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VOLUME 4 NUMBER 6, DECEMBER 1972
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TOTAL APPROACH

It is difficult in these rapidly changing times for the small businesses, and even for bigger companies, to keep abreast of advances in research and technology. The Technical Information Service (TIS) of the National Research Council of Canada is set up to do just that, working in collaboration with the research councils of several provinces and with experienced field office personnel available for consultation across the country.

In this film, it is a small-town furniture manufacturing company, an 80-year-old family enterprise priding itself on first-class custom work, that serves as an example of how a business can profit from the information and expertise of TIS.

In the situation presented, the company is caught in a bind of declining profits despite steady sales — a condition reflected by a drop in bank deposits that is noticed by the local bank manager.

It is with some skepticism, a "prove-it-to-me" attitude, that the company management invites a team from TIS to look over their operations. The two analysts check engineering aspects, talk to key personnel, study records, cost accounting, inventory handling — in fact, follow a "total approach". They are able to suggest possibilities for improvement in plant layout and methods.

But their study does not end with a survey of the premises. Through their contacts with other government departments and services they are able to advise about developments in materials, equipment, shipping facilities — all of which would work toward increasing the profit margin. Then, with the books definitely in the black, there might follow expansion into foreign markets.

Since it was established some 20 years ago, the Technical Information Service has been instrumental in keeping many a small business afloat and in giving new incentive and direction to others. The story of this furniture company is only one example.

16mm Color. Time: 25 minutes 55 seconds.

Produced by the National Film Board of Canada for the National Research Council of Canada.

Distribution:

Free loan from any TIS office (see list on page 10) through any local office of the National Film Board of Canada, or from NRC's Public Information Branch, Ottawa, K1A 0R6, Ontario.

