

Trade Mission: Mexico

Mexico Overview

Mexico is third among Virginia export destinations with exports in 2020 equal to USD 831 million. Mexican companies, government agencies, and entire industries are deeply familiar with and receptive to U.S. products and services. U.S. producers often find it straightforward to market and sell their services and products in Mexico. The market continues to benefit from the agreement to modernize NAFTA into the USMCA and its proximity to the United States and its modern port infrastructure. Mexico is the 15th largest economy in the world, and recent economic reforms have liberalized key sectors such as energy and telecommunications, creating market opportunities for U.S. companies. Close cultural, social, and economic ties make Mexico a natural market to consider for first-time and expanding exporters.

The top opportunities for Virginia exporters in Mexico include:

- Aerospace
- Environmental Technologies
- Internet and IT
- Safety and Security
- Smart Grid

Opportunities in Mexico

Manufacturing

Manufacturing has led productivity in Mexico for nearly 30 years. This is particularly true in the Bajío region over the last 10 years, both in terms of absolute growth and investment and in best practices for quality control, supply chain logistics, and process management. Automotive, aerospace, electronics, and appliance manufacturing clusters offer opportunities for advanced materials, components and secondary processes; operations and warehouse optimization; as well as logistics, IoT, automation, and services that help local companies perform better.



Infrastructure

Infrastructure has once again become a very active sector, as Mexico's government in 2020 renewed its support of investment by the private sector in telecommunications; rail, port, and highway transportation; and tourism infrastructure. This is in addition to perennial improvement in water and electricity management. Opportunities to add value exist for Virginia service providers in design, integration, and engineering, and for companies with related managed services and innovations. With development targeting Mexico's southeastern tropical region, environmental technologies are also in demand to assure safeguarding of precious natural resources.

Information Technology

Boom opportunities in Mexico take the form of cloud-based and API services; expert consulting services, especially in information security; financial technology to help keep up with accelerated "bankifaction" of consumers and SMEs; automation; IoT networks; and logistics and process management. ICT offerings, like most services in Mexico, are most successful through local partners or agents who already have strong relationships with your potential customers.

Safety and Security

The safety and security industry ranges from defense and law enforcement cooperation on regional security to industrial safety in manufacturing, mining, and petrochemicals. These can include environmental, worker, and asset protection services and products; situational awareness and intelligence platforms and consulting; aviation services and parts; and related training and technologies. Because Virginia solutions in these areas are often developed from direct work with U.S. Government agencies, perception of value proposition by Mexico's counterparts is particularly high.

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VEDP's Mexico Trade Mission gave our company an opportunity to meet with and learn more about prospective client's businesses and third-party resources. These events help us identify new opportunities to serve Mexico's industrial markets.

Trade Mission to Mexico

Details

The objective for this trip is to arrange and conduct quality meetings between you, our VEDP client, and potential sales partners (agents, representatives, or distributors) and/or customers in Mexico. The ultimate goal for these meetings is to help your company generate new sales among customers in Mexico and to provide you with market intelligence only attainable by an in-country visit.

Trade Mission Dates

March 13-17, 2023

Registration Deadline

January 13, 2023*

*You are encouraged to register early as this mission fills quickly.

Schedule:

The trade mission is based in Mexico City, with meetings to be scheduled in the metropolitan area, a region of 23 million people that includes Mexico City and Mexico State.

The schedule is planned as follows, and is subject to change. Your specific itinerary will depend on the location of your best potential partners identified by Neighbors International Business Group.



Date	Day	Activity
January 13, 2023	Friday	Last day for registration
March 11, 2023	Saturday	Latest day to depart the U.S.; Rest / Sightseeing
March 12, 2023	Sunday	Welcome; Review of itineraries and group dinner
March 13, 2023	Monday	Individual meetings
March 14, 2023	Tuesday	Individual meetings
March 15, 2023	Wednesday	Individual meetings
March 16, 2023	Thursday	Individual meetings
March 17, 2023	Friday	Individual meetings; Trade Mission concludes
March 18, 2023	Saturday	Return to the U.S.

Frequently Asked Questions:

How many Virginia companies will participate?

The registration process is ongoing. Based on past trade missions, we expect 6–8 Virginia companies to participate.

What is the cost for my company to participate?

The trade mission participation fee is \$2,500. This fee is per company, not per participant.

The participation fee includes the following:

- Identifying and screening potential partners, as well as match-making and organizing meetings with these companies
- Each participant will receive a fully customized report with a project/market overview, detailed company profiles of all prospective partners with scheduled meeting, and a summary of all other contacts made
- Translator, as required
- Briefing on “Doing Business in the Mexico”
- Your VEDP Trade Mission Leader and in-country consultant on hand during the week to ensure everything runs to plan
- Additionally, this fee includes 90 days of follow up support from the in-country contractor post mission

Additional *estimated* costs you will incur include (but are not limited to):

Expense	Estimated amount (\$)
Roundtrip airfare from Dulles to Mexico City, Economy Class	900–1,100
Hotels (6–7 nights at \$300/night)	1,800
Meals	400
Airport transfers, taxis, public transportation, and other miscellaneous items	85–250/day

How are the meetings organized?

