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Publication des Chambres de Commerce Canado-Suisse de l'Ontario et du Québec

April/May Avril/Mai 2014

Feature/Reportage:

Presentation of the Swiss Business Hub Canada

Présentation du Swiss Business Hub Canada

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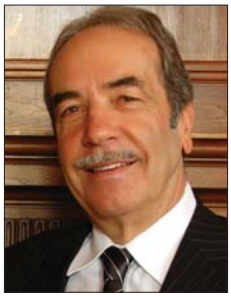
Dear Members,



The rough winter in Canada is behind us and the unpredictable weather in Switzerland, where I spent a lot of time skiing, was less of a discussion point than the political turmoil in Europe. The winter Olympics were fun to watch and both Canadians and the Swiss had successful results.

As you probably know, the Swiss voters narrowly approved tighter immigration control that will pose a direct challenge to the free movement of people in Europe, a key pillar to the whole edifice of the European Union. Switzerland not being a member of EU has broad agreements with Brussels and the Swiss had agreed to its rules on freedom of trade and movement of capital – which are all now in doubt. Measures will likely strain relations with the biggest trading partner being the European Union. The Swiss Government is now under a lot of pressure to come up with legislation imposing immigration quotas and to negotiate with Brussels on how to manage that legislation. In Europe, Switzerland has by far the highest percentage (23.3%) of foreigners and the proponents of this referendum and their political party had so far little to offer how all these challenges could be solved. This outcome will certainly have a big influence on business, especially affecting plans of foreign firms that were trying to open business in Switzerland.

This could also have an impact on Canadian firms that SCCC would be happy to assist establishing themselves in Switzerland.

With the recent closing of the Consulate General of Switzerland in Toronto and the departure of the Swiss Business Hub (SBH) to Montreal, the SCCC has decided to fill this gap by making its local network and intelligence available to Swiss SMEs who are interested in exploring the Canadian market. Our internal experts in various fields have a long-standing experience in Canada's largest and economically most important city, and generally they also have a close affiliation to Switzerland and thus represent great value to our potential clients. SCCC is presently working very closely with one Swiss client and the task force for this project has offered our services. We are also in close cooperation with Switzerland Global Enterprise and its Swiss Business Hub in Montreal; please see the article in this issue.

Our Annual General Meeting is approaching very fast (April 23, 2014) and I am looking forward to seeing you then and to be able to reporting progress of our new directions.

Yours sincerely,

Ernst Notz, President

2014 COMING EVENTS

April 23	Annual General Meeting at the King Edward Hotel
May 13	Swiss Night at Marché
June 10	Golf Tournament at King's Riding Golf Club
June 15	World Cup Soccer Event: Switzerland - Ecuador
June 20	World Cup Soccer Event: Switzerland - France
June 25	World Cup Soccer Event: Honduras - Switzerland
July 8	Swiss Night on the Patio
August 19	Pub Night with the British Chamber
November 15	Gala Dinner Dance

Further Information can be found on **www.swissbiz.ca/upcoming_events**
Dates above are subject to change

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Chères et chers membres,

Il n'est pas coutume que ce mot soit écrit par une autre personne que le Président du Conseil d'administration, mais les circonstances l'y obligent.

En effet, à notre grand regret, notre Président a récemment dû se retirer de ses fonctions pour raisons de santé.

Au nom de tous mes collègues, je tiens à souhaiter un prompt rétablissement à Jean Serge que nous espérons revoir rapidement parmi nous.

Pendant la durée de son absence, j'ai été désigné comme Président ad interim. Dans mes nouvelles tâches, je suis appuyé par Monica Schirdewahn ainsi que par tous les autres membres du conseil. Je les remercie de leur collaboration et de leur soutien.

Nous vous assurons que nous allons continuer à œuvrer envers ce qui a été entrepris et travailler ensemble pour assurer le suivi et la continuation de l'évolution de la Chambre.

Par ailleurs, la réalisation de notre nouveau site web suit son cours et vous aurez bientôt l'occasion de le découvrir, d'en apprécier son innovation, sa convivialité ainsi que son nouveau design.

Lorsque vous aurez cette nouvelle édition de l'info suisse dans les mains ou que vous serez en train de la lire sur notre site internet, l'hiver rigoureux que nous avons connu sera derrière nous et la préparation de notre tournoi golf bien avancée. Nous en profitons pour vous rappeler que celui-ci aura lieu le lundi 2 juin au Club de Golf Withlok, à Hudson. Je vous suggère d'effectuer votre réservation le plus rapidement possible en raison de sa grande popularité.

Notre traditionnelle soirée raclette de février, organisée par Bruno Setz, a remporté un vif succès. Vous trouverez les photos à la section –nouvelles de votre chambre-. Un grand merci à tous ceux qui ont contribué au succès de cette soirée et à nos généreux commanditaires.

D'autres événements sont en cours de préparation et vous recevrez prochainement les invitations y relatives.

Dans cette édition, vous découvrirez une présentation du Swiss Business Hub complètement réorganisé qui vient de déménager à Montréal. Celui-ci est dirigé Canada par Markus Reubi, nouvellement arrivé de Suisse. La Chambre aura le plaisir de travailler en étroite collaboration avec le Hub.

En attendant le plaisir de vous retrouver très prochainement, je vous souhaite un très bon printemps.

Bien cordialement,

Olivier Rodriguez
Président ad interim du Conseil d'administration.

ÉVÉNEMENTS / UPCOMING EVENTS 2014

24 Avril / April 24th	Événement Swiss Business Hub Canada
15 mai / May 15th	Départ de l'Ambassadeur / Farewell for the Ambassador
Date a déterminer / TBA	AGM
2 Juin 2014 / June 2nd 2014	Tournoi de Golf / Golf Tournament

Des événements supplémentaires seront ajoutés au fur et à mesure
Additional events will be added as soon as the dates will be known
Dates sujettes à changement / Dates are subject to change
INFORMATION et détails/and details : www.cccsqc.ca ou/or (514) 937-5822

SWITZERLAND GLOBAL ENTERPRISE
enabling new business

ENABLING NEW SWISS BUSINESS IN CANADA

At the beginning of 2014, Markus Reubi took over the management of the Swiss Business Hub Canada from his predecessor Caroline Blaser. Based in Montreal, he works closely with the internationalization promotion agency, Switzerland Global Enterprise, as well as with a network of partners and experts in Canada to support Swiss small and medium enterprises entering the Canadian market. In his presentation, the 40 year old diplomat elaborates on the organizational setup, the service portfolio as well as the goals of the Swiss Business Hub.

Export-oriented small and medium enterprises (SME) in Switzerland are getting off to a good start in the new year. Export sentiment heading into 2014 hasn't been this sanguine since mid-2011. Although the individual sectors of industry vary in their optimism, the growth is geographically broad-based. Demand for Swiss products looks poised to rise in practically all major customer markets, according to the findings of the SME export indicator produced by Credit Suisse and Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE).

For many years Canada has been a popular export destination which offers a stable market environment. Swiss exports to the North American country reached a record high of CHF 3.23 billion in 2013 (+ almost 8% compared to 2012). The free trade agreement with Canada, which has been in force since 2009, also provides a constant additional boost to the bilateral trade. And there is definitely a potential for further development and growth.

It is against this background and generally positive market environment that the Swiss Business Hub Canada (SBH) opened the door to its new premises within the Consulate General of Switzerland in Montreal at the beginning of 2014.

PART OF THE SWISS GOVERNMENT'S EXPORT PROMOTION PROGRAM

As an integral part of the Swiss federal government's export promotion program, the SBHs' intention is to supplement private

initiative by identifying and exploiting market opportunities in Canada, positioning Swiss exporters as internationally competitive providers and supporting access of Swiss companies to foreign markets. The SBH Canada used to be part of the SBH USA until 2009 and is today one of 21 independent business hubs operating on four continents around the world. It is run jointly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the network of embassies and consulates as well as by S-GE.

For the SBH, close collaboration with Switzerland Global Enterprise, formerly known as Osec, is key and takes place on a daily basis. S-GE was founded as a non-profit association in Lausanne in 1927. It informs, advises and guides SMEs from Switzerland and Liechtenstein in their international business ventures. It links companies, experts and private and public organizations around the world, thus facilitating efficient promotion of foreign trade. Apart from export promotion, S-GE has also been responsible for promoting Switzerland as a business location abroad since the beginning of 2008, as well as for promoting imports from selected developing and transition countries. These current mandates are defined in service agreements with the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs and last until 2015.

There is no doubt that being part of the Swiss export promotion program provides for synergies and creates trust among SMEs in Switzerland as well as partners in Canada.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES PROVIDED THANKS TO A NETWORK OF EXPERTS AND PARTNERS IN CANADA

Typically, SMEs from Switzerland and Liechtenstein ask S-GE or the SBH for support when they want to expand and achieve success abroad. Whether they are exporting for the first time or planning to expand their international presence, they will be offered the correct support in each case. Products and services are targeted, personalized and modular and they range from information on markets and export know how to consulting in analysis, strategy or implementation. Providing contacts to business partners and companies as well as to governmental authorities, be it by means of organizing meetings, fact finding missions or trade fare participation is also part of the service portfolio.

