



Sustaining Maine's Global Connections

2020 Annual Report



Maine International
Trade Center

mitc.com



President's Letter

Dear MITC Members and Friends:

"Needless to say, 2020 has not gone as planned."

No, it did not. And whenever I spoke those words in the past few months, everyone on the Zoom screen smiled. Why? Because we all knew the feeling. Plans made for the year were out the window by March, and revised plans were updated more than a few times after that.

This year, I've spent a lot of time reading and reflecting on leadership, managing in a crisis, and keeping one's own emotions in check. One insight I picked up along the way was about resilience: it isn't about bouncing back; it's about bouncing forward. It's not about how we return to the way things were in January 2020, but about using this time to propel us into the future. What will we bring with us? And what will we leave behind?

Rather than use all the 2020 cliches that we all know by heart, I prefer to frame the MITC story of this year as one of resilience and forward evolution. Evolution that, although prompted by tragedy, propelled changes that were long planned: using technology to engage more businesses in more areas of the state; exploring and creating virtual international trade events; and an emerging focus on e-commerce and digital exports.

In this report, we also highlight the incredible sense of community among MITC's staff, board, partners, and members in the face of unimaginable challenges. When we left our offices in March, my message to our team was simple, "We will do whatever we need to support our community."

And we did. MITC continued to assist Maine companies with traditional international trade services at about 88% of the volume we see in a typical year. We also helped more than 90 Maine businesses access economic relief programs through our parent DECD and other partners. We listened and we led, organizing training on e-commerce and supply chain issues and modifying our SBA STEP grant program to provide more funds to small businesses to improve their digital marketing and online sales infrastructure to better compete globally. In lieu of travel, we shifted to online trade development efforts in the seafood, education, and forest bioeconomy industries.

Looking forward, MITC will continue this evolution of our initiatives and services in 2021, always with an eye on what our international business community wants and what our state needs. Thank you for your ongoing support of MITC and our mission.

Wade Merritt,
President and State Director of International Trade

Our Role & 2020 Highlights

Maine International Trade Center (MITC) is Maine's leading source for international business assistance. MITC offers customized consulting, research, and an extensive network of connections across Maine and around the world to help businesses expand global markets for their products and services.

A public-private partnership, MITC activities are supported by nearly 300 businesses and organizations, corporate sponsors, and the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD). MITC members include manufacturers, service providers, and educational institutions located in all 16 Maine counties. While our members support the organization through annual membership dues, MITC provides assistance to any Maine business whether members or non-members. We work with both exporters and importers.

- In March, as the spread of COVID-19 resulted in travel bans and postponements or cancellations of several major international trade shows, the MITC team transitioned to working from home and activities moved to virtual formats.
- We watched with admiration and awe as several Maine companies, many of them MITC members, pivoted operations to manufacture much-needed PPE.
- International business continued, and MITC never stopped receiving requests for assistance.
- A week-long visit by a Maine delegation planned for June was transformed into the Finland-Maine Virtual Trade and Study Mission 2020, which kicked off with two webinars in August followed by virtual B2B matchmaking and roundtable meetings in September and October for 53 businesses and organizations in Maine and Finland.
- In July, we launched Members Supporting Members (see next page) as a way to bring Maine's international business community together.
- We were humbled by the strong support received from Maine businesses. As of December, 214 of our members had paid their annual membership dues for FY2021.
- In August, our Annual Member Appreciation Event was held virtually for the first time.



Virtual Member Appreciation Event (August 2020)

Bringing Our International Business Community Together

Members Supporting Members is a way to bring Maine's international business community together. With support from our Members Supporting Members sponsors, MITC is here to help Maine companies during this challenging time.

Members Supporting Members



Offering a full range of services to assist businesses entering or expanding international markets, MITC remains a trusted resource with a vital network of connections across the state and around the world. Now more than ever, we believe those relationships matter.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS



Oh my goodness, THANK YOU! You guys are the coolest. I'm super grateful. I've really gotten so much out of the guidance the team has been able to give over the years, so I was sad to think of a year without MITC. Thank you thank you thank you.

Thank you very much for this message, it made my day yesterday! I hated having to opt out of MITC membership, so I greatly appreciate the MSM effort allowing me to stay connected.

Many thanks to the MITC for this complimentary 2020 membership. We too value our relationship and hope for much more as we dig out.



BANK OF AMERICA

Dignitary Sponsor

Bringing Our International Business Community Together

During 2020, Members Supporting Members helped more than 30 member organizations.

