

Korea Gears up to Launch Cable TV

The Republic of Korea is getting ready to launch cable television (CATV) by early 1995, with a three tiered structure comprised of program providers, transmission network operators and system operators. The initial cable network will carry 27 channels: five existing networks, 20 new program providers and two channels for information and government.

The total market for hardware in the Korean CATV industry is estimated to be as much as C\$6.5 billion; C\$1 billion is required in 1994. The 20 program providers, which have considerable purchasing power, required sophisticated studios, including dubbing and mixing equipment. For the most part, the six transmission operators, which are subsidiaries of major companies, have most of the technology and hardware in place for providing transmission services. The 50 system operators have, on the other hand, immediate hardware requirements amounting to approximately C\$3.5 million each for installation in 1994.

The Korean government is emphasizing local production of the equipment requirements for this industry. The goal is for 60-85 percent of the total market to be sourced locally. Imports of equipment available locally will be prohibited. The market open to direct foreign imports is still of substantial value. Furthermore, there are many opportunities for Canadian companies to participate in the localization effort. Korean companies must license technology from abroad to produce the hardware in such a short time. Furthermore, localized equipment has high portions of imported parts and components.

There is an immediate need for CATV equipment in Korea, and valuable market opportunities for Canadian companies. The Canadian Embassy in Seoul, Korea, has recently conducted a study on the "Korean Cable Television Product and Services Market" as well as on the "Cable Television Programming Market." For a copy of these studies, see the Contacts box.

Rural Telecommunications Seminar for the Americas

Preparations have been made for a rural telecommunications seminar to be held in Brasilia, Brazil, at Telebras headquarters the week of 28 November 1994. A number of leading Canadian companies including Sasktel, Téléglobe, Mitel, Spar and led by SR Télécom, are working closely with Canadian government officials, and the International Telecommunication Union to set up a highly focused seminar targeted at Latin American and Caribbean countries. Key decision makers from these countries will be participating in the week-long seminar. The seminar will be comprehensive and will include topics such as network technologies, policy and regulatory issues, the economics of rural telecommunications, case studies, etc. For future proposed telecommunication seminars or for further information, see the Contacts box.

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The conference adopted the Buenos Aires Declaration, the Buenos Aires Action Plan for Worldwide Telecommunication Development as well as a number of resolutions and recommendations. The declaration highlights the main orientation of telecommunications development as a result of the decisions made by the conference and contains the visions, goals and objectives of telecommunications development to be achieved by the end of this century. It is addressed to governments.

The resolutions and recommendations provide guidelines for the work to be carried out by the Telecommunication Development Sector. They also can express desired broad objectives that cannot be achieved other than by a combination of factors outside the control of any individual entity.

In his closing address, ITU Secretary General Dr. Pekka Tarjanne said "ITU can be proud of the fact that it has paved the way for the information superhighway that will ultimately unite mankind and give everybody access to the world's riches of information and knowledge."

Canada is establishing a Government/Industry Consultative mechanism for participation in the ITU-D Study Group, in order to address the program of work for the Bureau for Telecommunications Development. For those Canadian companies looking for avenues to expand their relations with developing countries, serious consideration should be given to the potential advantages of joining in the work of the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector. For further information, see the Contacts box.