

Montreal This Week

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Economic Indicators:

* According to Statistics Canada, Québec manufacturing shipments rose 0.8% in January to \$10.81 billion (over December/seasonally adjusted), compared to a decrease of 0.4% in Ontario.

* Québec new motor vehicle sales in January increased 4.2% to 31 150 units (over December/seasonally adjusted), compared to a 2.5% increase in Ontario.

Contracts:

* SNC-Lavalin will build a \$US562 million thermal-power generating plant in Algeria. * Adacel Technologies has signed a contract with Lockheed Martin to supply voice-recognition systems.

Real Estate:

* According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, the average price of a home in the Montréal region in February rose 14.3% to \$176 992 (year-over-year).

Investments:

* Vancouver-based Boston Pizza has announced expansion plans into Québec with an initial 4 restaurants and a franchisee training centre in Laval. * Telus Québec has announced an investment of \$4.5 million to upgrade its network. * Magna Entertainment Corporation has announced an offer to buy Québec's four horse racing tracks with the promise of a \$100 million investment. * The Laurentian Bank has announced plan to expand its Québec network opening 20 new branches.

Jobs:

* According to Statistics Canada, Montréal's unemployment rate fell to 8.9% in February, from 9.1% in January. * JetsGo has increased its labour force by 200 in the last 2 weeks. * Video game developer Electronic Arts has announced plans to hire an additional 20 employees.

Conferences:

* Inter logiQ Network will hold its 4th annual CEO Vision Symposium in Tremblant on April 1 to 3, 2004. Designed for technology CEOs, the event offers a unique networking opportunity. Featured speakers include Harvard professor Das Narayandas and Captain Robert Piché. For more information, contact: Marlene Kovac at (514) 935-0166, Ext. 148. * E=MC² is hosting "How to Manage Conflict with Customers and Suppliers" at the Residence Inn By Marriot, 2170 Lincoln Avenue on Wednesday April 7th, 2004 at

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