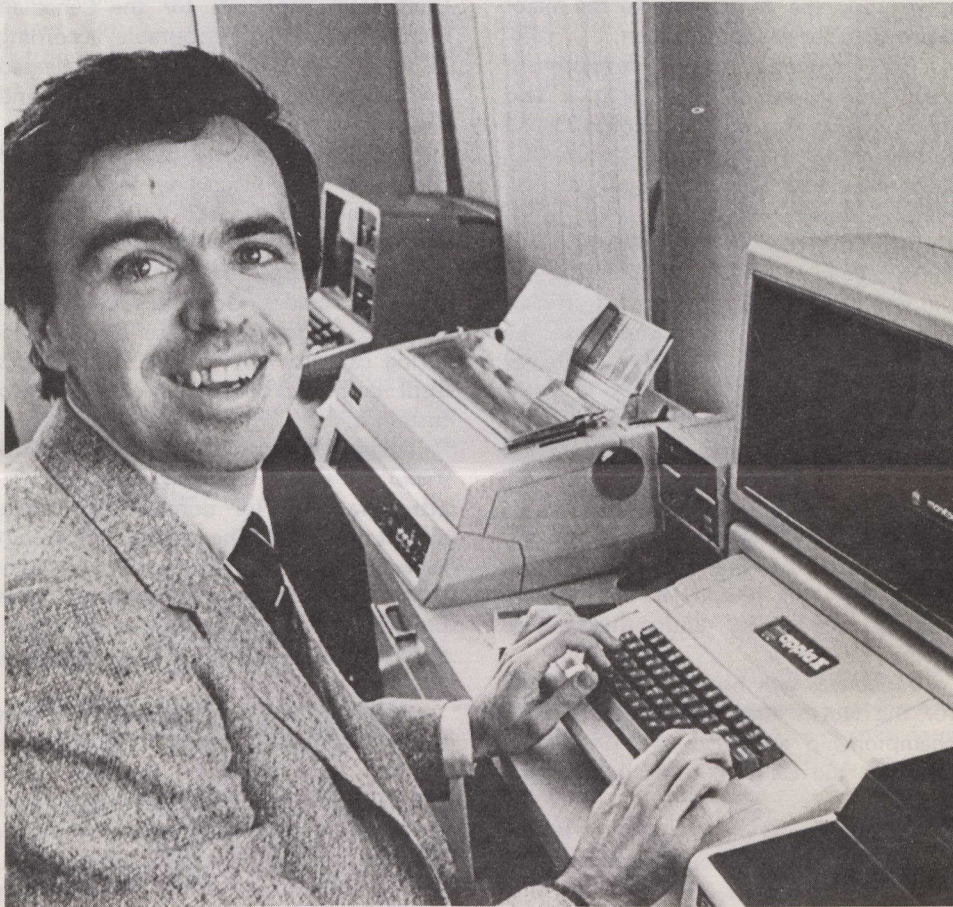


French language home computer opens doors for exports



CANAPRESS Photo Service

Pierre Turgeon at work at his French-speaking computer.

Teaching his home computer to speak French has opened a new world for Pierre Turgeon and given him major international markets in which to sell his product.

Turgeon, vice-president of the Montreal-based publishing house Sogides Ltée., recalled that when he bought his first home computer two years ago, he was the only one in his family who could use it since his wife and children spoke only French.

"What a shame that my daughter couldn't understand it, play with it, learn with it," said the publisher. "That made me decide, 'Okay let's do it in French!'"

Sogides formed a computer software branch called Sogiciel — a play on *logiciel*, the French word for software — to market French-language computer games and programs for management and editing. It will also sell a program that corrects spelling mistakes in French.

In a market study, Turgeon found that 40 per cent of the home-computer market in Quebec and an equal proportion in France was held by one company,

Apple Computer Corp.

He decided to translate the programs used by Apple, although he added that his programs can be adapted easily to other brands. Turgeon hopes to export them to France and other French-speaking countries where 40 000 Apples have already been sold.

He expects exports to account for 80 per cent of Sogiciel sales.

Prize-winning author

Turgeon has written an award-winning play, three screenplays and four novels, including the 1981 winner of the Governor General's award for French-language fiction, published in English under the title *First Person Singular*.

He bought his home computer to write fiction. Now that it is programmed to operate in French, he has to line up to use it.

His wife, journalist Michèle Thibault, works on it, his five-year-old son plays on it and his nine-year-old daughter has become so skillful she can beat him in computer games.

Food aid to Botswana

A grant of \$2.5 million to supply emergency food aid to drought-stricken Botswana was announced last month by Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan J. MacEachen.

The funds, supplied by the Canadian International Development Agency, are to be used for the purchase and transportation of approximately 2 000 tonnes of white pea beans required by Botswana's drought-relief program.

The emergency situation arose because for the second time in the past four years the rainfall in this sparsely-populated land-locked nation in southern Africa had been inadequate to ensure normal agricultural production. Yields of maize and sorghum, the country's staple crops, are only about one-quarter of required levels.

Canada's contribution will help Botswana protect its most vulnerable citizens — young children, lactating mothers, tuberculosis patients and those living in remote areas — from the effects of a series of crop failures resulting from the drought. In total, about 786 000 people in Botswana are suffering the effects of food shortages.

Recreational tastes change

A healthy shift in Canadian recreational tastes is indicated in a Statistics Canada survey.

Canadians are turning their backs on motor boats and taking up canoes, row-boats and sailboats. They are turning off snowmobiles and being turned on by skis, especially cross-country skis, said Statistics Canada.

"The outboard motor boat still retains its status as the most popular boat in use today, but canoes, row-boats and sailboats are gradually gaining ground," the 1982 survey revealed.

"The level of snowmobile ownership, after remaining stable at nearly 10 per cent since 1976, showed a large drop to 8.5 per cent in 1982, but the use of skis, both downhill and particularly cross-country, has continued to expand."

A spokesman for Statistics Canada says that it was not certain why the shift had taken place — the survey did not ask why — but increased fuel prices and an increasing concern about physical fitness might have contributed.