The particular advantages S-GE/SBH offer are its experience and competence in internationalization, the neutrality of their advice and the global network. Building up and maintaining a network of experts in various fields in Canada – the so called "export directory" – as well as establishing and developing mutually beneficial relationships with partners like the chambers of commerce, the Swiss business community in Canada in general as well as Canadian promotion agencies and other actors is certainly one of the most important tasks of the SBH.

MAIN GOALS FOR THE SBH CANADA IN 2014

After several changes in recent years, the main goal of the SBH Canada is to basically consolidate its organizational structure and network in Canada. The fact that the new office is now located in Montreal can be

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an advantage, given the growing interest among companies from the French-speaking part of Switzerland and also given the particularities of east Canada. However, simultaneously having a presence and developing the network in all of Canada's other economic centres including Toronto remains a strategic goal of the SBH. This is why the head of the SBH will travel quite frequently within Canada and is open to suggestions on how collaboration, particularly with the Swiss Canadian Chambers of Commerce, could be developed. Several promising discussions have started and will continue in this regard.

Another main goal is the creation of an efficient, targeted trend spotting throughout Canada. It cannot be taken it for granted that every company in Switzerland or Liechtenstein automatically thinks of Canada when looking for new market opportunities abroad. Therefore, providing them with timely, accurate and targeted information about new trends and opportunities can be very beneficial. Such a trend spotting system, of course, cannot be built up throughout all of Canada and across all industries. Identifying the right areas – for instance in life sciences and clean technologies including transportation and energy – is a challenge, just like getting access to the necessary specific information and the right contact person. The so called *country consulting days Canada*, which take place twice a year in Zürich/Lausanne and which provide interested companies with an opportunity to register for an individual meeting with the S-GE country consultant and the head of the SBH, as well as regular contacts with companies in Switzerland can be used to channel such kind of information. Our experts and partners are most welcome to approach the SBH for trends in their particular field of expertise.

Achieving these goals will most certainly help us to increase the number of Swiss companies the SBH assists in their export activities to Canada, to increase awareness of Switzerland as a prime location for investments in Canada and to strengthen Switzerland as an economic hub. In all its activities, the SBH thrives to be a strong and trusted partner for its clients, the cantons and the Swiss government, with a global network of experienced advisers and experts.

Markus Reubi has many years' experience of working in the internationalization sector. He has studied law at the University of St.Gallen/Switzerland. Prior to starting his new job at the SBH Canada, he worked in management consultancy and in various positions for the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) for more than ten years, including in Berne, Algeria and China.

ENABLING NEW BUSINESS : DÉBOUCHÉS POUR LA SUISSE AU CANADA

Au début de 2014, Markus Reubi prenait la direction du Swiss Business Hub Canada, assurant ainsi la relève de sa prédécesseure Caroline Blaser. Établi à Montréal, il travaille de près avec Switzerland Global Enterprise, une agence de promotion de l'internationalisation des petites et moyennes entreprises, en plus de collaborer avec un réseau canadien de partenaires et d'experts afin de favoriser l'introduction des entreprises suisses dans le marché canadien. Dans l'exposé qui suit, le diplomate de 40 ans présente la structure organisationnelle, la gamme des services offerts ainsi que les objectifs du Swiss Business Hub.

Les PME suisses misant sur l'exportation ont le vent dans les voiles en ce début d'année. La dernière fois que la situation des PME d'exportation a été si favorable remonte à 2011. Bien que chacun des secteurs de l'industrie connaisse des variations, la croissance observée couvre une large zone géographique. La demande pour les produits suisses s'annonce en forte augmentation dans pratiquement tous les principaux marchés de consommation, selon les conclusions de l'indicateur export des PME produit par Crédit Suisse et Switzerland Global Enterprise (S-GE).

Depuis plusieurs années, le Canada est populaire auprès des exportateurs en raison de ses conditions de marché stables. Les exportations suisses au Canada ont atteint le chiffre record de 3,23 milliards de francs suisses en 2013 (+8 % par rapport à 2012). De plus, l'accord de libre-échange conclu avec le Canada, en vigueur depuis 2009, apporte un soutien constant au commerce bilatéral. Enfin, nous croyons au potentiel de développement et de croissance de ce commerce.

C'est dans ce contexte et en raison des conditions de marché généralement favorables que le Swiss Business Hub (SBH) Canada a ouvert une porte sur de nouvelles

possibilités en établissant son siège au Consulat général de Suisse à Montréal au début de 2014.

PARTIE INTÉGRANTE DU PROGRAMME DU GOUVERNEMENT SUISSE POUR LA PROMOTION DE L'EXPORTATION

Dans le cadre du programme du gouvernement fédéral suisse pour la promotion des exportations, les objectifs du SBH sont de bonifier les investissements privés en identifiant et en exploitant les occasions d'affaires sur le marché canadien, de positionner les exportateurs suisses en tant que fournisseurs compétitifs à l'échelle internationale et de favoriser les chances des entreprises suisses d'accéder aux marchés étrangers. Le SBH Canada a fait partie du SBH USA jusqu'en 2009. Il compte aujourd'hui parmi les 21 Business Hubs indépendants en activité sur quatre continents. Il est dirigé conjointement par le ministère des Affaires étrangères, par l'entremise du réseau d'ambassades et de consulats, et par S-GE.

Pour le SBH, une étroite collaboration avec Switzerland Global Enterprise, connue auparavant comme l'Osec, est un élément clé qui doit faire partie du quotidien. S-GE est une organisation à but non lucratif fondée à Lausanne en 1927. Son mandat consiste à informer et à conseiller les PME suisses et liechtensteinoises et à les accompagner dans le développement de leurs activités à l'international. Son action repose sur la mise en réseau des entreprises, des spécialistes et des organisations publiques et privées du monde entier afin de soutenir efficacement l'économie extérieure de la Suisse. En plus de la promotion des exportations, S-GE est également chargée depuis 2008 de promouvoir la place économique de la Suisse à l'étranger ainsi que d'encourager les importations en faveur de certains pays partenaires. Ces mandats actuels sont définis dans les conventions de services avec le Secrétariat d'État à l'économie suisse et seront en vigueur jusqu'en 2015.

Il ne fait aucun doute que de faire partie du programme de promotion des exportations suisses assure la création de synergies et de relations de confiance entre les PME suisses et leurs partenaires d'affaires au Canada.

DES PRODUITS ET SERVICES OFFERTS GRÂCE À UN RÉSEAU D'EXPERTS ET DE PARTENAIRES CANADIENS

Généralement, les PME de Suisse et du Liechtenstein font appel aux services de S-GE ou du SBH pour obtenir du soutien lorsqu'ils tentent d'étendre leurs activités à l'étranger. Que ces entreprises exportent pour la première fois ou qu'elles soient en train de planifier leur percée à l'échelle internationale, elles obtiennent le soutien approprié pour leur situation particulière. Ciblés, personnalisés et modulaires, les produits et services vont de la diffusion d'information sur les marchés et l'exportation aux conseils en analyse, en stratégie et en mise en œuvre. L'établissement de contacts avec des partenaires d'affaires, des entreprises ainsi que des autorités gouvernementales, que ce soit par l'entremise de réunions, de missions d'enquête ou de salons commerciaux, fait également partie du portefeuille des services.

Les avantages des services offerts par S-GE et le SBH résident surtout dans leur expérience et leur expertise en matière d'internationalisation, dans la neutralité des

conseils donnés ainsi que dans la richesse de leur réseau mondial. Parmi les principales tâches du SBH, mentionnons la mise en place et le maintien d'un réseau d'experts canadiens issus de différents secteurs – aussi appelé « Expert Directory » – ainsi que la création et le développement de relations d'affaires mutuellement bénéfiques avec des partenaires tels que les chambres de commerce, la communauté suisse des affaires au Canada de manière générale de même que les agences de promotion du Canada et autres principaux acteurs économiques.

PRINCIPAUX OBJECTIFS DU SBH CANADA EN 2014

Après plusieurs changements survenus au cours des dernières années, le principal objectif du SBH Canada consiste à consolider sa structure organisationnelle ainsi que son réseau au Canada. Le fait que le nouveau bureau soit situé à Montréal peut représenter un avantage étant donné l'intérêt croissant des entreprises situées dans les régions francophones de la Suisse, et aussi en raison des particularités de l'Est canadien. Cependant, assurer la présence du SBH et développer un réseau dans l'ensemble des centres économiques du Canada, notamment dans la région de Toronto, demeure un objectif stratégique. C'est pourquoi le chef du SBH effectuera des déplacements fréquents au Canada, en plus de demeurer ouvert aux suggestions permettant de

développer encore la collaboration avec ses différents partenaires, en particulier avec la Chambre de Commerce Canado-Suisse. De nombreuses discussions prometteuses à cet effet sont déjà en cours et nous avons l'intention de poursuivre sur cette voie.

