



# GUEST COLUMN: WHY YOUR LOCAL AIRPORT MATTERS

YVR CEO Craig Richmond shares highlights from his annual Board of Trade address

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# SOUNDING BOARD



THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GREATER VANCOUVER BOARD OF TRADE AND ITS MEMBERS | OCTOBER 2019 | VOLUME 59 / ISSUE 9 | BOARDOFTRADE.COM

## VoteLocal survey explores 2019 ballot box issues

**ELECTION** | Poll finds that a balance between the environment and economy will be key in the federal election

BY GREG HOEKSTRA

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade unveiled results of its VoteLocal 2019 Federal Election Survey at a special breakfast event on Sept. 16.

Conducted in partnership with Mustel Group and Fleishman-Hillard High Road, the survey sheds light on some of the top priorities and concerns of our region's business leaders.

Heading into the 2019 federal election, the business community identified the economy as the top issue causing them concern, with nearly half of all respondents (45 per cent) ranking it as a key issue, along with related topics such as taxes (28 per cent) and fiscal responsibility (21 per cent).

With global growth slowing, business leaders in our region are clearly anxious about Canada's economic competitiveness. A total of 43 per cent of business respondents believe the Canadian economy will decline in the next



Anna Lilly (left) and Evi Mustel (centre) share findings from the VoteLocal 2019 Federal Election Survey in a Sept. 16 panel discussion moderated by Global BC's Richard Zussman (right). | MATT BORCK

five years, while less than one in five believe it will improve.

However, the environment is also top-of-mind for many Board of Trade Members, with 37 per cent of business respondents identifying it as a key issue, ranking it second just behind the economy.

Perhaps not surprisingly, affordability was another area of concern for our region's business community, with many respondents feeling that no level of government is doing enough to address housing affordability in our region. As a

result, there is strong support from the business community for governments to incentivize the construction of housing options in our region.

When asked about some of the practical actions the next federal government should take to

support the business community, the top suggestions from business leaders were to lower taxes (38 per cent) and decrease red tape (31 per cent). To strengthen our economy, the business community would also like to see more federal investment in transit, trade-enabling infrastructure, and support for businesses that wish to innovate and adopt new technologies.

International trade disputes are also causing a great deal of consternation for business leaders, with 80 per cent of respondents saying they're concerned about potential impacts on their businesses.

Nearly half of respondents said they believe Canada's international reputation as a place to invest or do business has declined over the past five years, due to our cumbersome regulatory environment and the uncertainty over some recent major infrastructure projects. **SB**

See the full results from the survey at [votelocalbc.ca](http://votelocalbc.ca).



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# 2 EVENTS AND SPEAKERS

## TRANSPORTATION | Shaping the future of how we move

TransLink CEO Kevin Desmond gives annual GVBOT update Nov. 5

Over 1.4 million transit trips are taken every day in our region. With more than 80 per cent of residents having used transit in the last year, the link between good transportation options and livability is undeniable.

To keep up with the region's insatiable demand, TransLink is now nearly three years into its unprecedented \$9-billion transit expansion plan. This includes major increases in service across the region, the new RapidBus program, extending the Millennium Line to Arbutus Street, and planning for the proposed Surrey Langley SkyTrain.

Meanwhile, this region is set to introduce ridehailing and the next decade will see new technologies further disrupt transportation. How will automation, connectivity, electrification and shared mobility affect the way we move? Even as TransLink is building for today, it is focused on preparing for the future.

Transport 2050 is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the region's transportation strategy for the next 30 years. As part of its largest public



engagement ever, TransLink has already heard from tens of thousands of people this summer, sharing their values and ideas for the future.

The mobility landscape is changing rapidly. What will Metro Vancouver's next transportation network expansion be and how will we pay for it? How can we provide better connections to growing suburban communities, or areas just outside our region like the Fraser Valley and Sea-to-Sky Corridor? And how can we address increasing congestion on our overburdened streets and prepare for the eventual introduction of driverless vehicles?

As part of Transport 2050, such trends are being considered through TransLink's partnership with Metro Vancouver and the Province of British Columbia to coordinate transportation and land use planning — all to create a more livable and resilient region.

