



## PNWA A Global Gateway Service

# Building Business Bridges Between India & US



Don Vollmer, President of Pacific Northwest Advisors (PNWA) and Lew Macfarlane, who directs PNWA's India-US Business Advisory Services, both in Seattle, U.S.A. have been interviewed Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC) for Indo-US Business. Both Vollmer and Macfarlane touch upon the great potential that exists for cooperation between Indian and US companies.

**Don, please tell us about yourself, and Lew, about yourself**

**Don Vollmer:** First, thanks for this opportunity to talk with the members of the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce. IACC is a great organization we've had the opportunity to meet with your members over recent years during delegation visits to Seattle, and we're especially honored that your founder member, Hemant Sonawala, is an old friend and a

distinguished member of our Advisory Board.

My own background is mainly in banking and international finance, and I've been with the World Bank, the Bank of Tokyo, and the Bank of America. Our idea in launching PNWA was to put together a powerful business group that could work strategically to develop business between our region and the international economy. Today, PNWA has grown into an international business network with 34 Advisors and Associates in almost every region of the world.

**Lew Macfarlane:** I'm originally from Seattle and then was in the U.S. Diplomatic Service for many years. I was privileged to represent the U.S. in South Asia and, after I retired from the Foreign Service, decided to help build business bridges between the United States and India. It was a tough go in the 1990s, but since then we've seen an historical transformation of the Indian economy plus a huge, positive shift in the nature of relations between our two countries. The possibilities for business development now are literally unlimited.

**Please give us some more background on the Pacific Northwest.**

**Vollmer:** Pacific Northwest Advisors is based in Seattle and really focuses on the five states Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, and Montana of our region. The Pacific Northwest is huge geographically (not too much smaller than





India, in fact) but with a population of less than 15 million, and a dynamic, diverse and fast-growing economy with an annual gross regional product of about half a trillion dollars. Your members know the names Boeing, Microsoft, Amazon.com, Starbucks and so forth, but we're a world leader in technology of all kinds, including IT, biotech, cutting-edge healthcare, nanotechnology. Many companies in this area see becoming involved in India as a logical next step.

**Macfarlane:** Our region has evolved much as India is doing from a lower tech to a higher tech economy. The household names Don mentioned are just the tip of the iceberg and there are literally thousands of companies here that could benefit from partnerships with India. Besides the high-tech sectors, we've also got tremendous resources in forest products and related products, marine resources and fisheries, service industries, a wide range of agricultural products and a leadership position in agricultural technology and food packaging, processing, and storage.

### **Please tell us more about PNWA and what it does.**

**Vollmer:** We really have an extremely wide range of capabilities and expertise we can provide to all our clients: strategic planning, relocation services, joint venture development, export management, government relations, transportation and logistics; manufacturing and supply chain management, oil and energy, mergers and acquisitions, marketing, business, law, banking and finance, and market research. We're not consultants; rather, we aim for a "trusted advisor" relationship with our partner companies---working with them over the long term, as part of their management team, to ensure business success.

**Macfarlane:** Let me mention our Global Gateway Service--- a key resource for any Indian company that wants to become active in our regional market or needs a U.S. supplier or partner. We offer overseas companies a wide range of deliverables including customized market research, specific industry profiles, business matchmaking, locating a distributor or representative, qualifying potential partners, negotiation, and much more. Our focus, always, is on what the client needs. We'll discuss those needs, free

of charge, and come up with a proposal specifically tailored to what the client wants, with compensation primarily based on success fees. And then we'll carry through on implementation.

### **What are the opportunities as far as India is concerned?**

**Macfarlane:** We have a rich and always-expanding network of first-rate contacts in India. We have a good sense of the opportunities, as well as some of the obstacles to be overcome on both sides. We try to keep up on our analysis of key trends in India, but our consistent focus is on business success for ourselves and our clients.

### **Can you be more specific?**

**Vollmer:** Sure. We have a contract with one of India's largest business groups, for some very specialized expertise we're providing. We're helping one of your top exporters find retail partners here. We're exploring some FDI options. We're helping a top local company seeking to export our wonderful Washington state wines to India. We're also exploring some specific markets in India for some specialized food products, as well as our world-class agricultural technology.

**Macfarlane:** ...and there's more going on all the time. This is a unique time for Indians and Americans to be exploring business opportunities together. And we really value our relationship with your great organization. More and more, India and other parts of the world are seeing the Pacific Northwest as an ideal place to start or expand their U.S. business connections. And there's no business group in our region that can do a better job of getting that process started. So please drop us an email, and we'll start a serious conversation about doing business.

*Contact Information:* **Lew Macfarlane**, Director, India-US Business Advisory Services, Pacific Northwest Advisors ([www.pnwa.com](http://www.pnwa.com)) ■