

VIRGINIA LITTLEJOHN

Virginia Littlejohn is co-founder, President and CEO of **Quantum Leaps, Inc.**, a non-profit global accelerator for women's entrepreneurship based in Washington DC, which uses technology to develop and disseminate knowledge and facilitate the sharing of best practices. Ms. Littlejohn has been the OECD's Senior Advisor for Women's Entrepreneurship since 1995.

She and Quantum Leaps are now working with the OECD on fostering women's entrepreneurship in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). For this project, Quantum Leaps will create trade linkages through the strategic utilization of technology and eCommerce, and the sharing of best practices. Quantum Leaps is also working with the Global Business Committee of the Women's Business Enterprise National Council on an initiative to get women-owned businesses certified as 51% or more women-owned, so that they can be integrated into the global supply chain and the world of eCommerce, and become suppliers to Global 500 multinational corporations.

Ms. Littlejohn is also co-founder and Chairman of **TradeBuilders, Inc.**, a for-profit company based in Washington, DC, which has been helping companies and organizations go global since 1999. TradeBuilders utilizes an Internet portal, videoconferencing, online forums, virtual trade missions and virtual communities to share best practices and facilitate trade linkages. TradeBuilders organized and hosted the world's first virtual trade mission in 1998, between women-owned businesses in Canada, Malaysia and Singapore.

Ms. Littlejohn has organized numerous trade missions and trade events over the last several decades. In 1985, she helped organize the first women-owned-business trade mission in the world, between the United States and London, Frankfurt and Madrid. In the early 1990s, she was the first chairman of the International Trade Committees for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Council on Small Business, the Small Business Legislative Council, and the American Express Small Business Partnership. She also served as the "Going Global" columnist for *Association Trends*.

In 1995, Ms. Littlejohn organized the International Visitors Program for the White House Conference on Small Business, as well as its Global Workplace of the Future exhibit, which profiled then cutting-edge technologies such as eCommerce, eBusiness and mobile telephony. As the Internet began transforming how business was conducted, she served on IBM's Research and Technology Advisory Council to provide input on the technology needs of SMEs. "Once people have access to technology and learn how to use it effectively," Ms. Littlejohn says, "then technology can be one of the ultimate strategic enablers of business and economic growth."

Over the last several decades, Ms. Littlejohn has worked with a high-level global network of leading entrepreneurs; association, corporate and foundation executives; as well as government and trade officials from numerous countries in all parts of the world. She has decades of experience in women's entrepreneurship, including as President of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) in the U.S. in 1984-1985, and as Vice President of the 40-country World Association of Women Entrepreneurs in the 1990s. She organized entrepreneurial training in the former Soviet Union in 1990, and helped the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) launch and organize a 60-country conference on women's entrepreneurship for developing and transition economies in 1997. She also served as president of the Professional Services Council, which represents the innovative, knowledge-based professional and technical services industry in the United States.

Ms. Littlejohn's clients have included American Express, AT&T, Business Week, IBM, The White House, the OECD, Royal Bank of Canada, Bank of Ireland, and Westpac Bank of Australia and New Zealand.

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