Nous avons également pour objectif de créer un outil efficace d'anticipation des tendances de consommation dans l'ensemble du Canada. Nous ne pouvons tenir pour acquis que toute entreprise située en Suisse ou au Liechtenstein pense systématiquement au Canada lorsqu'elle cherche de nouvelles possibilités d'affaires à l'étranger. Par conséquent, avoir accès au moment opportun à des renseignements ciblés et exacts sur les dernières tendances de consommation pourrait être très bénéfique. Mais un tel système d'identification des tendances du marché ne peut être mis sur pied dans l'ensemble du Canada et pour tous les types d'industries. Identifier des secteurs potentiels – par exemple les sciences de la vie et les technologies propres, y compris ceux du transport et de l'énergie – représente un réel défi, tout comme l'obtention de renseignements spécifiques et le contact avec les personnes-ressources clés. L'événement « Entretien pays Canada », qui a lieu deux fois par année à Zurich/Lausanne, donne la possibilité aux entreprises intéressées de s'inscrire à une rencontre individuelle avec un conseiller de S-GE de même qu'avec le chef du SBH. Nous entrons aussi régulièrement en contact avec des entreprises suisses pour obtenir ce type de renseignements. Nos experts et nos partenaires sont d'ailleurs cordialement invités à communiquer avec le SBH pour nous parler des différentes tendances dans leur champ d'expertise.

L'atteinte de ces objectifs nous aidera sans aucun doute à augmenter le nombre d'entreprises suisses faisant appel au SBH pour leur prêter main-forte dans leurs activités d'exportation au Canada, à attirer davantage l'attention de la Suisse sur le Canada comme partenaire de choix pour les investissements et de renforcer l'image de la Suisse comme pôle économique. Dans toutes ses activités, le SBH aspire à devenir un partenaire solide et digne de confiance, pour ses clients, les cantons et le gouvernement suisse, en offrant un réseau international de conseillers chevronnés et d'experts.

Markus Reubi cumule plusieurs années d'expérience dans le développement à l'international. Avant d'entrer au Swiss Business Hub Canada, ce juriste diplômé de l'Université de Saint-Gall, en Suisse, a travaillé comme conseiller d'entreprise. Depuis 2003, il a occupé différents postes au Département fédéral des affaires étrangères (DFAE), notamment à Berne, de même qu'en Algérie et en Chine. ■

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APPOINTMENT OF MRS. MARINA BELZILE AS HONORARY CONSUL OF SWITZERLAND IN QUEBEC CITY

Mrs. Marina Belzile was appointed Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Quebec City on January 10th, 2014. Mrs. Belzile has replaced Mr. Gérard Philippin; now retired, after having promoted Swiss interests in the Quebec City area during the past 12 years. Reporting to the Consul General of Switzerland in Montreal, Mrs. Belzile's duties include the representation of the Consulate General at various political, cultural, scientific, economic and commercial related events. Mrs. Belzile maintains and continues to develop the network of numerous contacts linked to Switzerland. Also, in collaboration with the Consulate General, she provides support to Swiss nationals in situations of emergency. However, the Honorary Consul is not responsible for consular issues nor is she responsible for administrative matters. Swiss citizens requiring consular assistance are asked to contact the Consulate General in Montreal directly.

Mrs. Marina Belzile

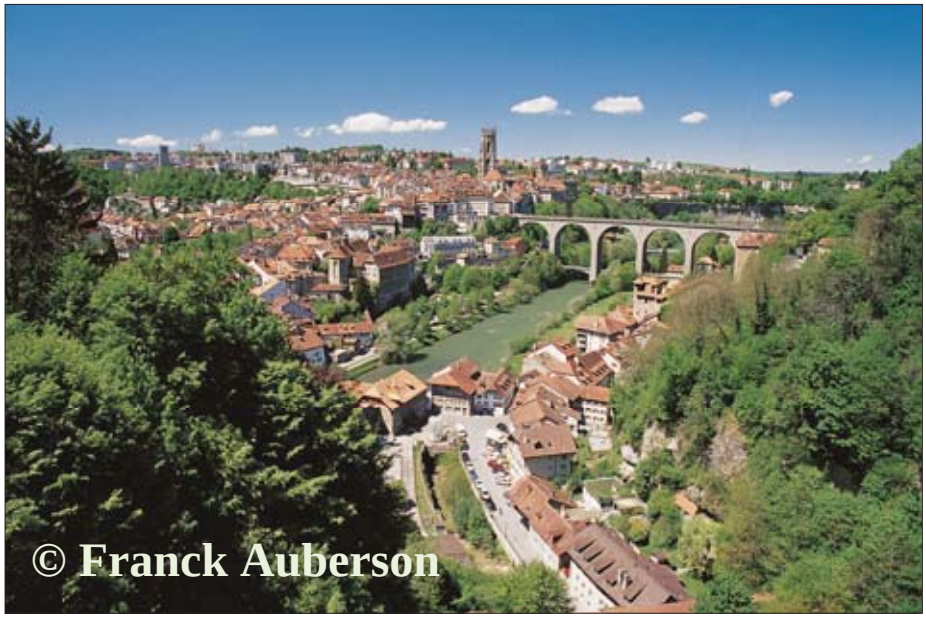
Mrs. Belzile is from Lugano/TI and has Canadian citizenship. Married and the mother of two children, she owns a successful travel agency in Quebec City. Mrs. Belzile organizes guided excursions for individual tourists and, due to ongoing mandates with the Quebec Government and the Quebec Tourism Bureau; she offers specialized tours to visiting foreign dignitaries.

UPCOMING APPOINTMENT OF MRS. KATHY UTIGARD AS HONORARY CONSUL OF SWITZERLAND IN TORONTO

Mrs. Kathy Utigard will be appointed Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Toronto effective June 1st, 2014. Reporting to the Consul General of Switzerland in Montreal, her duties will include the representation of the Consulate General at various political,

cultural, scientific, economic and commercial related events. Mrs. Utigard will maintain and develop the network of numerous contacts linked to Switzerland. Also, in collaboration with the Consulate General, she will provide support to Swiss nationals in situations of emergency. However, the Honorary Consul will not be responsible for consular issues nor will she be responsible for administrative matters. Swiss citizens requiring consular assistance are asked to contact the Consulate General in Montreal directly.

Mrs. Utigard has occupied several positions in different fields during her 30 years in Canada including previous occupations with the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (Ontario), Switzerland Tourism, the Canadian travel industry and a few private businesses. Employed by the Consulate General of Switzerland in Toronto, until its final closure on April 30th 2014, Mrs Utigard remains an active member of various professional, cultural and Swiss associations. ■



WELCOME TO THE STATE OF FRIBOURG, AN IDEAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT AND BUSINESS LOCATION

We can refer to a love story between Canada and Switzerland. Many similarities bring us together, such as the multicultural environment or our vital trade with powerful neighbor countries, but also the importance for our economies of a dense network of small and medium-size innovative companies. Led by entrepreneurs who are focused on providing quality products and services, our companies can rely on a skilled and dedicated workforce fueled by a recognized educational and training system. To identify possible synergies between our companies and support their respective developments on the European and American continents, the Fribourg Development Agency makes regular visits to companies in Canada. Below is a brief portrait of the canton of Fribourg, which would not be complete without emphasizing the major importance of ice hockey in Fribourg life as well as the prominent role played by the Fribourg Gotteron ice-hockey club and its key Canadian players in the heart of the Fribourg population.

ABOUT FRIBOURG

With about 300,000 inhabitants, the Canton (State) of Fribourg has the youngest population in Switzerland and is experiencing the strongest demographic growth in the country. 68% of its population speak French and 29% German as their "mother tongue", making Fribourg one of Switzerland's three officially bilingual Cantons. English, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese are also widely spoken. This multilingual population allows companies to access the main cultural communities in Switzerland, Europe and the World. In comparison with the major Swiss

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agglomerations, the cost of living and operational costs for companies are perceptibly lower in Fribourg.

AT THE HEART OF SWITZERLAND AND EUROPE

The Canton of Fribourg is situated on the main road and rail networks of Switzerland and Europe. Nearly a fifth of the Swiss population (1.5 million people) lives within 45 minutes of the Canton. Switzerland's main centers and airports (Basle, Berne, Geneva, Zurich) are all accessible between 30 to 90 minutes. Neighboring countries – Germany, France, Italy and Austria – are easily accessible by Rail and road as well.

STRONG HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

In addition to a cosmopolitan university attended by more than 10,000 students, Fribourg has a further five academic institutions (technical colleges and institutes) including the schools of engineering and architecture, management, social work, health and education. The Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, set to launch a new presence in Fribourg, is located less than one hour away from the city of Fribourg. Specialized institutes of learning are also established in the Canton, providing professional training in trade, food technology, music, art, multimedia and hospitality. At almost all levels, instruction is given in

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French and German, as well as in English in the case of postgraduate courses.

