

Up & Running

A weekly look into lessons learned from new entrepreneurs

Small business connects countries

Very rewarding to bridge Canadian and Mexican businesses, entrepreneur says

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How do you drum up business in another country? Most entrepreneurs want to export

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Tips on selecting a seminar

There are hundreds of small business seminars presented each day across the GTA. A new entrepreneur could do nothing but attend seminars morning, noon and night. With so many organizations, clubs, companies, advisers and consultants staging seminars, it's important to carefully choose the right ones to attend. Look for:

- An expert. Anyone can stand up and present a topic. Look for a presenter who is a qualified expert on a topic you're interested in, such as accounting, marketing or law. Go to their

their products or services, but don't know how to go about it. "It really helps to partner with an organization or company that knows the market you're interested in," entrepreneur Idalia

about, such as "Marketing to Existing Customers" or "How to Incorporate Your Business."

- Reputable outfit. Consider the organization, club or company presenting the seminar. Have you heard of them? Usually, reputable groups want to stay that way by booking only good quality, knowledgeable seminar speakers.

- Affordable price. Attending a good quality seminar shouldn't cost a lot. While prices will vary, a higher seminar fee doesn't necessarily guarantee a quality speaker. You can enjoy some fantastic seminars for less than

Obregon says.

Obregon's company, called Exito Trade Consulting Inc. (www.exito.com), helps Canadian consulting engineering firms develop business in the Mexican market. The company deals specifically with firms that offer mechanical, industrial and environmental engineering consulting services.

Up and running for two years, Obregon says she started her cross-border connection business because it combined her passions of developing business relationships and promoting Mexico. "There are so many ways both countries can help each other," she says. "Each country possesses expertise in areas such as technology, the environment, energy and economics. I really enjoy matching up the talents of Canadian and Mexican professionals for mutual benefit."

Exito Trade Consulting has all the right connections and an office in Mexico to promote the services

of their clients. The company is also very much involved with the Hispanic business community in Canada and professional associations that involve Hispanics, engineering, the environment, energy and international trade.

Obregon is president of the Toronto Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (THCC), a dynamic organization connecting Canadians with Hispanics in Latin America. Among many other activities, the Chamber provides information, training seminars and networking opportunities to entrepreneurs and professionals serving Hispanics in the Greater Toronto Area.

The THCC is hosting a one-day series of business seminars called "The Ultimate Guide to Become an Entrepreneur" on March 11 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Toronto Reference Library. Anyone interested in attending the event may contact the THCC at 416-241-4556 for details.



Entrepreneur Idalia Obregon connects Canadian and Mexican businesses.