

*Desktop Access to Trade Stats... and More:*New **SignetCD** service rolling out to missions

Did you know that all of *The Economist Intelligence Unit's* Country Reports are available using your SIGNET PC? And that's not all! The new SignetCD service, a collection of compact disk titles stored on the InfoTech servers at headquarters and made available to all posts by The Information Management and Technology Bureau (SXD), contains a wealth of frequently updated information. Just click on your "SignetCD" icon to access everything from trade statistics and company information to law and international relations.

DATA SOURCES AT THE DESKTOP

The information consists of a collection of some 45 CD applications, the selection of which is a co-operative effort between InfoTech staff and their clients. The collection includes the most in-demand data sources, and is organized into the following subject groups:

- Trade data (for Canada, Japan, the United States, Mexico and China)
- Business (*Moody's Reports*, National Trade Data Bank, *Actualité Affaires*)
- *The Economist Intelligence Unit's* Country Reports
- Government of Canada (Canadian laws and regulations, *Hansard*)
- Newspapers (*New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*)
- Technology (*Microsoft Technet*, *Computer Select*, Gartner Group)
- Reference (dictionaries, *Canada Phone*)
- Travel (flight information and hotel guides)

ADVANTAGES OF THE SIGNETCD SERVICE

The service has three distinct advantages that we think Trade Officers will find invaluable.

First, it is designed to provide up-to-date information that would be difficult to obtain or otherwise unavailable. With the SignetCD service, there are more research and information tools at your disposal, delivered in a more timely manner. This makes for more effective and efficient research.

Second, it offers the ability to perform searches through a large amount of data thanks to nifty little search tools.

Third, it allows you to download, print, or cut and

paste data into other documents. This results in an easier transition from electronic sources to final product.

PILOT PROJECT PERFECT

Early in 1997, the SignetCD service was piloted in Cairo, Paris, London, Tokyo and Mexico City. From the initial responses received, we are confident that missions will find the service invaluable.

"By revealing what is possible with this new technology, I have created a groundswell of demand for...the information...I hope that we can soon install the system on others' machines so that they can...enjoy the considerable benefits available. The experiment is a great success both technically and in providing me with real benefit."

Robert Brocklebank (Tokyo)

"I found the facility of 45 plus CD-ROMs extremely useful...Even more impressive was the speed at which one is able to access the information. There was no noticeable difference between drawing from the CD-ROM back in Ottawa and drawing from the one in my computer here in Cairo. Particularly impressive was the ability to pull up reports by our counterparts down the street at the U.S. Embassy!"

Ben Rowswell (Cairo)

Overall, the SignetCD service will provide you with an increased base of information, with more features and analysis than a standalone workstation could ever hope to achieve — with less cost involved on all sides. In sum, it reflects a renewed commitment from SXD to provide not only a high quality worldwide network, but also high quality research information for present and future departmental needs.

Client Services Division (InfoTech) staff will survey clients on a continuing basis to ensure that new and appropriate sources are added as required. Trade Officers who use the service can request or initiate the sharing of new CD titles by e-mailing their requests to the SignetCD organizational mailbox.

If you are interested in one-on-one training, Al Kay (996-0752) can walk you through the steps over the phone or by tapping into your computer screen.

He who asks is a fool for five minutes, but he who does not ask remains a fool forever.

Chinese proverb