A DYNAMIC ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Fribourg's economic fabric is characterized by its dynamism and diversity. The canton's geographic location and multilingual population make it an ideal location for the Swiss and European headquarters of international companies. Exports account for 59% of the Canton's GDP (Swiss average: 36%). Precision instruments, watches, jewelry, pharmaceutical and chemicals products, machinery and electronics represent the main export sectors. More than 18,000 firms domiciled in Fribourg are listed in the commercial register. The unemployment rate in 2013 was 2.7% (3.2% for Switzerland). The State of Fribourg, which is under a constitutional obligation to submit a balanced budget, has no debt and enjoys a very solid financial situation.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Companies that want to locate in the Canton can benefit from the Scientific and Technological Center of the Canton of Fribourg (PST-FR), which includes over 200 partners. The core is made up of three thematic clusters: the Plastics Processing Network, the Energy and Construction Network, and the IT Valley Cluster. Two centers of expertise, the Nanotechnology cluster and Cleantech Fribourg complete the PST-FR, which encourages productivity and the creation of high value-added jobs by financing research projects and promoting the transfer of technology to all companies in the region.

AN AMBITIOUS TECHNOLOGICAL PARK

Work is currently in progress on the blue FACTORY innovation district, located in the center of the city of Fribourg. Switzerland's first "zero carbon" park is aimed primarily at innovative high-tech companies in business sectors such as life sciences, biomedical, materials, plastics processing, nanotechnology, energy and information sciences. Several technological platforms are scheduled to start operation in 2014. Created under a partnership between the city and the State, the blueFACTORY innovation district heralds the start of a new era in Fribourg's competitiveness.

A LARGE NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES

Many well-known global companies have selected Fribourg to be their home, including Alcon Pharmaceuticals (USA), Bayer International (Germany), Bio-Rad Laboratories (USA), Bongrain (France), Cartier/Richemont International (France/Switzerland), Inditex (Spain), Johnson Electric (China), Ladurée (France), Liebherr (Germany), Magtrol (USA), Mapei (Italy), Meggitt Sensing Systems (United Kingdom), Michelin (France), Nespresso (Switzerland), Nestlé (Switzerland), Nova Chemicals (Canada), Novartis (Switzerland), Otis (USA), Pall (USA), PartyLite/Blyth Industries (USA), Phonak (Switzerland), RotoPrecision (Canada), Scott Sports (USA), Tetra Pak (Sweden), Torstar (Canada), Tupperware (USA), UCB Farchim (Belgium), VeriSign (USA) and Wago Contact (Germany).

A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT FOR ALL YOUR NEEDS

The Fribourg Development Agency is on hand to advise and guide you through the many different support mechanisms and opportunities offered by the Canton of Fribourg. A project manager will help you to engage with specialists and experts from the private sector and public administration, and to resolve any concerns or questions on issues such as financial support, tax relief, locating the right site, recruiting staff, making contact with higher education establishments, etc. I'm looking forward to your contact:

Christophe Gevisier,
Director International Markets
Fribourg Development Agency
Switzerland
www.fribourgswitzerland.com
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BIENVENUE DANS LE CANTON DE FRIBOURG, UN LIEU DE VIE ET D'IMPLANTATION IDÉAL EN SUISSE

On peut parler d'histoire d'amour entre le Canada et la Suisse. De nombreuses similitudes nous rapprochent, telles que l'environnement multiculturel ou nos échanges économiques vitaux avec de puissants pays voisins, mais aussi l'importance pour nos économies d'un réseau dense de petites et moyennes entreprises innovantes. Conduites par des entrepreneurs focalisés

sur la qualité des produits et services fournis, nos entreprises peuvent s'appuyer sur de la main d'oeuvre qualifiée et dévouée, issue d'un système de formation reconnu. Pour identifier les synergies possibles entre nos entreprises et soutenir leurs développements respectifs sur les continents européen et américain, la Promotion économique du canton de Fribourg effectue des visites régulières d'entreprises au Canada. Voici un bref portrait du canton de Fribourg, qui ne serait pas complet sans relever l'importance majeure du hockey sur glace dans la vie fribourgeoise et de la place prépondérante qu'occupe le club fétiche de Fribourg Gottéron et ses joueurs-clés canadiens dans le coeur des Fribourgeois.

FRIBOURG EN BREF

Fort de quelque 300'000 habitants, le canton de Fribourg a la population la plus jeune de Suisse et connaît l'une des croissances démographiques les plus rapides du pays. Aujourd'hui, 68% de la population parle français en langue principale et 29% allemand, ce qui fait de Fribourg l'un des trois cantons officiellement bilingues du pays. L'anglais, l'italien, l'espagnol et le portugais sont également des langues largement répandues. Ce plurilinguisme permet aux entreprises d'avoir accès aux grandes communautés culturelles, ainsi qu'aux plus importants marchés européens et internationaux. En comparaison avec les grandes agglomérations suisses, le coût de la vie et les coûts opérationnels pour les entreprises sont sensiblement moins élevés à Fribourg.

AU COEUR DE LA SUISSE ET DE L'EUROPE

Le canton de Fribourg est situé sur les principaux axes routiers et ferroviaires de Suisse et d'Europe. Le territoire cantonal est accessible en moins de 45 minutes par 1,5 million de personnes, soit le cinquième de la population suisse. De Fribourg, on atteint les principaux centres et aéroports de Suisse (Bâle, Berne, Genève, Zurich) entre 30 et 90 minutes. Les pays limitrophes – Allemagne, France, Italie, Autriche – sont également accessibles facilement par le rail et la route.

UNE GRANDE DENSITÉ DE HAUTES ÉCOLES

En plus d'une université cosmopolite, qui compte plus de 10'000 étudiants, on trouve à Fribourg cinq hautes écoles: d'ingénieurs et d'architectes, de gestion, de travail social, de santé et de pédagogie. L'Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, qui disposera bientôt d'une antenne sur sol fribourgeois, se situe à moins d'une heure de trajet de la ville de Fribourg. Des écoles spécialisées sont aussi établies dans le canton, couvrant les domaines du commerce, de l'alimentaire, de la musique, de l'art, du multimédia et de la formation hôtelière. A presque tous les niveaux, l'enseignement est donné en

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UN TISSU ÉCONOMIQUE DYNAMIQUE

Le tissu économique fribourgeois se caractérise par son dynamisme et sa diversité. La situation géographique et le plurilinguisme du canton en font un lieu d'implantation privilégié pour les sièges suisses et européens d'entreprises internationales. La part des exportations dans le produit intérieur brut (PIB) est de 59% (moyenne suisse: 36%). Les instruments de précision, l'horlogerie, la bijouterie, les produits pharmaceutiques et chimiques, les machines et l'électronique sont les principaux secteurs d'exportation. Plus de 18'000 entreprises sont inscrites au registre du commerce du canton de Fribourg. Le taux de chômage 2013 s'élève à 2,7% (Suisse 3,2%). L'Etat de Fribourg, qui dispose de l'obligation constitutionnelle de présenter

un budget équilibré, n'affiche aucune dette et dispose d'une situation financière saine.

DES OPPORTUNITÉS DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

Les entreprises qui veulent s'implanter dans le canton peuvent bénéficier du réseau du Pôle scientifique et technologique du canton de Fribourg (PST-FR), qui regroupe plus de 200 partenaires. Trois clusters thématiques en constituent le noyau: le Réseau plasturgie, le Réseau énergie & bâtiment et le Cluster IT Valley. Deux pôles de compétences en nanotechnologies et en cleantech complètent le PST-FR, qui encourage la création

de valeur ajoutée en finançant des projets de recherche et en favorisant le transfert de technologie vers toutes les entreprises de la région.

UN PARC TECHNOLOGIQUE AMBITIEUX

Le quartier d'innovation blueFACTORY, en plein développement, se situe au centre de la ville de Fribourg. Premier parc «zéro carbone» de Suisse, il accueillera prioritairement des entreprises high-tech innovantes, dans des secteurs d'activité comme les sciences de la vie, le biomédical, les matériaux, la plasturgie, les nanotechnologies, l'énergie ou les sciences de l'information. Plusieurs plateformes technologiques démarreront leurs activités en 2014. Fruit d'un partenariat entre la ville et l'Etat, le parc d'innovation blueFACTORY ouvre une ère nouvelle pour la compétitivité fribourgeoise.

