

Cable — *Continued from page 8*
to try programs that have limited general appeal, but that might have a strong niche market. NHL hockey is a good example. It is not well-known in France, but TV Sport is willing to give it a go to see if it develops a following.

The market for television program sales to the cable industry should see strong, steady growth over the next few years. Those interested in the market should contact Telefilm Canada as well as EAITC for more information (see box at right).

Networks/Equipment:

The next few years will be marked by heavy investment to establish the French cable networks. France Télécom is spending \$600 million per year establishing its infrastructure; the Générale des Eaux has earmarked a further \$100 million for its networks.

Despite the size of the market, potential equipment exporters must expect difficulties. Standards are different. Not only is the broadcast standard, SECAM, quite different from NTSC, thus affecting head-end equipment, but there is little use of the VHF band. Most of the cable distribution is done on the UHF band between 470MHz and 860MHz resulting in greater signal fading problems.

Electroline, a Canadian company that markets remotely addressable signal filters (to control clients' access to optional services), has a product eminently suited to the French marketplace with its abundance of apartment buildings. They have met the challenge and

modified the product by replacing the filter with one for the appropriate frequency range. This replacement component is manufactured in France. The product,

is currently a window of opportunity for selling equipment. Once the purchasing decisions are made, especially as the market saturates, the window will close.

Contacts

For a copy of a report on the Cable market in France prepared by the Embassy in Paris, or for more information on **Médiaville 1991**, contact EAITC (TDE) (613) 995-7558 or Communications Canada at (613) 990-4211. Fax: (613) 958-8839.

For information on marketing television programs in France, contact Telefilm Canada at (514) 283-6363.

therefore, has value added in France—an important consideration to many potential clients.

There is an awareness that Canada is very effective when it comes to installing cable systems. Cable installation costs in Canada are one-third what they are in France. This does not, however, mean that Canadians will not have to work hard to prove that they have something to offer. Companies will have to familiarize themselves with the political side of the cable industry as well as the technical side -- if they hope to have a chance. Canadian cable equipment companies are well advised to start talking to companies responsible for the cable systems in smaller French cities that have the flexibility to more rapidly integrate Canadian equipment into their installations.

With the rapid push to cable the country in the next few years, there

Marketing, Managing, Consulting:

On their visit to Canada in June 1990, representatives from the French cable industry showed great interest in Canadian marketing methods.

The idea of optional packages, the directed marketing to different segments of the population, the special rates for apartment buildings, the pricing of different services -- all were found to be very appealing. The visitors felt that Canadian experience had a great deal to offer France. However, France is establishing its network on a basis different from Canada's, with a different technical standard, different division of roles, and a very different political presence.

It is not clear that Canadian consultants or Canadian companies wishing to manage French cable firms will have an easy go of it. It should be noted that after several difficult years in France, Vidéotron, a large Canadian cable company, moved its European operations to England where it has been very successful.

Companies wishing to enter into the management of French cable companies perhaps have the most to offer in terms of experience, but may be faced with the most problems. Only those with a very strong Canadian base and with plenty of time and money to invest should consider such a move.

Thailand Hosts Electrical Exhibition This April

Bangkok—Canadian companies have an opportunity to participate in a proposed External Affairs and International Trade Canada (EAITC)-sponsored information booth at **ELENEX THAILAND'91**, being held in this capital city April 25 to 28.

The **Tai International Electrical and Electronic Engineering Exhibition** covers all

classes of electrical products, from materials used in factories, offices and hotels, to housing and infrastructure — all of which currently are experiencing a construction boom.

In a country whose economy is said to be growing at an annual rate of 10 per cent, the demand for electricity is increasing at a rate of 20 per cent annually. Indeed, the

Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand has an investment budget of US\$525 million over the next five years.

For more information on **ELENEX THAILAND'91**, contact A. McBride, Asia Pacific South Trade Development Division (PST), EAITC, 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa K1A 0G2. Tel.: (613) 992-0959. Fax: (613) 996-4309.