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Fall 2001. But that didn't scare off Electramedia — in fact, the reverse. "We realized a lot of our competitors wouldn't be there because people are pulling back on their budgets. We decided this was an opportunity — to advance rather than retreat, especially with our product to unveil. And those who did come were the serious people wanting serious products and willing to make serious commitment."

The fact that Electramedia could exhibit in the Canada Pavilion was also key to its decision. "You're going down with a family of other Canadians," says Chato. "That's really good for newbies like us. The fact that we were totally new to the world's biggest computer show was intimidating. So to be under the wing of the Canadian government was a huge thing for us."

Chato appreciated the location, price, and support provided by the Canada Pavilion. Because the Canadian government has been at

ness but generally the participants are first-timers."

This year, 11 companies (including Electramedia), two municipal economic development agencies, and two provincial government organizations exhibited under the Government of Canada banner. They were: Canada's

Best of COMDEX award

Electramedia

Technology Triangle, Databeacon Inc., E-CTI Inc., the Government of Alberta (with Alta Terra Ventures Corporation, Athabasca University, Baseline Technologies Inc., and Web Host Canada), Alberta Innovation & Science, Alberta's Investment Attraction Branch, Lava Computer Mfg. Inc., Navitrak, the Town of Richmond Hill (with A&L Computer Software Ltd.) and Valt-X Technologies.

on their own. And being a turn-key operation, the Pavilion saves companies from the tremendous amount of logistical detail they would have to deal with on their own. "It was great to have a turn-key booth," says Chato. "Every single one of those things — table, chair, power-source —

is optional, extra cost. All we had to do was arrive with our marketing materials, plug in our laptop and we were set to go."

Says Fera: "If you do your homework in setting up meetings in advance with potential partners or clients, have a good leading-edge product, and are prepared to market yourself to the exhibitors, attendees and media, you can go from being unknown to the darling of the show."

That was certainly the case with Electramedia, whose award announcement caused a crush at the booth. The company was interviewed by TV crews from Korea, China and Japan and received a flood of leads. "Security is the hottest concern in the world," says Chato. "So to be standing with the top executives when the awards were being announced, and then to win in such a hot category, we felt like we were riding a skateboard on a tsunami."

As the tsunami of calls and media attention gathers even more force in the wake of the show, Chato may well be reaching for his trusty old aluminum canoe. But the ride promises to be both smooth and exciting for this dynamic Canadian company.

For more information, contact Paul Chato, President, G + A Electramedia, tel.: (416) 361-6161, e-mail: paul@electramedia.com Web site: www.electramedia.com



G + A Electramedia President, Paul Chato (right), with CIO judge Chris Lindquist at COMDEX Fall 2001 in Las Vegas.

the show for more than 20 years, its pavilion enjoys a high-profile, high-traffic location that most companies could not get on their own. "We're looking for small and medium-sized companies that have not been in the show before, but have some experience in the U.S. already," explains Fera. "We do get some repeat busi-

Pavilion provides value-added services

Companies exhibiting with the Canada Pavilion receive value-added services, such as channel marketing advice, assistance with development of press materials, and a press conference that provides media exposure beyond what they could achieve