UN GRAND NOMBRE DE SOCIÉTÉS INTERNATIONALS

De nombreuses entreprises opérant sur le marché mondial ont choisi le canton de Fribourg, parmi lesquelles Alcon Pharmaceuticals (Etats-Unis), Bayer International (Allemagne), Bio-Rad Laboratories (Etats-Unis), Bongrain (France), Cartier/Richemont International (France/Suisse), Inditex (Espagne), Johnson Electric (Chine), Ladurée (France), Liebherr (Allemagne), Magtrol (Etats-Unis), Mapei

(Italie), Meggitt Sensing Systems (Royaume-Uni), Michelin (France), Nespresso (Suisse), Nestlé (Suisse), Nova Chemicals (Canada), Novartis (Suisse), Otis (Etats-Unis), Pall (Etats-Unis), PartyLite/Blyth Industries Etats-Unis), Phonak (Suisse), RotoPrecision (Canada), Scott Sports (Etats-Unis), Tetra Pak (Suède), Torstar (Canada), Tupperware (Etats-Unis), UCB Farchim (Belgique), VeriSign (Etats-Unis) ou encore Wago Contact (Allemagne).

UN SEUL CONTACT POUR TOUS VOS BESOINS

La Promotion économique se tient à votre disposition pour vous conseiller et vous orienter parmi les nombreuses possibilités de soutien qu'offre le canton de Fribourg. Un coordinateur de projet vous aidera à entrer en relation avec les spécialistes compétents de l'économie privée et de l'administration, afin de résoudre toutes les questions liées à l'obtention d'un soutien financier ou d'allégements fiscaux, la recherche d'un site optimal, le recrutement de personnel, la prise de contact avec les établissements de formation supérieure, etc.

Je me réjouis de votre prochain contact:
Christophe Gevisier
Directeur Marchés Internationaux
Promotion économique du canton de Fribourg – Suisse
www.fribourgswitzerland.com
cgevisier@fribourgswitzerland.com
tél.: +41 79 230 74 71

Quote of the Month

There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure"
by Colin Powell

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AN INCONVENIENT PEOPLE

By: Beat J. Guldimann, LLD

An Ethiopian airliner was diverted earlier this year to Geneva International Airport by a hijacker that was looking to become a refugee in the Alps. When this happened, the Swiss became the joke of the day as it transpired that the Swiss Air Force was only set up to protect Helvetic airspace during normal office hours. Many are wondering why the Swiss are even sporting an air force when they rely on NATO forces to protect the country from intruders between five pm and eight am.

Later this year, the Swiss will go to the polls and vote on whether the Nine-to-five air force should get new fighter jets built by Saab of Sweden. Billions of dollars are at stake and the voting populace may just put another blow to a government that over the past years has consistently lost credibility with its people.

As I have examined in previous Tribeca Insights, the direct democratic system in Switzerland awards voters more power than any other democracy on the globe. The instruments of constitutional initiative and referendum bring Swiss voters to the polls not only to elect the legislature, but also to decide on a variety of political issues. Often four times a year, not once every four years as is common in most other democracies.

For decades, a rather tame people has typically sided with parliament and voted down most proposals put to referendum. Recently, however, this has changed. In 2009, the Swiss have famously voted a clause prohibiting the erection of minarets into the constitution. Shock and indignation was ubiquitous, while the minaret vote was generally chalked up as an aberration.

In the wake of absurd compensation practices at some of the country's leading listed companies, Swiss voters have introduced a constitutional amendment last year that puts the decision on executive compensation into the hands of shareholders. Much to the surprise of the Swiss elite, Swiss voters became the defenders of corporate governance. All of a sudden, "the people" started to become a bit of a problem.

When the Swiss went to the polls earlier this month to vote on forcing the government to re-establish immigration quota despite the country's deal with the European Union on freedom of movement, forecasters had a hard time figuring out which way this vote would go. In an extremely tight battle between nationalistic elements from the right and the established parties from the left to the centre, the nationalists won a very narrow victory of 50.3%.

The slimmest of majorities has spoken, voting their hearts on growing frustration with the effects of rapid population growth in the tiny country, all of which were seemingly attributed to unrestricted immigration under EU treaties.

The reaction from Brussels, Berlin and Paris was swift. European leaders were quick to tell the Swiss that they couldn't have their cake and eat it, too. Free movement of people across the EU, and into Switzerland was non negotiable. If the Swiss wanted to continue free trade with the union, they had to accept all kinds of migrants crossing the border, without any restrictions.

The Swiss government is now between a rock and a hard place. They need to legislate immigration quota within three years without breaking existing agreements with the EU. A tricky exercise indeed, and one for which they can't count on support and

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understanding from the likes of EU President Barroso or French President Hollande.

The European leadership is already taking retaliatory measures by delaying cooperation agreements in other areas, such as electricity or canceling cooperation with Swiss universities on research projects and student exchange. The pressures will only get bigger and the dialogue, between Paris and Bern in particular, nastier.

At the core of French and European anger lies deep-rooted, and probably justified, fear of their own people. The Swiss are not alone in their discomfort with current immigration policy. If voters in EU member states had the power to bring immigration to a vote, the results would be very similar to what we have seen in Switzerland.

With European parliament votes coming up later this year, it is widely expected that nationalist parties in France, the Netherlands and England will rise and send an increased contingent of Euro-critics to Strasbourg. The concern is that in these three countries in particular, success in the European elections will be a harbinger of what is to come in the next national election cycle.

What the European political elite are afraid of are not so much the irreverent Swiss but their own people, and the inspiration they find in the freedom the Swiss have in shaping the political landscape. A fear well justified, if you consider the stubbornly high unemployment rates in the "latin" core of the Union and the negative effect that the introduction of the Euro had on households from Portugal to Greece.

The beauty of direct democracy is that it keeps governments in check as the people get to vote on a variety of issues on a regular basis. Even more importantly, the largest benefit of a democratic system is its remoteness from the back-room culture that has become so pervasive in the parliamentary process everywhere.

Voters decide anonymously, no party whip can control their vote, no hand washes the other at the polls. The Swiss system is not perfect and admittedly inconvenient for the political elites but it is highly effective in giving the people the power to redirect the country on a path that is aligned with the majority. No surprise that people across the European Union take inspiration from the guts demonstrated by the Swiss.

Beat Guldimann, owner of Tribeca Consulting Group, holds a Doctorate in Law from the University of Basel; he was legal counsel at the former SBC (86-96), President and CEO of UBS Canada (97-01), Head of Global Private Banking at CIBC (01-04) and Vice-Chairman at Hampton Securities (05-07).

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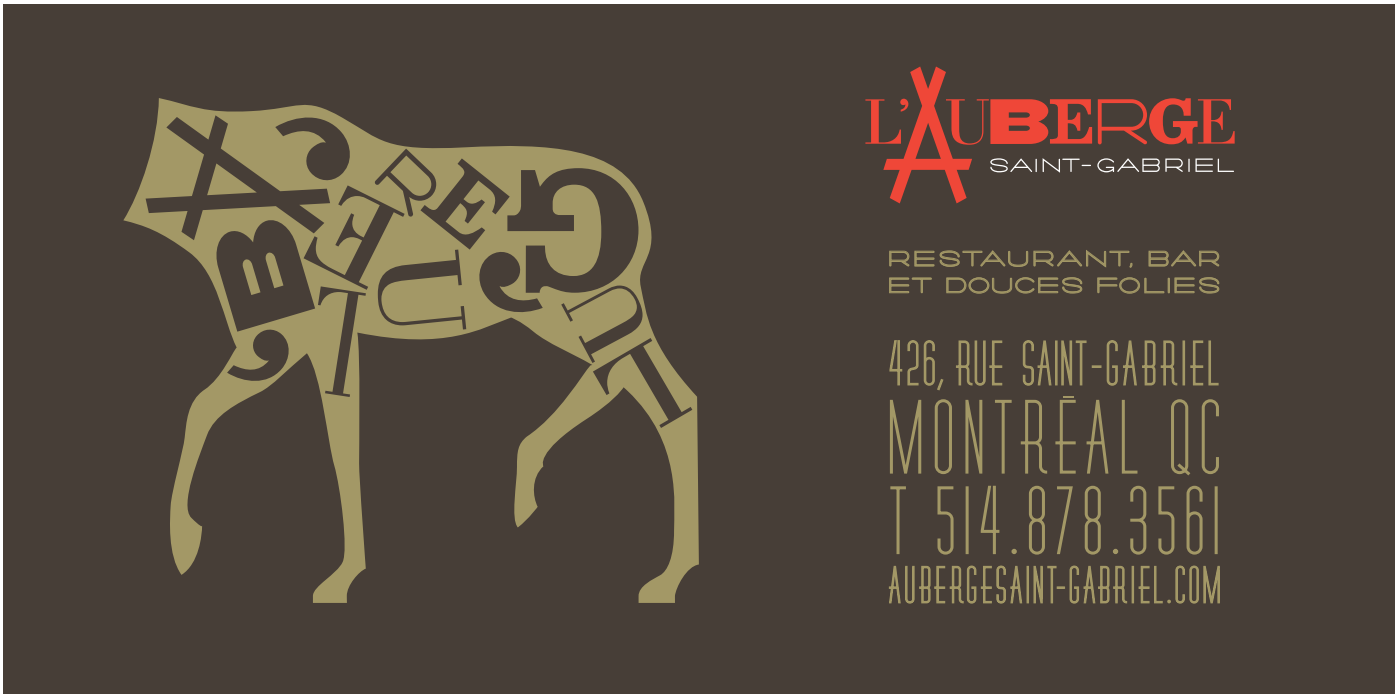

