

Doing Business In Dubai: Some Key Lessons

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As set out in our [International Business Development Strategy 2012-15](#), ITAC continues to organize overseas trade missions that encourage the adoption of best practice in international business development strategies for emerging Canadian ICT companies and present ongoing opportunities for international engagement and business development.

In January, we took six Canadian health informatics companies to Dubai, during the Arab Health Conference, which is one of world's most significant health sector conferences. Our goal was to begin looking at Dubai as the launching pad for further exploration of opportunities in the Middle East, Africa, Eastern Europe, and parts of the Asian market.

Our team was well briefed by Canada's trade commissioners in Dubai, who told participants what to expect and provided insight into the operating environment in the Gulf Co-operation Council, which incorporates six countries in the region. In addition, the partners of Bennett Jones' Dubai office hosted a session to walk our participants through how to do business in the region. A Bennett Jones senior partner also provided an introduction to some of the region's key players, in both the public and private sectors.

What became obvious to the delegates is that the region holds tremendous opportunities for Canadian companies; the level of spending and the sense of urgency around it were palpable.

It is clear that, to succeed in the region, Canadian companies must be committed to enter the market, maintain their presence, and build relationships.

We recognize that these international business efforts cannot be a 'one-shot deal', and with that in mind there are plans in place to potentially revisit the region during GITEX Technology Week in October.

Stay tuned for further developments.