

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ABCMI is known for creating networking opportunities, and they were very fortunate with their timing. They held their last in-person event in March 2020, just before the Covid-19 pandemic stopped all in-person gatherings and pushed the association to change how they help companies connect.

They pivoted to live webinars creating content with broad appeal to continue supporting their members, and since March 2020, they have held more than 30 live event webinars. They know their members prefer meeting face-to-face, but there's still a benefit on online communication, and they foresee having hybrid offerings of virtual and in-person events.

In efforts to return to in-person meetings, the association made sure to work closely with venues, developed event-specific covid protocols, and ensured all public health orders were strictly followed, which allowed them to host two events during the Covid-19 global pandemic. The first event was the BC Ferries Business Opportunities Forum in June 2020. The second was the annual Business Opportunities Conference and Trade Show in November 2021 at the Vancouver Convention Centre.

As with most not-for-profit associations, financial sustainability is one of the big challenges. It's difficult to plan and make financial commitments years into the future without having secure sources of core activity funding. ABCMI relies on revenues from annual memberships and sponsorships and is continually looking to undertake projects that can benefit its members. They keep their membership fees low cost for it not to become a barrier to entry. They are delighted to see how members appreciate their efforts and continue to support and recognize the value of the membership.

ABCMI also started working on an international business development plan to support BC companies with export activities, but the pandemic hit the pause button. They began working with other Canadian organizations to bring BC companies under the Canada brand at international trade shows and conferences. And now, they are hoping to pick up where they left off and expect to participate in Oceanology International this March with four BC companies in the Canada Pavilion.