Together, we'll find a new way forward. Maine will emerge stronger, strategically positioned to thrive in the global economy of the future.



Diplomat Sponsors



Consular Sponsors



Attache Sponsors

Growing Maine's Economy

TRADE ASSISTANCE

Maine International Trade Center (MITC) helps Maine businesses grow through international sales. We offer one-on-one Trade Assistance, which covers a broad range of topics including logistics, tariffs, documentation, referrals, and research on best new markets.

303
companies
across
Maine
assisted

COVID-19
resources
outreach to
96
Maine
companies

TRADE SHOWS & MISSIONS

While MITC had planned to coordinate participation for Maine companies in several major trade shows in 2020, only Winter Fancy Food was held as scheduled with 5 Maine companies exhibiting in our shared booth in January, and the other shows were cancelled due to the global pandemic. Seafood Expo North America was postponed then eventually cancelled. MITC worked with Food Export USA to organize virtual meetings for 8 Maine seafood companies with international buyers representing Cambodia, China, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, U.A.E., and Vietnam.

13
participating
Maine
companies

55
serious
leads

\$3.4
million
in projected
sales
reported



EXPORT ASSISTANCE GRANTS

Through Export Assistance Grants, MITC provides financial assistance to eligible Maine companies to expand international sales. Generally, these funds may be used for business-to-business matchmaking, interpreters or translators, trade show space, or other on-the-ground overseas activities. The global pandemic required a shift in focus for how funds could be used in 2020 to virtual B2B matchmaking, online export skills training, and international e-commerce and digital marketing.

In October, MITC was awarded an additional \$461,000 for two years from the U.S. Small Business Administration under the State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) to increase the number of businesses that export. During 2020, 24 applications from Maine small businesses were approved for STEP Financial Assistance Awards. Of the 16 completed activities, 13 companies reported \$136,000 in actual sales with an additional \$4.8 million projected sales in the next 12-18 months. These figures represent a 2.3:1 immediate return and a projected 81:1 future return on grant funds.

MITC is the state partner for Food Export USA, which promotes the export of food, seafood, and agricultural products through the Market Access Program (MAP). MAP provides cost-share assistance to eligible organizations for activities such as consumer advertising, public relations, point-of-sale demonstrations, participation in trade shows, market research, and technical assistance. According to the most recent annual reporting available (2019), 26 Maine companies participated in 101 activities resulting in \$17 million in actual sales and \$29 million in projected sales.

I want to thank MITC for their support of companies like OSS, and specifically on behalf of OSS a big thank you for this international marketing support. This support is critical as we struggle with developing materials for international business development, which is a difficult task in normal times, but is even more challenging in the age of COVID-19. I can't help but believe that this support will be a key factor in helping OSS achieve success.

*- Roland Sirois, CEO,
Orono Spectral Solutions (OSS) Inc. (Hermon, ME)*



The Maine North Atlantic Development Office (MENADO) was formed in 2013 as an initiative of MITC to increase trade, investment, and collaboration between the State of Maine and markets of the North Atlantic and to develop Maine's engagement in Arctic affairs. In 2020, MENADO coordinated and supported 16 virtual events, reaching over 1,500 participants in Maine and around the world.

We are in the heart of a large wood basket capable of supplying timber and fiber of all types. We see an amazing opportunity for Finnish technology to leverage our forest resource and existing manufacturing infrastructure to deliver products to North America that could possibly incorporate our insulation lines and offer more complete building solutions to the construction market.

*- Scott Dionne, Chief Marketing Officer,
GO Lab (Belfast and Madison, ME)*

Less than a year after Maine and Finland formally committed to building our respective forest bioeconomies and sharing best practices for climate resilience via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), MENADO organized MITC's first-ever virtual trade mission. The Finland-Maine Virtual Trade and Study Mission 2020 focused on building networks and collaboration between our forest industries. The virtual mission kicked off with two webinars in August, followed by virtual B2B matchmaking. Partnering with Business Finland, MENADO provided matchmaking and facilitation services between 73 participants from 53 companies and institutions in Maine and Finland for a total of 32 meetings and roundtable discussions in September and October.



A statewide consortium of Maine high schools, colleges, and universities, MITC's StudyMaine initiative, in close partnership with the U.S. Commercial Service office in Portland, promotes Maine overseas as a top U.S. education destination. Typically, more than 2,500 international students contribute an estimated \$80 million annually to Maine's economy. The global pandemic, as well as uncertainties around travel and student visa applications, made last year exceptionally challenging for international student recruitment.