In his annual address to the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade on Nov. 5, TransLink CEO Kevin Desmond will discuss transit expansion plans and share what the public is saying about the future through Transport 2050. **SB**

Get your tickets today at [boardoftrade.com/translink2019](http://boardoftrade.com/translink2019).

## COMMUNITY | The state of the city

Mayor Kennedy Stewart to speak at GVBOT's 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is excited to announce that Mayor Kennedy Stewart will deliver the keynote address at the organization's 132nd Annual General Meeting.

In his first "State of the City" address, Mayor Stewart will reflect on his inaugural year in office, highlight the accomplishments of city council over the past 12 months, and focus on the overarching theme of his first year: the power of partnerships.

With people struggling to stay in our city, Mayor Stewart has worked on building partnerships to deliver the housing we need. Whether it is partnerships on council, throughout our city, across the region, with the provincial and federal governments, Mayor Stewart has stressed that the challenges we face cannot be solved on our own.

In his remarks, Mayor Stewart will share his plan for how the power of partnerships can help transform our city, reduce people's stress, and make sure Vancouver becomes a city that



Mayor Kennedy Stewart

works for everyone.

Prior to Mayor Stewart's address, Board of Trade Members will gather for the business portion of our 132nd Annual General Meeting, for the purpose of electing a new slate of directors and approving the audited financial statements.

The business portion of the AGM is complimentary but is only open to Members of the Board of Trade. **SB**

Registration is now open at [boardoftrade.com/aggm2019](http://boardoftrade.com/aggm2019).

### UPCOMING EVENTS

See our full events calendar at [boardoftrade.com/events](http://boardoftrade.com/events)

Is there a speaker you'd like to hear from or topic you'd like explored? Make a suggestion at [boardoftrade.com/suggest](http://boardoftrade.com/suggest)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2019

#### Women's Health Care Forum Presented by Pacific Blue Cross

7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Fairmont Waterfront Vancouver  
900 Canada Place

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

**Serena Ryder**

Multiple Award-Winning Singer Songwriter and Mental Health Advocate

SESSION 1:

The gender care gap: the state of women's health in B.C.

SESSION 2:

Innovative solutions for closing the health care gap

SESSION 3:

Building a healthy corporate culture with a lens on gender diversity

Title Sponsor: Pacific Blue Cross

Supporting Sponsor: Telus Health

Event Partner: BC Women's Health Foundation

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2019

#### Delivering Results: How to effectively tackle large and complex projects

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver  
791 West Georgia Street

**Frank Supovitz**

President and CEO  
Fast Traffic Events & Entertainment

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2019

#### Honouring Promises: Priorities for Progress and Prosperity

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Fairmont Waterfront Hotel  
900 Canada Place

**National Chief Perry Bellegarde**

Assembly of First Nations

Community Sponsors: Port of Vancouver, Vancity

Community Partner: BC Achievement Indigenous Business Award

Presented in partnership with: World Trade Centre Vancouver

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2019

#### Shaping the Future of How We Move

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver  
900 West Georgia Street

**Kevin Desmond**

CEO  
TransLink

Presenting Sponsor: Stantec

Supporting Sponsor: UBC Rapid Transit Office

Community Sponsors: Hatch, FortisBC, Boyden

Presented in partnership with: World Trade Centre Vancouver

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2019

#### 132nd AGM and State of the City address with Mayor Kennedy Stewart

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver  
900 West Georgia Street

**Kennedy Stewart**

Mayor of Vancouver

Presenting Sponsors: BCIT, Air Canada

Community Sponsors: Telus, Port of Vancouver

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2019

#### The Port of Vancouver: National powerhouse, purposefully local

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver  
900 W Georgia Street

**Robin Silvester**

President and CEO  
Vancouver Fraser Port Authority

Presenting Sponsor: CN

Supporting Sponsor: Boyden

Community Sponsor: Dentons

Marketing Partner: Cargo Logistics Canada

Presented in partnership with: World Trade Centre Vancouver

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2019

#### How aging boomers are impacting your business and what to do about it

11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Coast Coal Harbour Vancouver Hotel  
1180 W Hastings St

**Daniel Fontaine**

CEO, BC Care Providers Association

Presenting Sponsor: BC Care Providers Association

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## COMMUNITY | Why your local airport matters

### YVR CEO Craig Richmond shares highlights from his annual Board of Trade address

BY CRAIG RICHMOND

On Sept. 12, in my annual address to the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, I made an important announcement: Vancouver International Airport (YVR) will be increasing its Airport Improvement Fee (AIF) from \$20 to \$25 effective Jan. 1, 2020 for passengers travelling to destinations outside of B.C.

