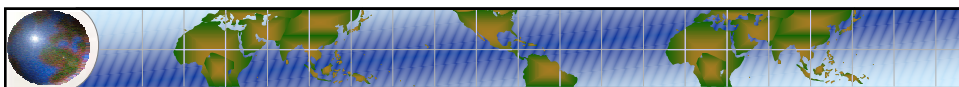




Association of
Cooperative Educators

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Attracting and Developing Women Leaders
Desjardins' Experience

by
Suzanne Maisonneuve Benoit



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Desjardins' Mission

To contribute to the well-being of people and the economic and social development of their communities within the compatible limits of its field of activity by:

- ✓ developing an integrated cooperative network of sound and profitable financial services, owned and administered by the members, and a competitive, member-controlled network of complementary financial companies
- ✓ teaching democracy, economics, solidarity and individual and collective responsibility, especially to members, officers and employees



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Desjardins Today

- The largest financial institution in Québec and the 6th largest in Canada in terms of assets
- Over 5.5 million owner-users (members) in Canada (70% of Quebecers are members of a Desjardins caisse)
- Over 125,000 business members in Canada
- 8,127 elected officers in Canada
- Canadian assets totalling \$99.4 billion (including federations outside Québec)
- 676 caisses and 1,077 service centres (total: 1,753 points of service) in Canada and some 20 subsidiaries
- www.desjardins.com: the most visited financial site in Québec and the third most visited in Canada
- Québec's largest private employer (36,139 people)



Data as at December 31, 2003

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Desjardins in Canada

With 100 billion dollars in assets, Desjardins is the largest financial cooperative group in Canada



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Desjardins in Canada

- **68 caisses** (plus 179 service centres) organized into 3 federations in French-speaking communities **in New Brunswick, Ontario and Manitoba** (assets reached \$4.7 billion in 2003)
- **Establishment in 2003 of the Desjardins Credit Union in Ontario:** acquisition of Province of Ontario Savings Office; a network of approximately 40,000 members, 75,000 accounts, 28 branches and \$2.1 billion in deposit liabilities as at December 31, 2003. The third largest credit union in Canada and the largest in Ontario
- **Willingness to develop our business in Canada** by means of strategic alliances with caisses and credit unions in other provinces
- **Major sales force in Canadian provinces other than Québec** (1,795 employees primarily in Toronto and Vancouver) specialized in life insurance, general insurance, securities and asset management



Data as at December 31, 2003

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Desjardins Around the World

International cooperation

Major contribution to several international cooperative organizations:

ICA: International Co-operative Alliance

ICBA: International Co-operative Banking Association

ICPB: International Confederation of Popular Banks

ICMIF: International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation



- One **bank in Florida** managed by Caisse centrale
- **International network of correspondents** and numerous supply programs in the U.S. and Europe through Caisse centrale
- Technical support and investment of community finance from **Développement international Desjardins** in savings and loan networks and other financial institutions in developing countries: over 40 projects in more than 20 countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Central and Eastern Europe. Major contracts were realized in Mexico in 2002 and 2003. Through its projects, DID supports 3,244 caisses (with combined assets of close to \$1 billion as at June 30, 2003) and reaches more than 2.5 million people
- **Virtual presence** of Desjardins through international ATM networks such as PLUS, CIRRUS and VISA international

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The Largest Physical Presence in Québec

Desjardins accounts for 57% of all physical points of service in Québec, compared to 43% for the 7 largest banks.

- **1,506 points of service in Québec** (caisses and services centres)
- **Largest ATM network** in Québec: 2,728
- 41,096 **POS terminals**
- 57 **Corporate Financial Centres (CFCs)**
- **Mobile advisory and sales force** for individuals and businesses
- **Point-of-sale consumer loan financing** at approximately 3,100 "*accord D'*" merchants and other financing centres through direct sellers or market intermediaries

(2003 data)



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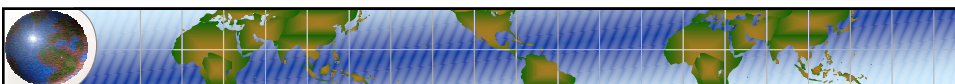


Seminars:

- **WOMEN OFFICERS' SEMINAR (1991)**
Theme - Women taking up a challenge as elected officers
- **DESJARDINS... DORÉNAVANT (2000)**
Theme - Building strategies to strengthen women's representation




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Working Towards Better Community Representation

49% of caisses have at least 30% of women as elected officers

- **Advisory boards** and other initiatives that aim to improve representation of women, youth, cultural communities and aboriginals within Desjardins Group. They also aim to improve our ability to meet the specific needs of these client groups.
- **6% of elected officers are between 18 and 34 years of age** (461 young elected officers for a total of 7,431)
- **30% of elected officers are women** (2,249 women elected officers for a total of 7,431)
- **17% of caisse General Managers are women**
- **23% of Fédération Board members are women** and the president of Desjardins Financial Corporation is a woman




(2003 Québec caisse network data) 10

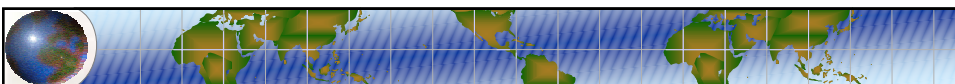


Networking

- Femmes Desjardins, Montréal 1988
- Partenaires Entr'Elles, Québec City 1994
- Partenaires Entr'Elles, other regions, 1998...




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Women's Advisory Commission

- Fostering improved representation of women in management
- Acknowledging and integrating the specific needs of women



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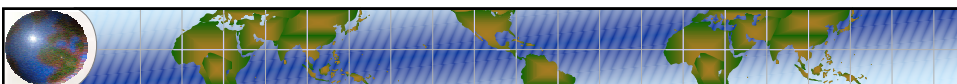


Training

- Political abilities
- Reading and understanding financial statements




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Mentoring

- Sponsoring network - Fondation de l'entrepreneurship
- The role of mentor



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Being proactive

- Securing the actual support of senior management
- Focusing on clear objectives
- Defining and implementing an action plan