

# The Art of International Business

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## The Art of International Business

I have heard many people talk about international business, but few who have successfully mastered the art form of conducting businesses in multiple States or Provinces, much less multiple countries and continents. We are talking about a whole new set of rules and customer expectations that are thoughtfully laid out in the book "[The World Is Flat](#)" by [Thomas L. Friedman](#). Basically the internet has broken down the old ways of thinking and walls to commerce and we are starting to see the floodgates open up and we are going global. The big question is, how do I keep track of it all?

The answer to that question is quite simple, use the internet to your advantage as you can have influence anywhere on the earth, 24/7. Three excellent examples of businesses that have successful small to mid-sized businesses that operate in more than one country are [TechCorr](#) and [Sealweld](#).

[TechCorr](#) is a great story because all odds they have figured out how to operate in Venezuela, USA, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Canada, and many other countries, all at the same time. Their secret is hard work, diligent record keeping, men and women they can trust, and a [web-based strategy center](#) that keeps them and their customers abreast of the business as it transpires. Their business is inspection services for energy pipelines and industrial chemical plants. They have found a way to record time on their projects that is instantly fed back to their corporate database. They have also added services that produce reports back to their clients the second they are completed. These important inspection reports are available to their customers in a secure environment and are archived forever.

[Sealweld](#) is a rising star in the energy pipeline valve service business. They are small, but they manage to operate in South East Asia, Russia, Canada, USA, Europe, and they even have an office in Dubai. They use a collaborative system that ties their people in the field and satellite offices to the head office here in Calgary. We first met Dean and Juanita Chisholm in Amsterdam at one of John Tiratsoo's ( [Scientific Surveys, Limited](#)) Pipeline Pigging Conference. They immediately caught my interest because here was two people who relished the challenge of finding new markets and it didn't seem to matter where in the world that was. We kept in touch through the years and we now provide the [MyCompany Toolbox](#) for them to keep track of their worldwide business. They can now comfortably provide a secure and internal environment for their global staff, and make it look easy.

System support and strategic planning are two very important issues for any global company. These two issues are covered by using the Web 2.0 [Toolbox](#). The system links customers, company employees, and contractors so they can work together and instantly see the status of global support and initiatives, regardless of the time zone.

If what you have to offer the World is as good as these three companies, the World will come to you demanding an evolved level of support and communications, make sure you get it right as mistakes can be pretty costly. One more global trade secret that isn't so secret anymore is [Skype](#). We've been using Skype since the day a colleague called me and said that he needed to talk with me, but has changed over his communications methodology to Skype. He told me I had 30 minutes to call him as he had another meeting and would have to do so using the thing called Skype at which time he hung up the phone. I felt a bit like I had just been dropped off at a strange foreign city and I needed to find my way to city hall before they closed. As it turned out my fears were unfounded and ten minutes later I had downloaded free Skype software, located a set of headphones, and was talking for absolutely free. That was over two years ago and we've never looked back and have told many people about Skype since. A few of our global colleagues save over \$10,000 per month using Skype. We have integrated Skype into our products to give our partners and clients the cost saving advantages they deserve and need to run profitable businesses.

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