symposium, or they can be stand alone events. This is similar to trade missions, perhaps less structured, but nonetheless an opportunity to build trade ties.

- **Trade Missions:** There is a busy trade mission calendar organized by INTRD, which includes both sector specific missions and multi-sector missions. Established relationships with New England and Ireland and Iceland, offer good first time exporter experiences, and new markets are added each year. As well INTRD is a major partner within regional missions such as Team Canada Atlantic, the Atlantic Canada Youth Missions, Atlantic Canada Consumer Products Trade Team, and there are openings for market ready companies from the Western Regions. Industry associations in ICT and Aerospace often take the lead in partnership with government on trade missions and trade delegations to major trade shows, and once again, market ready companies are always welcome. A tangible measurement of the short term effectiveness of the Exporters Network would be the increase in the number of companies from Corner Brook region that are attending these trade missions.

Timeframe: The opportunity here is to work within existing events and develop a calendar that keeps the focus on exports throughout the year. Ideally there would be a major event each quarter.

Action Plan: Investment Attraction

1. **Leadership Team:** The Leadership team identified within the Trade action plan would likely be the hands-on people with Investment Attraction. In each case, a more senior person within their organization should be available as an advisor and to get involved if the quality of opportunity for investment requires senior level contacts. The leadership team would share information and develop knowledge, skills and capacity within the investment attraction sector. There are a number of sources of information and organizations that can help develop the team's capacity. As well, there are people like industrial & commercial property developers, who will be at the forefront in investment attraction and the leadership team should find a way to include them. Recognizing that the Department of Business is the lead agency for all investment activities within the province, the Corner Brook leadership team will work closely with them and seek to achieve trusted partner status.

Timeframe: Immediate

2. **Community Profile:** Update the Corner Brook Community Profile and consider how this can be expanded to address the whole catchment area for which Corner Brook is the hub. It makes sense to generate as much synergy as possible with like-minded partners throughout all of the economic development regions which can use Corner Brook as their travel and trade gateway. If this can be done at some point formally within the Investment & Trade Strategy, it would make sense, although it does not need to be done at the outset. The material posted on the City of Corner Brook web site is quality information, comprehensive and useful and needs only to be kept current in order to address the investment targets.

Timeframe: Q1, 2009

3. **Develop Tools & Communication:** There are a number of tools and communications activities that would need to be in place, regardless of what organization is charged with developing the profile on the community and the opportunities for investors. The Investment attraction Action Plan should include the following:
- An investment attraction tool kit consisting of a Community Profile, a Tracking System for managing investment leads, cover letters and proposal formats & templates, web presence, and electronic sales brochure. **Q1**
 - Since an investment lead could come from a wide variety of sources, the sensitivity toward investment opportunities needs to be felt by a broad group of people, so proactive communication about what to do or who to contact when someone / anyone encounters and investment opportunity, should be prepared by the leadership team. **Q1**
 - Establish a tracking system for investment leads that will assist the Corner Brook Investment Partnership in moving potential investors along the process of commitment. The leadership team will need to think through the investment commitment process and identify additional information and tools that would help in achieving success. **Q1**
 - Identify a few key sectors, which provide the best opportunities for attracting outside investment. Corner Brook will naturally be interested in potential investors from any sector and will service them whenever they are identified, but there is merit in deciding on a few key sectors for proactive marketing. Since Corner Brook region is a centre of innovation in Natural Resources & Environmental Management, that sector is an obvious choice. So too is Oil & Gas, given the positive news and potential impact. Fish & Seafood are already major exports and as such should be a priority. It is possible to start with a few sectors and grow to embrace more as people and resources become available. **Q1**
 - Develop a list of Investment Attraction Partners and allies, with whom Corner Brook will want to maintain communication and keep updated on the positive business environment in the Western Region. This list would include investment attraction officers within the Province and ACOA, the manager of the NL Ambassador Program, key people within trade & investment portfolios at Canadian Consulates in markets of interest, senior business and community leaders in NL, and expatriates from Western Newfoundland who are living outside the region. Coordinate the communication strategy with Department of Business to ensure Corner Brook's message is fully integrated with the Provincial message. **Q2**
 - Starting modestly, with a network building vision, start to communicate with potential allies about significant events. Being careful not to overwhelm people with too frequent contact, communicate that Corner Brook is open for business, and ensure the highest possible level of attention is paid to each and every prospect for investing in the region or the province. Track every lead consistently and when a lead decides that Corner Brook is not the solution for them, help them find another place within Newfoundland & Labrador, Atlantic Canada or Canada that meets their needs. Corner Brook can have allies in other jurisdictions who may return the favour, and in any case the prospective investor may have other future projects for the Western region. **Q2**

- Be a learning group that shares information and insight. Allocate some time to thinking and planning and bring on partners in industry, academia, and community organizations to help inform the Investment partnership and the stakeholders on what is happening in sectors of interest in NL and around the world. Keep senior people in these stakeholder organizations informed on the work being done and the lessons learned, so that they are ever ready to help out when they are told they are needed.
On-going.
- Develop an action plan that involves more activity in markets outside NL, which can be scheduled for 2010. Concentrate first on getting a good working group and handling the basics; then, build a plan to be bolder and more aggressive in selling the region. Coordinate closely with Department of Business and with Federal Partners as activity moves outside the province. **Q4**