

Canadian business people, seeking practical information about Asian markets, about exporting their products and about networking opportunities. Education institutions and non-profit, non-governmental organizations are also active users of the APFC's information services, each making up approximately 20% of information requests. Federal and provincial governments and media representatives make up the majority of the Information unit's other calls.

The geographical breakdown of the APFC's information requests underscores the national -- and international -- scope of the Foundation's services. In 1993, inquiries from British Columbia comprised about 59% of Information Services requests, while 16% originated from Ontario, 8% from the Prairie Provinces, 5% from Quebec, and 2% from Atlantic Canada. In addition to handling requests from across Canada, Information Services received close to 100 requests for information from companies and institutions in the Asia Pacific region and around the world.

The Information Services unit maintains its resources from sources all around the world, although the majority of its holdings focus specifically on the Asia Pacific region. Books, periodicals and files contain a wealth of information and statistics, and are arranged so that they are easily accessible to users. In addition to these outside sources, the Information unit has developed its own series of information products, including the Country Backgrounders series, quarterly-updated bilateral trade statistics and a Canadian Trade Summary. New information products in development include immigration data and statistics, investment data and statistics, and the "Success Stories" project, describing Canadian companies which have successfully marketed their products and services in the Asia Pacific region.

Besides print materials, APFC's information services include extensive electronic information products, featuring a series of Asia Pacific related databases. The Corporations database, containing over 550 listings, assists in tracking Canadian corporate activity in Asia. The Human Resources database profiles over 1,880 Canadians from business, government, academia and media with expertise on the Asia Pacific. The Cross Cultural Business Skills database is in the design phase, and will detail over 500 key resources on how to better understand and conduct business in the region.

Finally, the Curriculum Resources database -- containing source material, course outlines and a directory of Canadian educators -- brings together a comprehensive package of suggested educational resources on the Asia Pacific. The Curriculum Resources database has attracted over 600 subscribers from British Columbia, Ontario and Saskatchewan. Clients include primary and secondary schools, school boards, publishing companies, education consultants and ministries of education. The Information Services unit provides ongoing user support and conducts training workshops across Canada on the use of its databases which are consistently well attended.

The APFC's Manager of Information Services is currently working with several research groups and Canadian publishing companies who are seeking to develop Asia Pacific curriculum-related CD ROM and multi-media products (K-12). The Information Services unit is assisting in identifying key resources, information products, and resource people.