Why? Because we are dealing with exceptional growth. In fact, YVR just completed 74 months of consecutive, year-over-year growth. And last year, we hit a record, welcoming just shy of 26 million passengers from around the world.

This growth means more pressure on our airport, which is reaching its capacity limits. To meet the demand, we recently launched a 20-year, multibillion-dollar expansion program, which contains up to 75 projects that will enable our airport to continue delivering an exceptional experience for years to come. And all of this will cost money.

So, to meet forecasted growth and ensure the airport's long-term financial health, we will be increasing the AIF — by \$5. Following the increase, YVR's AIF will continue to be one of the lowest among the eight major Canadian airports with only Ottawa International Airport collecting a lower fee of \$23. Additionally, we are the only major airport to offer a heavily discounted rate for regional travel at \$5 for flights within B.C. and to the Yukon.

For context, YVR earns revenue from three main sources: aeronautical revenue (25 per cent), non-aeronautical revenue (44 per cent) and the AIF (31 per cent), as of 2018. First introduced in 1993, the AIF can only be used to pay for capital infrastructure projects such as terminals and runways. Revenue generated from aeronautical and non-aeronautical sources is not enough to cover both the costs of operating the airport and the major capital projects needed to enhance and maintain it.

If we left the AIF as is, we wouldn't be able to keep up. We wouldn't be able to make sound



Craig Richmond speaks to GVBOT Members on Sept 12. | KIM BELLEVANCE

decisions that have the success of future generations in mind or meet regulatory requirements. Our infrastructure would wear down, the passenger experience would decline, people would choose other airports for connections and we would not be able to deliver on our public mandate — to provide social and economic benefits to our communities.

Also note: the AIF is essential as the Canadian government does not provide funding to operate YVR. Why? Because

YVR is run by Vancouver Airport Authority, a not-for-profit, community-based organization. We operate like a private company, having to innovate and stay ahead of the competition. But we are not shareholder-based, meaning we reinvest all our profits back into the airport, constantly improving it for everyone.

The result of our unique model, which has been in effect since 1992, has been outstanding. We have been voted Best Airport in North America at the Skytrax

We are not shareholder-based, meaning we reinvest all our profits back into the airport, constantly improving it for everyone.

World Airport Awards for a record 10 years in a row. And we are a powerful economic generator, facilitating \$20.2 billion in total economic output across B.C. and supporting over 26,500 jobs at the airport.

To ensure we continue to deliver an exceptional airport, we will be raising the AIF. We know it won't be popular, but I assure you it will go directly into making your airport even better. It will help us improve YVR for everyone, which in turn will attract more passengers and businesses and thus ensure the continuation of our great airport well into the future. **SB**

Craig Richmond is President and CEO of Vancouver Airport Authority.



## Delivering Results: How To Effectively Tackle Large And Complex Projects

Monday, October 28, 2019 | 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Four Seasons Hotel Vancouver



### Frank Supovitz

President and CEO  
Fast Traffic Events & Entertainment

Join us as Supovitz shares insights from his career and shares how an usher at Radio City Music Hall rose through the ranks and landed a job planning the Super Bowl.

If you work for a complex organization or manage a large project, you won't want to miss this event! Learn how to manage every business problem like you were born for it.

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[boardoftrade.com/events](http://boardoftrade.com/events)



## Honouring Promises: Priorities for Progress and Prosperity

Tuesday, October 29, 2019 | 11:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.  
Fairmont Waterfront Hotel | 900 Canada Place, Vancouver



### National Chief Perry Bellegarde

Assembly of First Nations

National Chief Bellegarde will speak to the ambitious agenda set out in Honouring Promises, the impact and influence of First Nations on the federal agenda, and why First Nations priorities are Canada's priorities.