VEDP has engaged the services of Neighbors International Business Group, a highly qualified consulting firm, to identify, screen, and arrange meetings with potential partners for each of our trade mission delegates. Neighbors International Business Group was selected through a competitive bidding process and has demonstrated extraordinary expertise, enthusiasm, and commitment to the work of introducing Virginia companies to the Mexican market. Neighbors International Business Group has supported VEDP’s trade missions to the region for over six years and has served as our market research partner in Mexico. If you would like to learn more about Neighbors International Business Group, please review their websites: www.neighbors.mx.

Neighbors International and the Trade Mission Leader will have detailed conversations with each participating company, to ensure a full understanding of your products and services and the profile of companies, partners or government agencies you want to meet with during the trade mission.

How will I get to my meetings?

In most cases, you will be traveling independently to the locations of the local companies with which you are meeting. Neighbors International Business Group will provide detailed instructions for each delegate on how to get from one appointment to the next, as well as expected travel time. For travel between meetings, Neighbors International Business Group will recommend the most effective method of transportation and provide information, including taxi services and public transportation options. Your meeting program will highlight details of advance booking options and specific travel instructions. Because most appointments will be held at the companies' locations, travel and other logistics may prevent each delegate from having a minimum of 3–4 meetings each day of the trade mission.

Will I need an interpreter?

Mexican company representatives at the managerial level often speak English, although there could be exceptions for which interpreter services will be provided by the mission organizer. It's typically of benefit (and recommended) to have product literature available in Spanish, especially if you target government or non-transnational clients. It's also helpful to have the text of any presentation you show written in Spanish, even if you plan to walk clients through it in English. Our consultants can facilitate translation services in Mexico if you wish to look at having them translated there.

How are airline and hotel reservations handled?

Airline tickets: You book (and pay for) your own airline ticket via local travel agent or online air travel website. The airport code for Mexico City Airport is MEX. If you do not have a travel agent, the Trade Mission Leader can recommend one for you.

Hotels: VEDP will choose the hotel(s) and make reservations at a pre-negotiated government rate for each delegate. **However, delegates will be responsible for their own hotel charges throughout the mission.** All delegates will stay at the same hotel in order to facilitate logistics as well as to encourage the interaction and networking that is always a collateral benefit of traveling with a group. You will pay all hotel room charges directly to the hotel.

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We made several contacts that will likely lead to long-term relationships and increase our sales in Mexico.

Trade Mission to Mexico

How can I verify that Mexico is a good market for my company before we register for the trade mission?

Contact your local International Trade Manager or the Trade Mission Leader (see bottom of last page) **immediately!** We only want you to make the trip if we think there is good market potential in Mexico for your company. We can perform exploratory market research within a short period of time to verify market potential for you. The more time you give us, the better job we can do!

What are the entry requirements for Mexico? Will I need a passport or visa?

A visa is not required for Mexico for a stay of up to 90 days. Please keep in mind that while a visa is not required, you must:

- Hold a passport valid for at least six months beyond your date of country exit and with one blank visa page
- Hold proof of onward and return flights
- Hold all documents required for the next destination
- Hold proof of sufficient funds relative to your intended length of stay

If you plan to show samples, demonstrate products, or offer small branded gifts during your meetings, assess whether to carry them with you or to send them separately to Mexico via courier. If you decide to send them, our consultant will gladly receive and hold them for you, but please ensure they are precisely, fully, and accurately documented, and that they are shipped well in advance of the mission, foreseeing possible delays in customs. Whether bringing these items with you or sending them, do also make it clear for customs that they are not for sale and entering Mexico temporarily.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

You will enter Mexico as a tourist, for which a small piece of paper is issued that you must return to your airline when you depart the country. Please **keep this piece of paper** as delays and fees will occur if you do not present it upon leaving.

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This event helped put us in contact with numerous companies in Mexico that could have a long-term business impact as we begin to move into that market with new products.

Trade Mission to Mexico

Registration:

How do I register to participate?

You can register and pay the trade mission fee online by visiting:
<https://mexico-trade-mission-2023.eventbrite.com>.

Contact the Trade Mission Leader for more information:

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Consultant Bio

Mexico

Mary Claire Whitaker

Mary Claire Whitaker is the founding partner of Neighbors International, a Mexico-based consultancy that helps its clients enter new markets and achieve growth within those markets. Since 2013, the firm has already assisted some 250 companies of varying sizes to enter new markets throughout the Americas, and Virginia companies looking to enter the Mexican market are bound to continue to expand this figure well into the future.