

Finland is one of the most networked countries in the world, a highly technology-oriented society and a global information technology leader by almost any measure. Early adoption of high-tech products is characteristic of the market.

A land of firsts

With a penetration rate of over 60 per cent, Finland is the world's largest user of mobile telephones. As the first country to have more wireless than land-line subscribers, the density of its land-lines is one of the highest in the world.

Finland has also the largest number of Internet-connected computers per capita, and is the global leader in electronic banking transactions per capita.

WAP-based information and entertainment services via mobile phone are available, and more sophisticated ones are being introduced. For example, secure banking and trading of shares are being piloted and will be available to users early this year.

Finland has long been one of the world's least regulated telecommunications environments, a major factor behind the highly advanced industry and market. A large number of operators has always been characteristic of the Finnish market and the competition has had a beneficial impact on technological know-how, and has increased the variety of services available.

Finland is also one of the five lowest-cost countries in terms of tele-service rates, especially the rates of mobile phone and data transmission services.

The Finnish telephone network is 100-per-cent digital with extensive use of intelligent network technology. New technologies are adopted early, which offers opportunities to suppliers with leading-edge products.

For example, Finland was the first country in Europe to take the ATM technology into commercial use, and the first IP communications network incorporating the Internet and the

traditional telephony was introduced in Finland.

Also first in the world, third-generation mobile network licences were granted in Finland, and the network is expected to be operational in early 2002, at the latest.

this offers opportunities for Canadian companies aiming at being part of a growing market.

Major competition

The flagship of the Finnish telecommunications industry, Nokia, is a

Finland Information Technology Market Overview

Opportunities

A high level of infrastructure and an active approach to implementation of new technologies and applications create ample opportunity for leading-edge Canadian products. Currently, for example, work geared to developing the information society is going on in areas such as cultural and information products and services, electronic transactions and electronic learning environments.

Import climate is receptive and the high technical standards and advanced structure of the market and industry allows foreign companies to use Finland as test and pilot platform for new products, systems and services.

Also, Finland's role in the advancement of information technologies in Russia and the Baltic countries offers Canadian firms a solid opportunity to gain a foothold in these emerging markets.

Last but not least, Finnish firms are constantly seeking partners and alliances for global markets. Especially in an area such as mobile Internet communications where they have technology leadership even globally,

global leader in the development and production of mobile, fixed and IP network systems. There are several other small and medium-sized Finnish companies specializing in advanced telecommunications products.

Finland has an increasing number of highly innovative software houses, and the industry is growing rapidly. Data security and cryptography, software products for mobile environments, embedded software for new platforms, new media, edutainment and Internet infrastructure products are among the software industry's strength and growth areas.

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