



EDC offers small business access to e-learning

OTTAWA -- September 10, 2003 - Export Development Canada (EDC), along with a coalition of partners, is offering small businesses the opportunity to learn online with the launch of a series of web-based business courses.

"Online learning offers small and medium sized businesses a fast, flexible and inexpensive way to keep up with the latest business knowledge and international trade issues," says Suzanne Morris, Vice-President Small Business Services, at EDC. "By learning at their own pace, business owners and their employees don't have to disrupt their operations, while enhancing their collective business skills and intelligence."

The new electronic service is being offered in partnership with the *E-Learning for Business* coalition, whose members include the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants, the Canadian Association of Management Consultants, Scotiabank, and the Canadian Society of Management Accountants of Canada (CMA). *Coalition members co-produce and co-market e-learning content to serve the needs of small and medium sized enterprises.*

Courses range from e-commerce and financial management to the Forum for International Trade Training's (FITT) well-known 'Going Global' program on export readiness and pursuit. EDC also has created a special course, *A Primer on International Trade*, to help smaller businesses better understand the scope and opportunities of international trade. The Primer includes an introduction to commercial contracts and the various payment risks associated with exporting.

"Our goal is to encourage small business to experience on-line learning and adopt e-business technologies to increase their opportunities for growth, profitability and competitiveness," says John Bulloch, founder and CEO of Vubiz Ltd., which created the *Coalition* learning channel. "We are very pleased to have EDC, a leader in helping to build Canada's export culture, as a *Coalition* partner."

This is the latest in a series of educational initiatives by EDC that includes scholarships at 25 universities across Canada, support for Junior Team Canada Trade Missions and funding for FITT. Small business exporters can gain free access to various courses on the site through EDC's Web portal, www.edc.ca/elearning.

EDC provides trade finance and risk management services to Canadian exporters and investors in up to 200 markets. Founded in 1944, EDC is a Crown corporation that operates as a commercial financial institution.

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