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Article provided by Swiss Tourism, more information can be found on www.myswitzerland.com

In Zurich the winter officially ends with the traditional "Sechseläuten" holiday which literally means the ringing of the six o'clock bells and is usually on the third Sunday/Monday in April (one week later if it happens to coincide with Easter). The spring festival should actually be held in March but it was postponed by one month because the weather was usually unreliable. The famous Sechseläuten dates back to 1818 when a guild (trade association) was first formed and held **night-time processions** -– on horseback and with a musical accompaniment. By the following year there were already several guilds parading through the town to music and carrying flares, and by 1820 there were initial signs of a coordinated procession. The first Sechseläuten procession took place in 1839, with all the guilds taking part. Since 1862 the Sechseläuten has culminated in the burning of the giant "**Böögg**", an 80 kg "snowman" over three metres tall which is filled with fireworks and set alight at 18:00 hours sharp. When the head of the Böögg explodes, it signals the official end of winter. Tradition has it that the quicker it explodes, the hotter and longer the summer will be. Other spring customs that create a regional spectacle every year include the rousing **Chalandamarz** bell procession in the Engadin valley, the **Vignolage** ceremony in Sierre accompanied by pipes and drums, the singing children at the **Feuillu** parade in Cartigny, and the **Auffahrts-Umritt** procession in Beromünster. The «**Eierläset**» egg race festival is an ancient spring tradition and fertility ritual to banish the winter practised by local gymnastics clubs in many villages in the cantons of Aargau, **Solothurn** and **Basel-Land**. Two tracks are laid out, each one containing 80 to 100 heaps of sawdust with an egg in each heap. There are two opposing teams, one representing winter and the other representing spring. Each team has several runners and one or two catchers. The **race between spring and winter** then commences. The runners sprint to the egg which is furthest away, pick it up, hurry back and throw it to the catcher who is holding a large basket. If an egg falls on the ground the runner has to go back and cover the distance again, but without picking up another egg and taking it to the catcher. The same task is repeated by all the other runners in the team. There is also a special task every 10 eggs. The team which is first to collect all the eggs and take them to the catcher wins, but occasionally the players will bend the rules to make sure that spring prevails. Some villages in the canton of **Aargau** add their own twist to the event by introducing characters with elaborately designed costumes, such as the «Schnäggehüsler» in a snail shell costume, the «**Stächpälmler**» dressed as a holly bush, or the «Pfarrer» who is a priest figure. These characters are meant to represent the winter or spring and symbolic fights break out between the two sides while the race is going on.

PASSIONTIDE AND EASTER

Easter is central to Christianity and therefore many customs also have a religious background. Every region celebrates in its own way – but the "Eiertütsche" egg battle is known all over Switzerland and involves hitting the tip of an opponent's egg with the tip of the most decorative egg. The person whose egg breaks has to give it to the owner of the winning egg. In the city of Bern the "**Eiertütschen**" is a public event which is held in the old part of town – reviving a local custom which had almost died out until recently. The ancient Zurich tradition of the "**Zwänzgerle**" Easter egg game takes some skill and the custom was designed to provide a bit of extra pocket money for the children (although it has not been adapted to inflation for technical reasons). The rules are simple. The children stand facing the adults holding up their hard-boiled decorated eggs and the adults have to throw small coins at the eggs. The aim is to get the coins to rest on the eggs. If the coin drops then the child keeps the egg and the coin, but if the "Zwänzgerli" coin stays on the egg then the person who threw it keeps the egg and the coin. The **Easter processions in Mendrisio** are re-enactments of Christ's walk to Golgotha, with some 200 people playing the part of Jews and Romans who were involved in the crucifixion of Christ. This tradition goes back to at least 1600 or thereabouts. Another custom is linked to an ancient 15th century tradition called the **Pleureuses von Romont**. As soon as the Bible reading of the Passion narrative reaches the point of mourning for Jesus, a group of women with veiled faces and clothed in black begins its procession. They carry the emblems of Christ's martyrdom on scarlet cushions, namely the crown of thorns, scourges, nails, hammer and pincers. The Virgin Mary leads the procession with the one who atoned, bearing the cross. Other customs include the **Clefele** in Schwyz at which schoolchildren make a rattling sound with their "Clefeli" (little hand-held boards with notches for fingers), the festive **Palm Sunday processions** in the canton of Lucerne, and the **Surrexit-Singen** in Estavayer-le-Lac where men proclaim the Easter message at midnight in song, accompanied by brass instruments – starting in front of the church, then in the cemetery and finally in the whole village. ■

S.O.S. FONDUE A DE LA "SUISSE DANS LES IDEES"!

Originaires de Lausanne, Sandrine et Gérald Golay sont arrivés au Québec, plus précisément à Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts dans les Laurentides, en octobre 2010, avec leurs deux enfants, aujourd'hui âgés de 18 et 15 ans. D'abord intéressés par la reprise d'un gîte touristique, ils ont finalement renoncé à ce projet pour toucher à plusieurs domaines et se familiariser avec la mentalité et les habitudes de vie locales. Deux ans après leur installation, ils ont fini par se lancer dans l'aventure S.O.S. Fondue... Un virage à 180 degrés pour Gérald, ancien journaliste sportif et Sandrine, photolithographe de formation. « Jamais nous n'aurions cru nous retrouver à la tête d'une compagnie, et encore moins de fondues, ici au Québec! C'est un peu la confirmation de l'image qu'on se fait de l'Amérique du Nord où tout est possible... », relève ce couple de quarantenaires mariés depuis 21 ans.

Encouragés pas des amis et voisins québécois conquis par leur fondue au fromage, Sandrine et Gérald ont créé leur société en décembre 2012. Ils ont rapidement constaté que les Québécois sont de grands consommateurs de fromage et que nombre d'entre eux possèdent déjà tout le matériel nécessaire pour la déguster en famille ou entre amis. Rapidement, ils ont été motivés par le fait que le choix proposé par les grandes surfaces n'offrait qu'une piètre qualité de produit. « Il n'existait aucun choix de fondue suisse artisanale, rien que des sachets industriels, certes bon marché et qui proviennent de Suisse mais qui n'ont qu'un lointain goût d'une authentique fondue », relève volontiers Gérald, fier de porter hautes les couleurs de la Suisse et de régaler les vrais amoureux de fromage.

POINTS DE VENTE EN AUGMENTATION

Après avoir trouvé l'importateur de fromages suisses le plus proche de chez eux, le couple vaudois lance un concept basé sur le service à domicile, dans un rayon allant de Montréal à Tremblant. Composé d'un sachet contenant le mélange de fromage et d'un autre avec le vin et le reste des ingrédients, leur « kit » se prépare en 5 minutes et ne demande aucun autre effort que de mélanger le tout dans son caquelon. « Chauffez, remuez avec une cuillère en bois, servez et dégustez avec votre pain préféré, c'est tout! », relève l'étiquette collée sur les sachets. Sur simple appel ou courriel, les clients sont livrés le jour même ou le lendemain selon leur emplacement géographique.

Depuis cet hiver, la petite compagnie a

évolué et propose en parallèle une dizaine de points de vente dans les Laurentides. Leur objectif est de couvrir assez rapidement un plus grand territoire en trouvant place, par exemple, du côté de Québec ou Gatineau. Mais la famille Golay pense à l'avenir développer d'autres horizons en développant un système de franchise en Ontario ou dans les stations de skis de l'ouest canadien par exemple. « Le succès de nos fondues nous donne des ailes... Si des compatriotes sont intéressés à développer notre produit dans leur région, nous serons heureux d'étudier toute proposition », se réjouit Gérald.

DEUX RECETTES ORIGINALES

Dans leur atelier de fabrication situé dans le sous-sol de leur maison de Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts, Sandrine et Gérald concoctent deux recettes de fondue artisanales: « La Suissesse » et « L'Edelweiss ». La première est une recette traditionnelle composée de Gruyères, d'Emmental, de vin, d'ail et bien entendu d'une pointe de kirsch! La deuxième recette constitue la fierté de la famille. Composée d'un savant mélange d'herbes et d'épices, cette fondue a été inventée dans

les années 70 par la tante de Gérald. Servie dans le restaurant de sa conceptrice dans la banlieue lausannoise, cette fondue connaissait un succès phénoménal.

Le décès prématuré de cette femme a relégué la fondue aux oubliettes dans les années 80, n'étant plus mangée que par les membres de la famille, à qui la recette avait été confiée. C'est donc ici au Canada que Sandrine et Gérald ont fait revivre ce plat... « Une recette aussi bien protégée qu'un coffre d'une banque suisse » aiment-ils à relever lorsqu'ils ont affaire aux questions des plus curieux concernant les précieux ingrédients... « Seules 6 personnes connaissent la recette, tous membres de ma famille », ajoute Gérald le sourire aux lèvres.

