MANAGING YOUR INFORMATION HOLDINGS:
From 'Manila Folders' to OPAC*

By Anna McCormick

One of the frustrations of today's information society is that information is easily lost or hidden under mountains of "rubble", and can be tedious and time-consuming to find. Sometimes you don't know how to find it; other times you don't even know what you have. Don Caldwell and his staff in Manila have come up with a solution to this familiar problem. Using the Cardfile feature in Windows, they have developed a Library Management System (LMS) that lists the titles of all information holdings and their location in the embassy by program. The best part is that access to the LMS is only their friendly PC away!

To test its user-friendliness, I tried out Manila's Trade LMS using a copy Don kindly e-mailed to me from Manila. First, I conducted a search for titles for a hypothetical presentation to Philippine beef importers. Manila's Trade LMS has 6 directories: 1) Main Trade Refer-

ence directory, 2) Brochures, 3) Videos, 4) Company Catalogues, 5) Periodicals and 6) Asian Development Bank reference. Accessing the system through a "hotkey" macro, I found all I needed, a selection of brochures, a number of periodicals, the Canada Beef Exporters Federation membership directory, as well as a choice of videos.

I then used the LMS to conduct a search for titles for a hypothetical presentation on the Philippine market for beef to Canadian exporters . Using the key word "agri", I began my search in the Main Trade Reference directory. I found the titles I needed under "Business Conditions - Agrifood - Phils", "Trade Directories - Philippines" and "Company Catalogues", the latter listing both local and Canadian company profiles and promotional literature.

Manila also uses its LMS to track its inventory of Asian Development Bank reference materials facilitating access to the myriad of reports, etc., the post must maintain on the 50+

member countries of the ADB and the bank's $5 billion annual development programme.

These are just a few examples of how an LMS makes life easier for mission staff. One of its other time-saving benefits comes in serving local drop-in researchers, who can independently search for information with a minimum of assistance using a PC located in the main library. The LMS functions as a precursor to the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), the system currently used in libraries.

As a result of Manila's pioneering work, SKS has developed and is now testing an inexpensive OPAC for use by missions. We will report on this development in our next issue. In the meantime, if you would like to learn more about Manila's LMS, please give Don Caldwell, Marife Buscaino or Jerry Lavina in Manila a call at 346-0000.

*Online Public Access Catalogue

Anna McCormick is a communications consultant with TOO.

Worldwide Retail Market Information *By Tony Marino*

Seeking value-added market information for clients? Nielsen Marketing Services offers market information on hundreds of consumer retail product categories, in over 6 continents and 70 countries worldwide.

This worldwide information network gives Canadian exporters an appreciation of what they are up against on retail shelves – where the ultimate buying decision is made.

Available information includes:
- Quantitative and dollar measures of market size
- Identification and market share of best-performing segments
- Profiles of leading retailers and channels of retail distribution
- Retail market share of key competi-

tors and the brands they control
- Indication of most popular product format: size, flavour and container type
- Regional development indicators to identify sub-geographic markets with the best potential for market expansion
- Promotion expenditure and other costs of market entry

Nielsen's international databank covers the following industry sectors:
- Durables
- Textiles and Clothing
- Grocery Edibles
- Household Cleaners and Detergents
- Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages
- Hardware and General Merchandise

- Dairy and Refrigerated Products
- OTC Pharmaceuticals
- Cosmetics and Beauty Aids

National and regional data is available for the following territories:
- United States, Canada and Mexico
- Western and Eastern Europe
- Latin America
- South America
- Japan, Australia and the Pacific
- China and the emerging countries of South East Asia

For more information, contact Tony Marino by phone at (514) 333-1416, by fax at (514) 333-1526, or by mail at 3333 Place Cavendish, Suite 505, St-Laurent, Quebec, H4M 2X6.