In early 2020, StudyMaine organized and led an Education Mission to Turkey and Azerbaijan with three Maine educational institutions and one immigration law firm. The delegation visited Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir in Turkey and Baku in Azerbaijan. U.S. Commercial Service organized matchmaking meetings with education agents in each location, and ISE World (an education agency in Turkey) organized seminars where delegation members presented to audiences of 300-500 students/parents and held one-on-one meetings with interested families. The Maine delegation's visit to Turkey received media coverage on TV and in multiple newspapers. Meetings with the Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir Chambers of Commerce were also held to promote Maine to their business members.

31
agreements
expected with
education agents
or schools

60
serious
leads

8
students
interviewed
and
accepted



“
I thought the mission was outstanding. I've traveled with numerous groups and this was among the very best admission trips I've gone on... What made it a best trip: extraordinarily well organized, lots of exposure and good media events, student fairs were well attended, and cultural experiences that are helpful to understanding the market and building student experience back on campus. I think having agents visit Maine and then our going over to Turkey was an excellent strategy.
”

– Beth Ross, Fryeburg Academy (Fryeburg, ME)



Invest in Maine is an initiative of MITC and Maine Department of Economic and Community Development established to promote job creation and growth through overseas business attraction. Last year, the primary focus remained on Italy.

Maine's food mystique brought executives from Italy's Gastronomia Toscana to the state to assess the potential for a manufacturing location and wine bar. The company has an established relationship with Costco and wants to begin production in the U.S. to lower logistics costs. The January visit, organized by MITC's Invest in Maine initiative with assistance from Maine Port Authority and MITC Member Modula USA, showcased all that Maine has to offer, including tours of potential sites in Biddeford, Lewiston, and Portland.



Developing Maine's Workforce

GLOBAL U

Maine's future success depends on a global workforce. When we talk with Maine businesses about barriers to growth and exporting, the inability to hire enough skilled workers to fill existing orders is frequently one of the top challenges for manufacturers across industry sectors.

While addressing the workforce shortage is beyond the scope of MITC, our efforts in this arena provided international business focused training for individual employees or entrepreneurs and internships for college students during the past year.

Global U is MITC's three-tiered trade education series to provide practical skills training to help Maine businesses succeed in international markets. During 2020, our training offerings featured ExporTech Maine 2020, a national export assistance program that applies a structured strategy development process to help companies enter or expand in global markets, as well as several webinars. Last year, 349 individuals attended Global U training sessions.



ExporTech is a great opportunity to access knowledgeable experts, and especially for smaller companies it provides an excellent structure for developing a plan and staying on task during the process. It's easy to focus on the urgent rather than the important. The process, coaching, and cadence of the program really helped us get this done. This has been a great experience, and the process really helped with both our domestic and international marketing plans.

— Ed Gervais, President, Cascon Inc. (Yarmouth, ME)

FUTURE GLOBAL LEADERS INTERNSHIPS

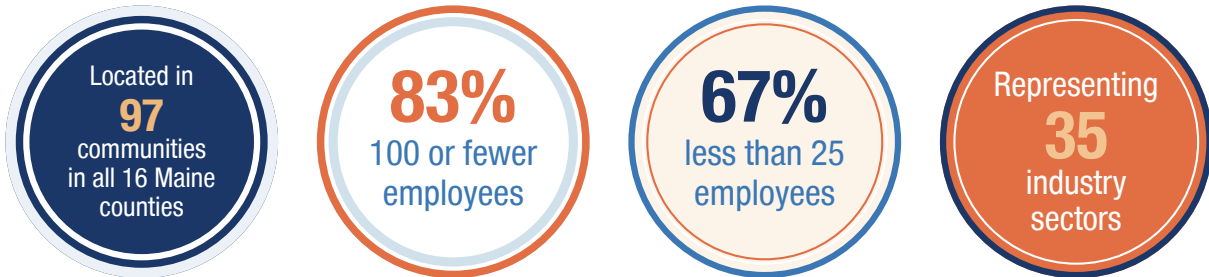
MITC has trained over 200 college students and recent graduates in our paid, part-time internship program Future Global Leaders. As a Research Assistant, MITC interns learn about international trade from Maine's point of view, hone internet and other secondary research skills, and gain valuable insight into what real Maine companies doing business internationally need to know.

Like the MITC staff, our interns worked remotely after mid-March. With the research work already being done online, we were able to continue providing a valuable experience for interns in 2020 through access to our Global U training webinars and inclusion in virtual meetings.