SERVICE TRAITEUR

Ces deux Lausannois de souche ne manquent pas d'idées pour développer leur compagnie. Un service traiteur complet est ainsi également proposé. Sept jours sur sept, ils se déplacent avec leur matériel complet pour un 5 à 7, une soirée d'anniversaire ou pour toute manifestation privée ou publique. Secondés parfois par leurs enfants, Gérald et Sandrine proposent les produits S.O.S. Fondue dans bon nombre de marchés et de festivals tout au long de l'année. Vous pourrez ainsi les retrouver à Val-David ou à Mont-Tremblant tous les samedis à partir de la fin du mois de mai. Et en profiter pour avoir à votre tour de la Suisse dans les idées...

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WTAS GLOBAL OPENS NEW OFFICE IN GENEVA

WTAS Global announces further expansion with the opening of a new office in Geneva, Switzerland this spring. The Geneva office is the third WTAS Global location established in the past eight months and reinforces the firm's objective of providing best-in-class service to its clients whose needs are increasingly international in nature.

"Establishing a location in Geneva is a logical extension of our larger global strategy which is to be in those locations that allow us to best serve our clients," shared Mark Vorsatz, CEO of WTAS and Chair of WTAS Global Management Council.

Hervè-Antoine Couderc, Co-Founding Partner of STC Partners (WTAS France), will serve as the Office Managing Partner of the Geneva location and will be joined by Christian Couderc, another Managing Director and four staff.

"An office in Geneva has been part of our plan for several months," said Hervè-Antoine. "This new location bridges our Paris and Zurich locations and is essential to ensuring best-in-class service for our corporate, individual and private equity clients."

genae OPENS OFFICES IN SWITZERLAND

genae, a global Contract Research Organization (CRO) and services provider for the medical devices industries, today announced the incorporation of genae International AG.

The centrally located Swiss services facility will support the group's expanding operations and forms the second base in Europe.

"The Swiss offices reflect the growing demand of our strategic partners to provide local presence and tailored support," said Bart Segers, CEO at genae. "With local anchoring, we aim at accelerating high-quality and cost-contained recruitment and execution of our medical device trials in Switzerland and other European countries."

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BARING ASSET MANAGEMENT OPENS OFFICE IN GENEVA, TO CATER FOR PRIVATE BANKS

Baring Asset Management has opened an office in Geneva, and named Véronique Fournier to head it up, in the new role of head of Switzerland and global head of private banking.

The new office is located on Rue de Rhône, in the centre of Geneva's central business district.

Here, Fournier's role will be to market Baring Asset Managements range of mutual funds to Switzerland's private banks, many of which have been boosting their asset management operations in recent years.

Fournier comes to Barings from Schroder Investment Management, where she was relationship director of its Global Financial Institutions group, initially for six years in London, then for five years in Geneva. ■

The winner of the tickets to fly to Switzerland I. Mousseau with B. Setz (middle) and A. Kraeuchi

QUELQUES MOTS SUR NOTRE SOIRÉE RACLETTE

Notre soirée raclette du 19 février dernier à l'Auberge Saint-Gabriel, a, comme de coutume, remporté un très vif succès.

Bruno Setz a organisé de main de maître cette superbe soirée avec l'appui d'Andreas Krauchi et de Gabriella Spineti. Nous les remercions vivement de leur implication et de leurs efforts. Cependant, il n'y a pas de raclette sans racleurs, ainsi, nos remerciements vont également à nos racleurs Marc Bolay, Richard Dill, Olivier Schlegel ainsi qu'Alex Volery.

De plus, nous souhaitons souligner la participation de nos généreux commanditaires qui ont fait d'heureux gagnants :

Auberge Saint-Gabriel, Busch Vacuum, Chocolats Suisses, Consulat Général de Suisse, Marketing de Fromages Suisses, Nespresso Canada, Swiss International Air Lines, Charton Hobbs, Saucisson Vaudois, Orchestre Métropolitain, Musée Grévin & Newtown.

Our "racleurs" from left M. Bolet, A. Volery, R. Dill and O. Schlegel

Le prix très convoité de deux billets d'avion à destination de la Confédération Helvétique, gracieuseté de Swiss, a été remporté par Madame Isabelle Mousseau.

Olivier Rodriguez
Crédit des photos: Zabell Photo

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TRANSPORTATION NEWS

LAS VEGAS: NEW EDELWEISS FLIGHTS TO ZURICH.

Edelweiss Air, a member of the Swiss International Air lines family, will add service to Las Vegas. Edelweiss will begin nonstop flights to and from Las Vegas starting on May 5, with twice weekly service on Mondays and Fridays.

More: edelweissair.ch/en/destinations/

A SWISS PEAK PASS OFFER THAT'S UNSTOPPABLE.

Spectacular views, stunning rides, simple access – all this and more awaits you when exploring the scenic splendors of the Swiss Alps with the Swiss Travel System. Some of Switzerland's majestic peaks can be discovered via mountain trains and cable cars when booking a 4- or 8-day Swiss Peak Pass in addition to the consecutive 4- or 8-day Swiss Pass. With the Swiss Peak Pass you'll have access to 8 specific Swiss Peaks like the Mt. Allalin, the Mt. Brienzer Rothorn or the Mt. Stanserhorn. This offer is available between January 1 and December 23.

More: raileurope.com/activities/swiss-peak-pass/index.html

BIENVENUE AUX NOUVEAUX MEMBRES

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OTHER TRAVEL NEWS

FIND THE BEST SWISS HOTELS THE EASY WAY.

Are you looking for a great hotel for your next vacation in Switzerland? Thanks to the new «Best Swiss Hotels» App, created by Switzerland Tourism, that's a breeze. The app allows you to chose various criteria, such as type of hotel (for instance in the mountains, near water or in the city) or the number of stars. Once you find the perfect one, you can directly book your rooms. The app can be downloaded from the iTunes App or the Google Play Store and works on iPhones, iPads and Android Smartphones.

More: myswitzerland.com/en-us/about-switzerland/apps-panoramas/best-swiss-hotels.html

SHOWING AT A APT STATION NEAR YOU: REAL RAIL ADVENTURES SWITZERLAND.

The awe and wonder of the Alps exhilarate travelers and the engineering marvels of mountain railways mesmerize. Majesty and machines join in Switzerland and in this new public television special from APT. «Real Rail Adventures: Switzerland» showcases the construction marvels and visual splendors of the Swiss rail system. From world-class main lines, to stunning scenic routes, to pioneering steam locomotives and historic cog trains, host Jeff Wilson celebrates the triumphs of Swiss engineering over unbelievably challenging terrain. Many of Switzerland's harrowing trestles, world-class bridges and improbable tunnels are highlighted in «Real Rail Adventures: Switzerland».

More: www.smarttravels.tv/RealRailTV/ ■

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DISCOVER SWITZERLAND
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Tours Chanteclerc, Switzerland Tourism and Swiss International Air Lines have become partners to propose "Swiss Moments", offering new travel ideas. Each holiday package provides a pre-established itinerary, combining flights, hotels and trains. The Swiss Travel System transportation network is always on time! Therefore, anywhere in the country, you'll find it easy to get from one city to another.

Would you like to explore Switzerland the relaxing way ? Travelling by train, boat or postalbus is an ideal way to go from point to point within Switzerland, without any stress.

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- **How will I get to the hotels ?** Since the selected hotels are situated close to the railway stations, a short walk will take you to your hotel.
- **Are the proposed itineraries too short ?** No problem, just book extra overnight stays before, during or at the end of your holiday package.
- **Would you prefer a customized itinerary ?** Tell us what you would like and we prepare it for you.
- **Do you prefer to drive ?** We can offer you a car leasing contract with Avis or a Renault buy back plan (achat-rachat).

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NON-RESIDENTS CARRYING ON BUSINESS IN CANADA – PART 2

Part 1 can be found in the December 2013/ January 2014 edition of info suisse or on the website www.cunningham.ca

More and more non-resident companies are expanding into Canada. Often these non-resident companies do not realize that by carrying on a business in Canada, even if they do not incorporate a Canadian corporation, they assume domestic tax obligations and responsibilities. It is important that non-residents recognize these obligations and responsibilities and seek Canadian tax and legal advice prior to selling their goods or services in Canada. This paper summarizes some of the more significant Canadian tax issues that non-resident companies must consider when carrying on business in Canada directly.

OBLIGATION TO FILE A CANADIAN INCOME TAX RETURN AND THE VOLUNTARY DISCLOSURES PROGRAM

If a non-resident corporation carries on business in Canada but is not subject to Canadian income tax because it does not have a "permanent establishment" based on the relevant tax treaty, the non-resident corporation will still have an obligation to file a Canadian corporate income tax return.

