



MARSHA, MARSHA, MARSHA
Firestone founded the WPO in 1997; today, 20 percent of members do business globally.



GOINGGLOBAL.

WPO AROUND THE WORLD

Marsha Firestone, president and founder of the Women Presidents' Organization (WPO), looks to members across the globe for advice on breaking into new markets

According to a recent report by Palo Alto, California-based research firm Institute for the Future, half of US-based small businesses will be involved in global trade by 2018. This information—paired with the facts that our members span four continents, and that 20 percent of WPO members are already doing business globally—played a large role in deciding the theme of this year's Women Presidents' Organization (WPO) conference ("Growing Boldly, Leading Globally"). It's a fitting topic: the WPO expanded internationally beginning in 2001 and has since rolled out chapters in Canada, Peru, the UK, and South Africa. Here, four of the WPO's international members share tips for navigating the global market.

1 MICHELLE KOREVAAR, CEO

Spice4Life, spice4life.co.za

Industry: Web-based media

Based in: South Africa

Conducts Business In: United States, India, Spain, Mongolia, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe

Michelle's Advice: *Build a Network.*

"When I'm breaking into a new market, I build a network of contacts in that region by joining credible organizations. For example, the WPO has a very strong membership of top businesswomen in America, and joining the organization led to 90 percent of my business in the US. In most countries, business organizations—such as the Chamber of Commerce—are important to connect with. LinkedIn and other social networks, like Ecademy, can also be of great use."

2 ROZ ALFORD, PRINCIPAL

ASAP Staffing LLC, myasap.com

Industry: IT staffing

Based in: North America

Conducts Business In: India

Roz's Advice: *Seek Local Support.* "A major client encouraged us to expand into India, and was instrumental in helping us to establish a pipeline of contacts in the area. We also hired a native of India—who had been consulting for our company for more than a decade—to head up our regional India office. This helped ease our transition, because he was familiar with our process, the business process in India, and the legality of establishing an office in the region."

Today, ASAP has over 900 consultants on staff, and areas of expertise include design, development, and project administration. By expanding globally, we have been able to draw from a larger pool of more highly qualified consultants, which has enabled us to attract and retain larger clients."

3 KAREN EMANUEL, MANAGING DIRECTOR

Key Production Ltd.,

keyproduction.co.uk

Industry: Audio/AV and associated print manufacturing

Based in: Europe

Conducts Business In: Europe and United States

Karen's Advice: *Get a lawyer—and an accountant.* "Before expanding, it's crucial to research the market you're interested in. For this research, I turn to professional advisors, especially lawyers. Expanding outside the United Kingdom has allowed us to increase revenue, but my main problem in business—both in the UK and abroad—is securing payments. Before inking a deal in a new region, a knowledgeable lawyer can advise on how to obtain references and, if needed, help you collect payments. I also rely on my accountants to monitor cash flows and projections across many markets."

4 MILAGROS JOHANSON, GENERAL MANAGER

Fidenza Disegno,

fidenza-disegno.com

Industry: Jewelry design and manufacturing

Based in: South America

Conducts Business In: Latin America

Milagros' Advice: *Offer Something Unique.* "Conducting business globally is an opportunity to show the world what South America offers in terms of materials and service. We use techniques and materials that you can only find here—like *huayruros*, *cacho de toro*, and Peruvian shells. This reflects our Peruvian and Andean culture, and gives a unique style to our products. The strategy is working: we have won many Latin American quality awards, which give us international recognition."

OUT&ABOUT

InfoComm

Las Vegas, NV,
June 9-11 2010

1 InfoComm is the annual conference for the audiovisual industry. The 2010 event was its largest yet.

2 More than 32,000 AV professionals attended; conference-goers hailed from more than 90 countries.

