

# Annual District Export Council Conference

Exporting in the 21st Century

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*U.S. Commercial Service*

Opening on a naval vessel off the coast of San Diego and ending with a tour of manufacturing facilities in Tijuana, this year's District Export Council (DEC) Conference has adopted a fitting theme: "New Directions in Exporting in the 21st Century." Taking place in San Diego, one of the liveliest export areas in the country, the conference in September focuses on providing key information to help exporters navigate current and future international challenges. The conference is open to members of the exporting community as well as the nationwide DEC network. Companies interested in learning about the latest in export opportunities, and meeting with U.S. Commercial Service officers from around the world, should plan to attend this conference.

## THE CITY OF TRADE

The site for the 2003 conference could not be a better location to demonstrate the effects of international trade. The second-largest city in California is the fastest-growing export district in the United States. Equidistant from Europe and Asia, San Diego considers itself a gateway to Latin America and the Pacific Rim.



"San Diego is the perfect example of how international trade can affect a city—from population growth to the way that it does business," says Luis Eternod, chairman of the San Diego DEC. During the last four years, San Diego's exports have doubled, with electronics and information technology as the leading industries.

Not only has San Diego increased its export sales, but it has also embraced changes affecting international trade. "We've changed the way we do business over the past several years," says Eternod. "Now, with the click of a mouse, a mil-

lion-dollar application can be attached to an e-mail and sold overseas."

This ease of selling includes the responsibility to authenticate buyers and know the intended use of the products they purchase. Add these security concerns to the list of new U.S. trade agreements, reconstruction opportunities in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the ever-growing export of services, and U.S. exporters will find much to learn at the 2003 DEC Conference.

Focusing on subjects that will help exporters most is important to the



organizers of the conference. “Our speakers are living it, doing it,” Eternod says. From security of technology transfers to marketing your company on a shoestring budget, this year’s conference covers a wide variety of pertinent issues.

The conference offers participants a choice of 18 different topics within seven breakout sessions. Some of the highlights include:

**Overcoming Foreign Competition:** What is our government doing to aid U.S. companies in combating foreign competition? How are the newly imposed tax laws on U.S. companies affecting our ability to compete?

**Transacting Business over the Internet in Foreign Currencies:** One of the challenges of global e-commerce is accepting payment in foreign currencies. Learn how painless it can be by partnering with companies that provide this service.

**Industrial Espionage—It’s Not about Hackers:** A discussion of the risks of industrial espionage, citing real cases prosecuted under the Industrial Espionage Act of 1996. How can you protect your company from domestic and international espionage?

**Licensing Your Medical Technologies Overseas:** What should you be aware of when licensing your technologies abroad? Which organizations can assist you with information? This session is useful for any industry, not just medical technology.

**International Reconstruction Opportunities:** U.S. companies will find new business in the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. Hear from the director of the U.S. Commerce Department’s Iraq and Afghanistan reconstruction task forces about how you can participate in this growth.

Other sessions address offshore manufacturing, inexpensive international marketing, and free trade agreements in Latin America.

#### MEXICO BUSINESS EDUCATION

DEC members may also choose to travel to nearby Baja California to visit *maquiladoras* (special in-bond manufacturing facilities) as well as Porto Nuevo. San Diego’s closest international market holds opportunities for U.S. companies in infrastructure development as well as the electronics, automotive, tourism, and agribusiness industries. Due to the proximity of Baja California to other

Mexican industrial centers, the state’s *maquiladoras* look to nearby U.S. cities for parts and supplies.

DEC members participating in the tour will visit an electronics *maquiladora* and meet with Baja government officials to receive briefings on the local industry and opportunities for U.S. exporters. The tour includes a traditional Baja lobster luncheon and visits to Rosarito and Fox Studios, where the movie *Titanic* was filmed. Early registrants are eligible for a companion ticket for the Mexico day trip for only \$15.

#### REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE

Following its own example in promoting new directions in exporting, the 2003 DEC Conference is using on-line technology for all registration and conference information.

The conference’s Web site, [www.2003decconference.com](http://www.2003decconference.com), includes the conference agenda, speakers’ biographies, registration details, and San Diego tourism information.

The Southern California DEC has reserved 200 rooms at the Coronado Island Marriott Resort. These rooms will get booked fast. Register now for this important exporters’ event. ■