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# SOUNDING BOARD

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**ABOUT THE PUBLICATION**

Sounding Board is the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade's official publication, distributed to all its Members, as well as all subscribers of Business in Vancouver newspaper. Sounding Board is published 11 times per year by Business in Vancouver Media Group in partnership with the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. The newspaper is read by business leaders and elected officials across B.C. and beyond, with a conservatively estimated total readership of 37,500.

**ABOUT THE BOARD OF TRADE**

The Greater Vancouver Board of Trade is Western Canada's most active and influential business association. We accelerate business success through our advocacy and public policy initiatives, our four Signature Programs for professional development, and our 100+ events each year, which educate and connect our region's business community. We engage with decision-makers to develop our region as a vibrant hub for commerce, trade, travel, and free enterprise. And we've been doing it with tangible results, for more than 130 years.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**OUR PURPOSE** is to support sustainable prosperity throughout the Greater Vancouver region.  
**OUR VISION** is to be an active, innovative, trusted, credible business organization, known for influencing decision-makers, and educating, connecting with, and engaging our communities.  
**OUR MISSION** is to provide leadership, information and connections, and public policy support that help ensure the Greater Vancouver region is competitive and the preferred Pacific Gateway for trade, commerce, and travel.  
**WE ARE** informed, respectful, principled, collaborative, and professional.

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## LEADERSHIP | Creating an agenda for growth

Chair Lori Mathison on the GVBOT's latest collaboration with Canada's eight largest chambers of commerce

BY LORI MATHISON

At the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, we have long believed that infrastructure is the backbone of our nation's economy, tying the country together and connecting us to the world.

As the Gateway to the Pacific Rim, Greater Vancouver is able to truly leverage infrastructure to benefit all of Canada. And within Greater Vancouver, infrastructure investment enables the efficient movement of people and goods, with benefits to productivity and even housing affordability.

Last month, our Interim CEO, David Crawford travelled to Halifax for a meeting of Canada's eight largest chambers of commerce, known collectively as the Canadian Global Cities Council. The group discussed some of the shared priorities of our metropolitan regions — including Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Brampton, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver — with a particular focus on innovation and infrastructure.

On Sept. 19, the Canadian Global Cities Council hosted a joint press conference where we released the second in our series of federal election policy playbooks, the "infrastructure playbook." The playbooks identify specific actions the next federal government can take to strengthen our economy.

In the infrastructure playbook, we called on the parties to support the development of a National Urban Strategy to help cities build the infrastructure they need to support Canada's competitiveness on the global stage.

"Canada is an urban nation without an urban strategy. Rather than measuring the federal



Lori Mathison

government's impact by dollars spent or ribbons cut, it's time for Canada to set broader urban goals and engage cities and city-regions to develop plans consistent with national priorities," said Patrick Sullivan, President and CEO of the Halifax Chamber, as he kicked off the news conference.

Our coalition believes that a National Urban Strategy would help track and report on Canada's infrastructure needs, develop long-range priority plans, and most importantly — would enable the government to *fund the plan, not the project*.

"Whether its railways or roadways, ports or airports, tunnels or transit, investments in infrastructure drive economic prosperity and job creation," Crawford told the press conference. "As our population grows, we need to continue to focus on moving people and goods efficiently through our metropolitan regions."

Crawford was also asked to share some of his thoughts on the importance of long-term transportation planning, given that transit ridership is growing faster in Greater Vancouver than any other metropolitan region in Canada or the United States. Currently, more than 1.4 million

transit trips are taken every day in our region, and demand for more services is surging.

Other cities from across Canada are looking at Greater Vancouver right now as a model for success, regional collaboration, and long-term vision. This vision is being implemented with TransLink's unprecedented \$9-billion expansion plan, which includes significant increases in service across the region and transformational projects such as the Millennium Line expansion along Broadway, and the proposed SkyTrain expansion into Surrey and Langley.

In Greater Vancouver, what we have come to realize is that transit expansion is about more than just moving people from point A to point B. It's also about reducing congestion on our streets, which ultimately improves the efficiency of goods movement in our region. And it's about improving housing affordability by expanding the radius in which people can live while still commuting quickly to the downtown core.

Our *Greater Vancouver Economic Scorecard 2018* revealed that transit expansion plays a vital role in helping to solve our housing affordability crisis — which continues to be one of the top concerns of residents and businesses, who are struggling to attract and retain skilled workers.