This corporate income tax return is an information-based return and is commonly referred to as a "Treaty Based" tax return. **A Canadian corporate income tax return is due no later than six months after its fiscal year-end and there are penalties for non-compliance**.

If a non-resident corporation has been carrying on business in Canada for several years and has never filed a Canadian tax return and has never received a request to file a Canadian income tax return, it may be eligible to make a disclosure under the Canada Revenue Agency's Voluntary Disclosures Program. This is an amnesty program that has the authority to waive penalties for taxpayers who have not been compliant with their Canadian tax reporting and filing obligations.

PROVIDING SERVICES IN CANADA AND WITHHOLDING TAXES

Under Canadian domestic tax law, every person in Canada who makes a payment to a non-resident for services performed while the non-resident is physically present in Canada (or its employees are physically present) is required to withhold 15% of the gross amount paid. The withheld amount(s)

must be remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency on behalf of the non-resident.

As discussed above, if the non-resident does not have a "permanent establishment" in Canada and it is a resident in a country that Canada has signed a tax treaty with, it will not be subject to Canadian income taxes. Therefore, when it files its annual "Treaty-Based" tax return, the non- resident will receive a refund of any monies withheld and remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency by the payor.

Alternatively, a non-resident may be able to apply for a "Treaty-Based Regulation 105 Waiver" to exempt it from being subject to the 15% withholding requirement. A waiver may be granted by the Canada Revenue Agency when a contract or agreement requires a non-resident corporation (or its employees) to be physically present in Canada for 180 days or less.

EMPLOYER TAX ISSUES, OBLIGATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT INCOME

A non-resident corporation who sends one or more of its employees to perform services in Canada will be required to follow Canadian domestic payroll tax law and will be subject to the following obligations:

- The non-resident will be required to register with the Canada Revenue Agency for Canadian payroll purposes;
- The non-resident will be required to withhold a prescribed amount of Canadian personal income taxes from each pay cheque on behalf of each individual employee in respect of employment services performed while s/he is physically present in Canada. The withheld amounts will have to be remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency on a timely basis in accordance with prescribed due dates;
- The non-resident may be required to withhold, remit and/or make Canadian Pension Plan and Employment Insurance contributions to the Canada Revenue Agency (U.S. resident employers are generally exempt from this requirement).

Salaries, wages and other remuneration earned by a non- resident employee will be taxable in Canada to the extent that the employee does not meet an exception found in the relevant tax treaty.

Canada's tax treaties will exempt income in respect of an employment exercised in Canada if the non-resident employee is present in Canada for 183 days or less in any twelve month period.

Under the provisions of the Canada-U.S. Tax Treaty, employment income earned by a U.S. employee while present in Canada will also be exempt from Canadian income tax if the annual amount does not exceed $10,000 Canadian.

If a non-resident individual's employment income is exempt from Canadian income taxes under one of Canada's tax treaties, the employee can file, or the employer and employee can jointly apply for, a "Treaty-Based Regulation 102 Waiver". If the waiver application is accepted by the Canada Revenue Agency, the non-resident employer will be absolved of the Canadian personal income tax withholding requirements.

HARMONIZED SALES TAX (HST) / GOODS & SERVICES TAX (GST) FOR NON-RESIDENTS

GST is a tax that applies to most goods and services sold in Canada. Most provinces in Canada have combined their provincial sales tax regime with the federally administered GST. This single combined tax is referred to as HST. The HST rate ranges between 13% - 15% depending on the participating province. For provinces that have not combined their provincial sales tax regime with the GST, the GST rate is 5% and is charged in addition to the province's sales tax.

Non-residents who are "carrying on business" in Canada must register and charge GST or HST on most goods and services they sell in Canada when their revenues in Canada exceed $30,000. Alternatively, a non-resident who is "carrying on business" in Canada can voluntarily register and charge the GST and HST rather than wait until their sales exceed the $30,000 threshold. GST/ HST registrants are entitled to claim the GST/HST paid on expenditures used in their business as a refund, commonly referred to as an input tax credit (ITC). Any ITCs claimed can offset any GST/ HST collected. The difference must either be remitted to the Canada Revenue Agency (i.e. GST/ HST collected exceeds the ITCs) or will be refunded (i.e. ITCs exceed the GST/ HST collected).

Whether a person is "carrying on business" in Canada for the purposes of GST/ HST is a question requiring the consideration of all relevant facts. A non-resident can be "carrying on business" in Canada for the purposes of GST/ HST even if it does not have a "permanent establishment" in Canada.

By Cunningham LLP, Chartered Accountants, Toronto
For more tax and accounting information or if you have any questions, please follow Cunningham LLP on Twitter @CunninghamLLP or contact Paul Girolametto at paul@cunninghamca.com, by telephone at 416-496-1051 x254 or visit their website www.cunninghamca.com ■

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How to become a member of the SCCC:

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or contact our office at sccc@swissbiz.ca or 416-236-0039

Karin can be reached at 1-647-401-5274 or by e-mail at karin@karicosolutions.com; you may also visit her website at www.karicosolutions.com

REBOOT YOUR CORPORATE CULTURE WITH 5 SIMPLE STEPS

by Karin Lindner

A business must know what it stands for and so must the employees who work there. Would you agree?

These days many organizations are broken, at least from the standpoint of employee engagement. The lack of employee engagement is costing a company anywhere from 35 % to 50 % of their payroll. What do you think, is your company's payroll an investment or an expense?

If you want to discover the sexiness of your business, it is vital to focus on the culture that you want to create. Culture comes from the inside out and this will get attention and help you to stand out from your competition. The building, the machines, processes and procedures are important but the people who work there can either make or break your business success. The foundation for employee engagement is trust, dialogue and direction. What would it be like to attract the best attitude, skill and talent because of the reputation your company has?

In our fast paced and extremely competitive world there is no more room for complexity. There is simply no time for more boxes and dotted lines. Our times have changed and with that we have to start changing our beliefs about what works and what doesn't. We have to learn how to cooperate with each other because if we don't, we will waste unnecessary time, money and energy.

Just between you and me, what keeps you awake at night?

Have you ever thought what your ideal work-environment would be like? It is all about having a positive image in your mind. You won't be able to manufacture your future if you are not able to "see" your desired end result.

How do people interact? How is their attitude? Do they willingly cooperate? Are the individuals in one department able to understand how their work impacts the people around them? How is respect demonstrated? What's the energy like? Will creativity and innovation be welcomed and appreciated? Is everyone outcome oriented instead of task oriented? Does your team know how their efforts affect the big picture?

I love asking these questions because these questions help you to visualize a better tomorrow instead of focusing on what you don't like, don't have and don't want. It has been said that energy flows where attention goes.

Why do you want to see change? In what areas would you like to see change? Are you personally willing to learn and to grow?

Your personal attitude in this discovery process is and will be critical. How open are YOU to learn new skills, perspectives and techniques, and more importantly how willing are you to apply them? Either you blame or you get into the game. It is important to understand that a reflection of yourself will be mirrored back to you in your work environment on a daily basis.

What's exciting for some may be stressful for others. Consider all perspectives as possibilities, and consciously choose your actions and reactions today and every day.

You create your reality. Just like that!

I am not a big fan of "complicated". Complicated is hard to achieve, comes with a lot of frustration and doesn't keep you motivated. Who wants that?

My philosophy in life and in business is KIS=S: Keeping it simple is sexy.

You can apply these simple steps in your personal and professional life. It doesn't matter if you are the president of the organization, a manager, a supervisor, an office employee, or a team member of the workforce. Reboot your life and reboot your culture. Nobody can do everything but everybody can do something. Teaching each other and becoming life long learners is key.

Here are 5 simple steps to get started:

1. **Enough is enough:** Make the decision that you will do everything it takes – ethically, morally, and legally of course – to create the change you want to see. It is a mindset of commitment and dedication for a cause. Why do you want to see change? Your "why" has to be strong enough to keep you going when the going gets tough.
2. **Know what you want:** Utilize positive language, clearly communicate your desired outcomes. You have to be able to see with your mind's eye. Write your "want to haves" on paper and be as specific as you can.
3. **Replace 1 bad habit with 1 good habit:** Negative personal and organizational habits are hard to break. Is this true or is this just a belief that doesn't serve us? After all, a belief is nothing more than a thought that we keep thinking. If you focus on transforming one habit into another, many other positive aspects will start to magically appear.
4. **Refuse to accept the status quo:** Become curious about people, standards, processes and general ways of doing things. Don't be stuck in the past, ask powerful questions instead. Is there a better way of doing business? Is there a better way of being? Is there a better way of working together? Progress is impossible without change. There is a better way for most aspects in business and in life.
5. **Work harder on yourself than on others:** It is indeed so much easier to focus on other people's faults instead of improving ourselves. Did you know that we judge ourselves by our intentions, yet we judge others by their actions? Be an inspiration for others to learn and to grow but stay focused at the same time. Who knows what will you be able to discover if you start your journey of self-improvement.

If you learn something new, you become someone new.

Something to Think About. ■

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