Common wisdom is that Canada is pretty well prepared for Y2K, or on the road to being so, but the population is now turning its thoughts to readiness abroad.

Six Core Services, Y2K and You

Market Prospect

Canadian companies and individuals are now turning outward to ascertain the readiness of their partners around the world. In addition to government infrastructure in your country of residence, is the banking system Y2K compliant or on the way to being so? How about telecom? Will there be a Y2K-related conference in your country, or a working group or a roundtable?

Key Contact Search

Do you know the name of the National Y2K Co-ordinator in your host country? Is there a staff who will share reliable information about government and infrastructure readiness, or about key sector readiness? Can you tap into this resource as part of your search on behalf of Canadian companies?

Local Company Information

One of the areas being highlighted as possibly disruptive is that of "Just In Time" delivery systems. This topic, with its corollaries of customs clearance, warehousing and transportation, could well prove of interest when you need to identify companies that are Y2K compliant.

Visit Information

You may wish to note information that Consular Services is now issuing for travelling Canadians, such as the need for up-to-date travel documents (passports and visas), as well as viable financial and travel arrangements. The current mantra always includes "back-up plans" – as in be sure to have yours!

Face-to-Face Briefing

This is an opportunity to include Y2K as part of your discussions. Inform your business clients of the Y2K risks in your territory.

Troubleshooting

Know the "worst case scenario" and consider it. Remember the Iron Rectangle...that's the Iron Triangle plus One: Telecom, Energy, Financial Services plus People. Drop one and business can grind to a halt.

Here are some dates to note that may give a taste of the "real thing":

April 9, 1999

The 99th day of the year could cause the same type of problems in some programs as the year 1999 caused in others at the beginning of the year.

August 21 and 22, 1999

The time when Global Positioning Satellites run out of days in their 1024-week clocks and reset to zero. Ground-level programs that work with the satellites could malfunction or crash if programmers fail to account for the rollover.

September 9, 1999

The string of nines could be interpreted as the end of a file and cause computers to shut down, or if 9-9-99 is misinterpreted as infinity (an invalid date), then calculations could be in error.

Resistance is Futile

Information on Y2K will be spread throughout the TCS. We are working closely with the PSU to support you on Y2K trade-related issues. The Y2K Co-ordination Secretariat is in its new home, 2nd Floor at City Hall. For general information, call Suzanne Mooney, 944-3005.