For a full list of the Canadian Global Cities Council's recommendations and infrastructure priorities for the next federal government — including the SkyTrain expansion to UBC and completion of the Roberts Bank Terminal 2 project in Delta — visit [agendaforgrowth.ca](http://agendaforgrowth.ca). **SB**

Lori Mathison is 2018-19 Chair of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade. She also serves as President and CEO of the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia.



### NOTICE OF MEETING

In accordance with Bylaw 11.10 — Notice of Meeting — Notice is hereby given that the 132<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade will take place on Thursday, November 7, 2019, at the Fairmont Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver Island Room, 900 W. Georgia St., Vancouver, B.C.

The meeting's purpose is to elect directors, approve the audited financial statements for the year ended July 31, 2019, receive reports and the conduct of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Registration for the Member-Only Business Portion of the AGM will begin at 10:00 a.m. followed by the meeting at 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Register at [boardoftrade.com/agm2019](http://boardoftrade.com/agm2019)

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## IN FOCUS | Photos from recent events and activities at the Board of Trade



Yasmin Passos, Signature Programs Coordinator for the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade, welcomes guests aboard a yacht in Coal Harbour on Sept. 18, for a special event kicking off the 2019-20 year of our Company of Young Professionals program. Board of Trade Members under the age of 35 were invited to take part in the sunset cruise, meet the advisory committee, and learn about what is in store for the year ahead. To learn how you can get involved, visit [boardoftrade.com/cyp](http://boardoftrade.com/cyp). | MATT BORCK



Mitzi Dean, Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equality, speaks to the Women's Leadership Circle on Sept. 23 to kick off Gender Equality Week. | NAZ ILCIN



A panel of senior executives from Coast Capital Savings, KPMG, Stantec, and WATSON discuss how to 'engage men as change agents' as part of National Gender Equality Week. | NAZ ILCIN



L-R: Anna Lilly, NDP Candidate Peter Julian, Liberal Candidate Jonathan Wilkinson, Conservative Candidate Ed Fast, Evi Mustel, Mary Anne Davidson, and Green Party Candidate Jesse Brown on Sept. 16. | MATT BORCK



The CEOs of Canada's eight largest chambers of commerce – Halifax, Vancouver, Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Brampton and Montreal – came together on Sept. 19 for a press conference on infrastructure. Read more on page 4.



Matthew Sicoly of Facebook speaks to small business owners on Sept. 20 about how to use Facebook and Instagram to break into new markets online. The presentation was part of World Trade Centre Vancouver's new International e-Commerce Workshop. Learn more at [wtcice.ca](http://wtcice.ca). | GOOD SIDE PHOTOGRAPHY

Did you know the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade hosts more than 100 speaker events, seminars, and networking receptions each year?

More photos at [facebook.com/boardoftrade](https://www.facebook.com/boardoftrade)

# 2019 TAP EXPORT PLAN AWARDS

It has been nearly two years since World Trade Centre Vancouver launched the Trade Accelerator Program (TAP), which helps small and medium-sized businesses in B.C. prepare an export plan and reach new international markets. On Sept. 27, two companies that recently completed the program were presented with awards, including Metric Modular and Vivo Team. Learn more about the program, its upcoming workshops, and how you can apply at [tapbc.ca](http://tapbc.ca).



## Metric Modular

“We believe that any company that has a desire to expand through exports should take the Trade Accelerator Program.”

Stephen Branch & Joel Holloway  
President & CFO  
Metric Modular  
Established 1977

Metric’s biggest challenges prior to TAP was turning our export strategies into tangible business growth and profitability. TAP helped us address this challenge, by providing a broad spectrum of resources and insights that allowed us to refine our export plan to mitigate risks and move us closer to realizing our export targets.

**Where do you currently export?**  
We currently export to Washington State and Northern California.

**What is the next international market you would like to tap into?**  
Our expansions plans will continue in the U.S. There is a massive opportunity for modular construction to reshape the construction sector and we see significant growth opportunities.

**What did you or your team learn from TAP?**  
TAP allowed us to deepen and

**Give us your elevator pitch. Describe your business in 30 words or less.**  
Metric Modular brings certainty to time, budget and scope for developers and general contractors that build mid-rise multi-storey buildings through an integrated design build process that leverages offsite modular construction.