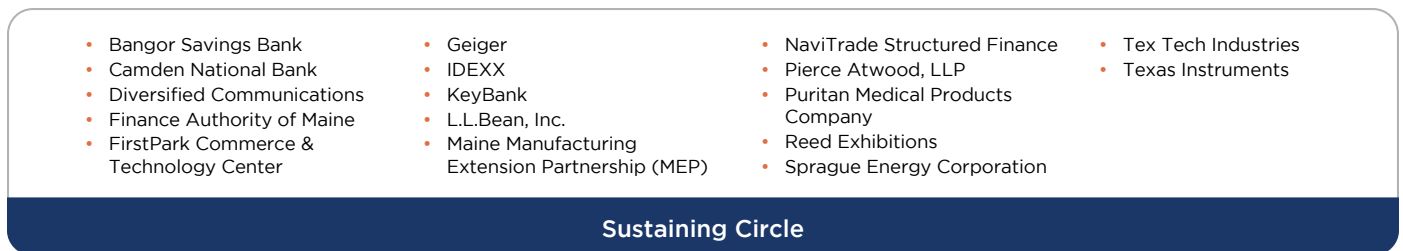


MITC Members & Partners

Our members are the lifeblood of what we do. Our success depends on their success in entering and doing business in markets around the globe, which in turn supports jobs in Maine and strengthens the state's economy. Working together helps all of us grow and prosper.



MITC members include manufacturers and service providers, educational institutions, industry associations, and economic development partners. We work with both exporters and importers.



OUR KEY PARTNERS

With the support and collaboration of these key partner organizations, MITC can provide additional valuable assistance to Maine exporters with significant impact on the state's economy.



Maine International Trade Center Member List

A.N. Deringer, Inc.	Camden National Bank	East Colombia Trading Company
Acadia Benefits, Inc.	Camoin Associates	Eastern Maine Development Corporation
Advanced Infrastructure Technologies	Canadian Consulate General	Eaton Peabody
Allen Insurance and Financial	Caron Engineering	Elmet Technologies
Alternative Manufacturing, Inc.	Casco Bay Molding, Ltd.	Emo Trans, Inc.
American Rheinmetall Systems, LLC	Cascon Inc.	EnviroLogix Inc.
Amy Spear	Central Maine Growth Council	Exhibit Source of Maine, Inc./Nimlok Maine
Androscoggin Valley Council of Governments	CES, Inc.	Fiber Materials, Inc.
Apex Clean Energy	C.H. Robinson	Finance Authority of Maine (FAME)
Artel, Inc.	Christopher Paradis	Fintech Advocate
Auburn Manufacturing, Inc.	CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange	First National Bank
Baker Company, Inc.	City of Bangor	FirstPark Commerce & Technology Center
Baker Newman Noyes	City of Portland	Flowfold
Bangor International Airport	Civil Arms Inc.	Fluid Imaging Technologies
Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce	Coastal Enterprises, Inc. (CEI)	Foxcroft Academy
Bangor Savings Bank	Coface	Front Street Shipyard
Bank of America Merrill Lynch	Colby Co. Engineering	Fryeburg Academy
Bean Maine Lobster Inc.	Combined Management, Inc.	GAC Chemical Corporation
Bernstein Shur	Compotech, Inc.	Garrand Moehlenkamp
BerryDunn	Conscious Revolution	Geiger
Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences	Consigli Construction	Gneiss Spice
Bioscience Association of Maine	Cornerstone HR	Gorham Savings Bank
Bixby & Co.	Corson GIS Solutions	Gould Academy
Blue Lobster Consulting LLC	Coryell Solutions LLC	Greater Portland Council of Governments
Bristol Seafood Incorporated	Cote Corporation	Green Building Initiative
Broadreach Public Relations	Cozy Harbor Seafood, Inc.	Greenhead Lobster
Brooks Trap Mill, Inc.	Dachser USA	Grover Gundrilling, Inc.
Butterfield ICC, LLC	DeepWater Buoyancy, Inc.	Hancock Lumber Company
Cajo, Inc.	Dental Lace, Inc.	Harborside Logistics
Camden Hills Regional High School	Dirigo Strategies	Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
	Diversified Communications	Hawkin Dynamics LLC
	Down East Innovation, LLC	
	E2Tech - Environmental & Energy Technology Council of Maine	

