

According to the National Association of Software Companies (NASSCOM), "The Year 2000 date-conversion projects have been added to the growth rate of software exports from India. It is estimated that the Indian software industry may corner a market of more than US\$2.5 billion worth of global opportunities in year 2000 conversion projects." It further added that there was a marked increase in offshore projects, and that more than 131 Fortune 500 companies have chosen to outsource their software requirements to India.

Indian companies have been attending the Canadian software show "Softworld" for the past three consecutive years. India was a Global Partner in Softworld '97 and about 25 Indian software companies participated in this show. The show gives both Canadian and Indian firms the opportunity to enter into alliances in the software area.

The new industrial and fiscal policies introduced by the government of India have paved the way for greater technological advancement and international competitiveness of the Indian electronics industry. The new policies have made governmental procedures more transparent, and have eliminated import licences in most sectors. Foreign direct investment provides for automatic approval from the Reserve Bank of India for foreign equity up to 51 percent in software. Proposals from non-resident Indians (NRI) and overseas corporate bodies whose predominant owners are NRIs receive automatic approval for 100-percent equity, provided the cost of the imported capital goods is covered by the foreign equity.

Great potential exists for Canadian software companies to enter the Indian market through collaboration with Indian software companies to have the software developed by Indian software companies either for buy-back or for the domestic as well as for third-country markets. Similarly, the Indian partner can serve as a distributor in India for unique Canadian software with applications in this market.

SUPERVISORY CONTROL AND DATA ACQUISITION SYSTEMS

Large potential exists in the power sector, oil and gas sector, meteorology, geology and space sectors

for Canadian manufacturers of supervisory control and data acquisition systems (SCADA) equipment. Though one Canadian company has been quite active in the Indian market, there exists scope for other participants. SCADA requirements are often met through international tenders and an agent/representative is useful in positioning firms to take advantage of these opportunities.

SPACE COMMUNICATIONS, REMOTE SENSING AND GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SERVICES

Market potential exists for Canadian companies in the space, remote sensing and geographic information services (GIS) sectors. The Canadian Space Agency has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), which will eventually result in increased sales of Canadian space-related products and technology. Sales prospects exist for microwave components, carbon fibre, resins and robotics. Software for GIS solutions and scientific software and advanced optical instruments for remote-sensing applications, etc., are also sourced offshore.

CABLE TELEVISION EQUIPMENT

Large potential exists for Canadian companies for CATV equipment and services. Indian cable TV is a wide open field as far as the market for both equipment and services are concerned. Indian National Television (Doordarshan or DD) is continuing to add more transmitters with the objective of expanding viewership through terrestrial broadcasting. Recently 50 transmitters were added to the DD network bringing the total to 706 transmitters. This has helped to expand primary viewership to 260 million people out of a population of 950 million. DD is currently using INSAT 1D, 2A and 2B satellites to beam 17 channels to the CATV network. Cable TV in India now reaches over 30 million homes (approximately 125 million viewers). Cable TV has become very popular in India since Star TV started beaming into India. Satellites and channels that are beaming into India are: ASIASEAT 1, Star Channels, Zee TV, Star Movies; RIMSAT - Sun (Tamil), Udaya (Kannada), ASIANET; APSTAR 1-CNN; STATIONER - JAIN; GORIJONT-ATN.