

designed capacity for future expansion. In early 1979, Bell Canada initiated a pilot, trial videotex system known as Vista, which used the public telephone network to transmit graphic and textual information stored in data banks. Subsequently other Canadian firms, notably Norpak, have taken up the Telidon technology and are now manufacturing a range of Telidon hardware and equipment. Northern Telecom is also considering current market opportunities and could enter some specialized areas of the Telidon field. Canadian Telidon hardware and information services companies are finding early acceptance in Australian and other export markets.

As with other videotex systems, Telidon consists of a slightly modified television set or display monitor, an interface decoder device, a telecommunications system and a central computer. Since Telidon has a microcomputer in all its terminals, it can fully exploit recent advances in computer graphics and telecom data technologies, so that it is uniquely fitted to convert the television set into an information tool.

Fibre-optics technology has been utilized in communications systems in Canada since 1976. In the field of subscriber loop plant, Bell Canada conducted a trial with 36 homes in Toronto, to demonstrate the practicability of simultaneous transmission of telephony, data, and television in urban loop facilities under working conditions. In the rural environment, an extensive field trial is being co-sponsored by the Canadian Telecommunications Carriers Association (CTCA) and DOC with the co-operation of the Manitoba Telephone System, Bell Canada, and Alberta Government Telephone, all members of the Trans-Canada Telephone System. Some 150 households will be connected in the small community of Elie, Manitoba, making the trial the first for multi-use tests of fibre-optic systems in a rural community. Industry capacity is being further augmented by a manufacturing facility for fibre-optic cable and terminal equipment being established this year by Northern Telecom in Saskatoon.

Other fibre-optic field trials and experiments are under way in Canada involving industry, governments and numerous carriers, of which Bell, AGT, B.C. Telephone and Manitoba Telephone provide consulting services. Alberta Government Telephone, for example, has already begun installing a fibre-optic network that will carry some 30,000 voice circuits over 50 kilometres (31 miles). When in operation, it will be one of the largest high capability