



photo: IDC

**International Datacasting President Ron Clifton with computer teacher Norberto Arturo García Robledo at the Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz elementary school in rural Mexico. The school uses IDC technology to receive videos and data from the Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa.**

### Leaping the technological gap

In the race to the new economy, Latin America is jumping ahead—and Ottawa-based International Datacasting Corporation (IDC) is helping it. Ask IDC President Ron Clifton which part of the world offers the most exciting opportunities for Canadian technology. He answers without hesitation, "Latin America, because of its incredible connectivity needs."

Determined to become global competitors, Latin American countries are acquiring the skills and infrastructure of the knowledge-based economy, notes Clifton. "They want to leapfrog older technologies," he says. "They are in the market for advanced, innovative solutions."

IDC has what they need. Operating on a global scale, the company produces and integrates hardware and software systems that can pump huge amounts of data up to satellites at very high speed and receive them at the other end. The systems are capable of pulling together into a single broadband stream as many as 8000 channels of data,

video and broadcast-quality television, for delivery to the other side of the world.

IDC's Latin American clients use the systems to reach isolated rural communities not wired for telephone services. The technology provides access to distance education, training in the skills of the knowledge economy, and the great equalizer of the Internet.

Among IDC's customers in the region:

- Mexico's prestigious Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM) is a powerhouse of learning for all of Latin America, and a distance education pioneer. Since 1999, ITESM has been using IDC systems to distribute its virtual university programs throughout the region. In November 2000, ITESM chose IDC to supply encryption systems for its customized programming to corporate clients.
- Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa is an international organization using IDC systems to deliver Internet data, streaming video, video on demand and multimedia to schools across Mexico, even those without telephone lines.
- Telefónica Mundo, Chile's telephone service, recently hired IDC to provide datacasting systems for Internet connectivity and new satellite-based distance learning programs throughout Chile.

Like many Canadians, Clifton grew up in a home with one English- and one French-speaking parent. That, he says, taught him to be at ease in bilingual situations, and he has learned enough Spanish and Portuguese to do business in both.

Feeling at home with cultural diversity, he maintains, is another market asset for Canadians: "Based on my experience over the years, I would say that Latin Americans see Canadians as a culturally and linguistically aware people. Other things being equal, that can be an important advantage."

photo: CANAPRESS

### Women on the Net: Making things happen in Suriname

"At the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, Caribbean women shone," says Vanda Radzick, co-ordinator of the Canadian International Development Agency's Gender Equity Fund in Guyana. "But it became very clear to us that we were seriously under-resourced. Many of us did not even have computers and none of us had access to the Internet."

