

Importers, exporters learn to spin a wide Web

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Importers and exporters know that the Web these days is as vital a business tool as trucks, ships, planes, trains, and automobiles.

But many don't know how to use technology effectively to market their wares throughout the world. The Global Business Roundtable, a 24-year-old group of professionals in the field, aimed to change that Wednesday during a seminar on e-commerce in Rochelle Park.

"We want to help people become active in international trade and without the Internet they're not going to be able to do that," said Frank Garcia, vice president of the Global Business Roundtable. "But the technology is so vast it can be overwhelming."

To allay anxieties about creating Web sites and using the Internet as a marketing tool to customers in Asia, Africa, Europe, and other foreign lands, the group enlisted the help of Web design and product branding specialist Marya Triandafellos.

"Everything is so competitive today you really have to stand out," said Triandafellos, president of MET Design Inc. in New York.

"People in importing and exporting need to realize the Web isn't an extra, but an essential part of their businesses."

She offered tips on content and presentation to help businesses create sites that other businesses and potential customers can easily negotiate, such as using clear language and links to product information.

Seminar speaker Janet Driscoll discussed one way importers and exporters can promote their Web sites and expand their reach.

The World Trade Centers Associations, she said, offers businesses a chance to network in 90 countries.

"We exist to help build relationships in the global market," said Driscoll, New York region manager of WTCA online.

Seminar attendee Susan Brod, owner of the sales outsourcing company APH Associates Inc. in Wayne, found the tips on expanding visibility in the marketplace useful.

"It's important for marketing our services to companies in foreign countries," Brod said.

The Global Business Roundtable meets monthly to network and tackle pressing industry issues.

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