**What was your biggest challenge in terms of business growth and exporting before you joined TAP?**



Metric Modular CFO Joel Holloway and President Stephen Branch

solidify our export plans. We were already moving on a plan to export our product to the U.S. and TAP was a catalyst to ensure our export plan considered the broad spectrum of challenges, opportunities, and resources available to exporters. It was helpful to get access to the government and private sector resources that TAP pulled together into a single program.

**What have been the most impressive results?**  
Working through the Trade Accelerator Program confirmed that we need to remain focused on our target export markets and geographies. Our business has long sales cycles (up to a year) so we need to be focused on leading indicators to support our strategic decisions. Since completing TAP, we continue to see

meaningful opportunity in our target markets.

**Who do you think could benefit most from participating in TAP?**  
We believe that any company that has a desire to expand through exports should take the Trade Accelerator Program — it doesn’t matter how big or small. We did not know what to expect and came with a little bit of trepidation but that quickly went away when networking with other companies and sharing experiences. We highly recommend TAP.

**What is your overall impression of the Trade Accelerator Program?**  
The Trade Accelerator Program is truly named correctly. You learn in a short period what many companies have taken years to learn. It jump-starts you so that you do not have to learn through mistakes but through proven techniques that help a company to be on the right path from the start. **SB**



## Vivo Team

“The magic comes when you get to sit back and work with experts in the field to validate and modify your plan with their experience. It’s so valuable.”

Renée Safrata  
CEO  
Vivo Team  
Established 2012

struggling to make the right connections that could help us gain footing and we hadn’t accessed the capital we needed to extend ourselves beyond Canada. TAP introduced us to mentors across industry sectors who reviewed in detail and provided feedback on our export plan. They offered invaluable insight and ongoing support and most importantly, connections to help focus and maximize our limited resources. Prior to the program, we were planning in a vacuum where we didn’t have the expertise to validate our plans. The second challenge was our lack of capital. The export plan has now set us up for success in gaining access to new capital opportunities as well as giving us the focus we need with our resources.

**Where do you currently export?**  
We are currently exporting only into the U.S.

**What is the next international market you would like to tap into?**  
Central Europe. Really, the key

**Give us your elevator pitch. Describe your business in 30 words or less.**  
Vivo Team is a data-driven analytics and training solutions company that helps teams be more effective. Our analytics measure gaps in your team’s performance and the impact on business results.

**What was your biggest challenge in terms of business growth and exporting before you joined TAP?**  
Connections and capital. We were



Vivo Team CEO Renée Safrata

driver is a strong connection and interest we have from PwC. If we have learned anything from the TAP experience, it’s that the right connections and people can make a major impact on our business. PwC Eurasia is interested in using our People Analytics within the work they are doing overseas.

**What did you or your team learn from TAP?**  
The most impactful learning was to be focused and specific.

Working with limited resources, we are still able to build a solid strategy and a phased-in entry plan. It’s essential for us to be able to maintain our business within Canada, so I think that learning to be laser-focused (the shotgun vs. the machine gun) on the export plan was extremely helpful.

**How did TAP change the way that you run your business?**  
The biggest shift is the strategy for being on the ground in the U.S. The realization that in order to really gain momentum, having a footprint in the U.S. is going to help.

**What do the next 18-24 months look like for you and your business?**  
Our plan for the next two years is having our business leaders making a significant move to the markets we are focused on while working remotely. We are targeting sales in the U.S. and we plan to continue to get traction with U.S. distribution channels.

**Who do you think could benefit most from participating in TAP?**  
Two or three years ago, I don’t think we would have had the same success in TAP. We are coming up to our seventh anniversary, and to put into place the TAP plans, I would say you need to have your core business established and be ready to take it to the next level. There is a lot of complex requirements and resources needed to be successful in the export game.

**What is your overall impression of the Trade Accelerator Program?**  
We had an excellent experience with the Trade Accelerator Program, and we continue to reap the benefits of the connections and relationships we made in the program. The truth is the process at the beginning is a bit unsettling, it is information overload like we’ve never experienced. But, have trust in the program because the magic comes when you get to sit back and work with experts in the field to validate and modify your plan with their experience. It’s so valuable. **SB**



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