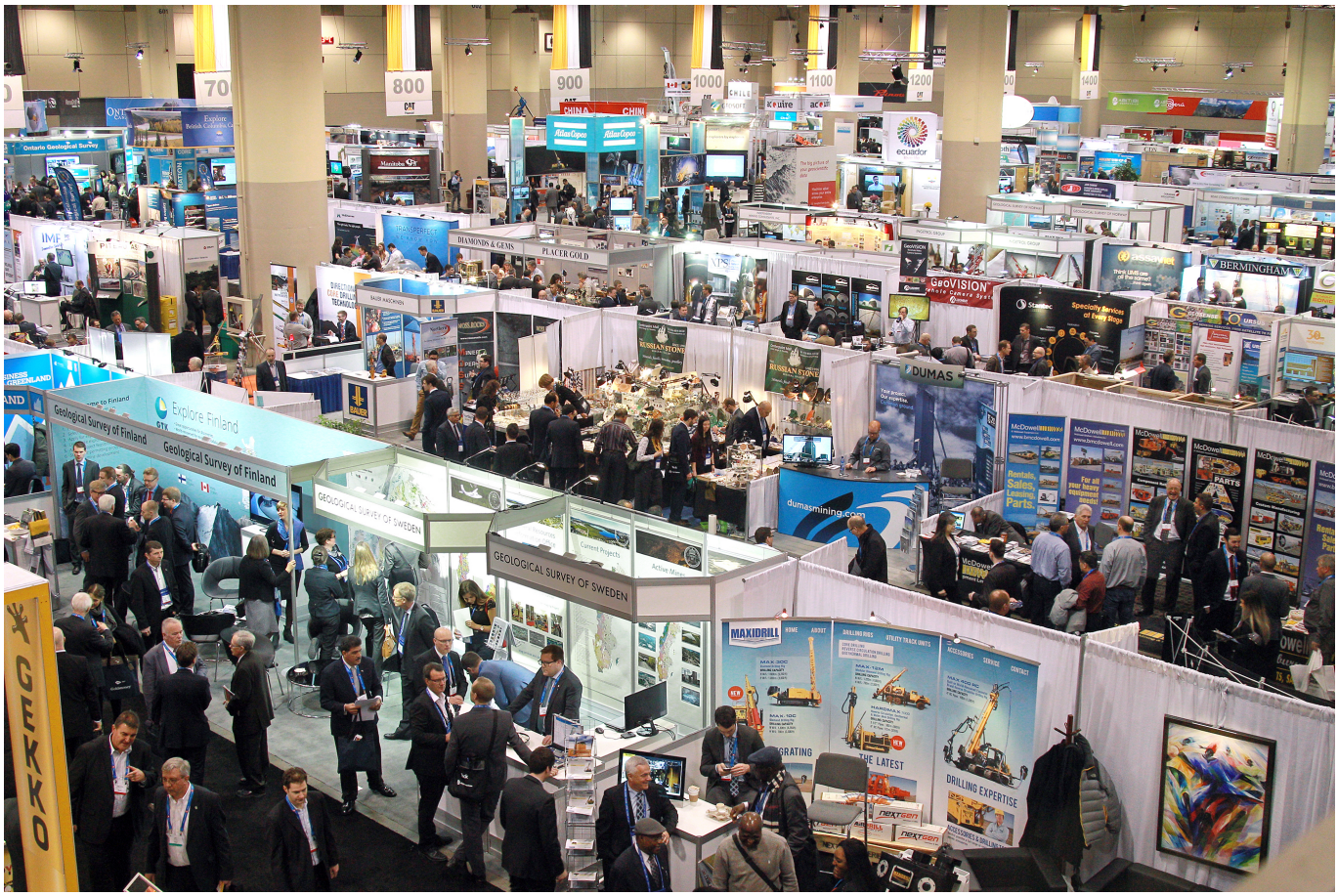
PDAC 2018 preview

PDAC 2018 is upon us, and once again I am making my annual pilgrimage to the frozen Arctic weather conditions that prevail in Toronto in early March, in order to participate in what is my favourite large mining conference.

Here I preview the PDAC from an investor's viewpoint, and outline why I enjoy attending this conference so much.



PDAC 2018 – An investor's eye view

Once again, I am making my annual pilgrimage to brave the

artic like weather that generally prevails in Toronto at the beginning of March, to participate in the PDAC mining conference, the world's biggest, and probably still the best.

People often ask me what attending this show is like, so I thought it would be useful to describe it from my personal viewpoint, as I have been attending as an investor since 2006.

The PDAC started in the Royal York Hotel, opposite Union Station, but quickly outgrew the space available there, and has moved across the railway tracks to the Convention Centre South, in downtown Toronto, next to the famous CN Tower.



Arriving on a crisp Sunday morning, (it's always cold) I descend to the first sub level, where there is a throng of thousands of people queueing to register or self-printing badges at the self service registration computers. Once registered, another two escalator rides down, and I arrive at the Investor's Exchange, my home for the next three and a half days.

I always feel a tinge of excitement on that first morning as the booths come into view and the expectation of finding some new, exciting, and undiscovered companies to invest in appears once again.

Once inside the massive L shaped hall, where there are around 600 company booths, the buzz is electric on that first morning as people dart around between booths seeking information or the chance to chat over past results and future plans. Sunday is the main day for private investors, and the ‘mom and pops’ are always in attendance, lovely people, and everyone enjoys talking to them.

One useful and unique feature of PDAC is that companies normally retain their booth positions year on year, so if you have some companies you want to meet every year, their booth is in the same place as last year. It makes life so much easier given the size of the venue.

Sunday finishes, like every other day, with a whole host of receptions and networking opportunities in nearby hotels and restaurants. Sunday night I always go to the Silver Party on the 18th floor of the Royal York Hotel, which is a lovely setting, and they serve tasty canapes and fine wines.



Monday is the professional's day, so the PDAC is quieter, with fewer investors in evidence, and more people wearing suits. The suits are either brokers there to connect with companies, or part of the myriad of service companies such as IR or geologists, that are there to seek to sell their wares to the mining industry.

It is this inclusivity that makes the PDAC so special in my opinion. Everyone is welcome, both investors and people seeking commercial opportunities, and you never know who you might bump into or sit next to whilst taking a much needed rest and a cup of coffee.

Tuesday and Wednesday get progressively quieter, and many booths are often left unattended during the day, so it's much harder to connect with someone you wish to meet. Each evening involves social functions, all events are free, and each day I grow more tired than the previous one, and after walking all day on wafer thin carpet over solid concrete, the feet *really* hurt!

At one o’clock on Wednesday lunch time a loud voice bellows out that “the PDAC has closed, take down your booths”, to loud cheers and great relief all round, and another year of endless walking and talking has ended.

There’s enough time to pick up the baggage and head up to the Airport for the 18.30 flight home, arriving first thing next morning in London.

The PDAC is the original mining and trade show, the biggest, and still the best in my opinion. They run a great show, make everyone feel welcome, and keep attracting hundreds of companies and around twenty five thousand delegates each year.

I Will be back next year…