Maine International Trade Center Member List

Hebron Academy	LGC Maine Standards Company	Assistance Center (PTAC)
HMH Visés	Lighthouse Imaging Corporation	Maine School of Science and Mathematics
Howell Laboratories, Inc.	Luke's Lobster	Maine Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)
Hoyle, Tanner & Associates, Inc.	Lynch Logistics	Maine Standard Biofuels
Husson University	Main(e) International Consulting, LLC	Maine State Chamber of Commerce
IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.	Maine & Company	Maine Technology Institute (MTI)
IIS Financial Services	Maine Brewers' Guild	MaineStream Finance
Initial This, INC.	Maine Central Institute	Mano en Mano
Inland Lobster	Maine Coast	Manufacturers Association of Maine
Insulsafe Textiles	Maine Composites Alliance	Marine Parts Express
Interloqui	Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry	Mason's Brewing Company
Island Institute	Maine Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD)	Michael A. Poland Consulting
Jackson Laboratory	Maine Department of Labor	Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority (MRRRA)
Jasper Wyman & Son / Wyman's of Maine	Maine Department of Transportation	Middleton & Shrull, LLC
JobsInME	Maine Development Foundation	Millinocket Fabrication & Machine, LLC
John Bapst Memorial High School	Maine Forest Products Council	Modula Inc.
JP Morgan Chase Bank	Maine Lobster Dealers' Association	Mohawk Global Trade Advisors
Jynx Productions, LLC	Maine Lobster Marketing Collaborative	Montalvo Corporation
Katahdin Forest Products Co., Inc.	Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)	Montserrat Group, LLC
Kennebec River Biosciences Inc.	Maine Marine Composites	Mt. Blue Campus
Kennebec Valley Council of Governments (KVCOG)	Maine Marine Trades Association	NaviTrade Structured Finance
Kents Hill School	Maine Maritime Academy	New England Ocean Cluster
Kepware Technologies	Maine Maritime Museum	NibMor
Kestrel Corporation	Maine Molecular Quality Controls, Inc.	Nittobo America Inc.
KeyBank	Maine Ocean & Wind Industry Initiative	Nomad Pictures
L.L. Bean, Inc.	Maine Office of Tourism	Norman, Hanson & DeTroy, LLC
Laurenz Schmidt	Maine Port Authority	North American Kelp
Ledgemere Group Consulting, LLC	Maine Procurement Technical	North Atlantic Cargo Line LLC
Lee International		Northcross Group
Leiner Optics		Northern Maine Development Commission
Lewiston Auburn Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce		

Maine International Trade Center Member List

Ocean Renewable Power Company, LLC (ORPC)
Ocean Rescue Systems International
Ocean's Balance
OCEANAIR, Inc.
Old Port Advisors
One Source Risk Management & Funding
Orono High School
Orono Spectral Solutions, Inc.
P.A.T. Products
Panda Rocket Punch, LLC
Penobscot Bay Regional Chamber of Commerce
People's United Bank
Perkins Thompson
Pierce Atwood, LLP
Piscataquis County Economic Development Council
Planson International
Plantronics, Inc
Pole Star Maritime, LLC
Portland Pudgy, Inc.
Portland Regional Chamber
Power Gripps USA, Inc/Versa Gripps USA
PowerWise Systems
Preti Flaherty Beliveau & Pachios, LLP
Puritan Medical Products Company
Quad Express
R.E.D.D.
Radius International Inc.
RainWise, Inc.
Rapid Assault Tools

Ready Seafood
Reed Exhibitions
Rubb Building Systems
Rudman & Winchell
Sanford Regional Economic Growth Council
Sapphire Group LLC
Saunders Electronics
Savatteri Law Firm PC
Scarborough Economic Development Corp (SEDCO)
Scythe Supply
Sea Bags
SEKO Worldwide Logistics, LLC
Ship-Right Solutions
Shucks Maine Lobster LLC
Solstice Corporation
Southern Maine Community College
Southworth International Group, Inc.
Sprague Energy Corp.
SteriZign Precision Technologies, LLC
Stone & Associates
Stonewall Kitchen
Strainrite Companies/Lapoint Industries
Sunrise County Economic Council
Susan DeGozzaldi
Talus Corporation
TD Bank
Tempshield, Inc.
Tex Tech Industries
Texas Instruments
The Dunham Group

The Rowley Agency, Inc.
Thornton Academy
Tory Bell
U.S. Commercial Service
U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)
University of Maine
University of New England
University of Southern Maine
Verrill
ViroStat, Inc.
Washington Academy
Washington County Community College
Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
Western Maine Economic Development Council
Whitney Campbell Advertising & Design
Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine
Wipfli LLP
Woodex Bearing Company, Inc.
Woods End Laboratories, Inc.
World Affairs Council of Maine
Xuron Corp.
Yale Cordage, Inc.

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