

Multimedia Exhibit Showcases Canadian Companies to the World

Vancouver's INTER COMM 93 was the site for a Canadian first in multimedia. The Canadian government, in co-operation with Apple Canada and Animatics, demonstrated a multimedia system that promotes the Canadian advanced technologies industry internationally. Communications Minister Perrin Beatty was on hand to launch the exhibit.

Multimedia computer technology combines video, graphics, sound and text applications. The system demonstrated in Vancouver encourages visitors to interact with the display so that they can zero in on specific information requests. At the same time, the system collects strategic marketing data from the user that can

be employed by Canadian companies.

According to Scott Sullivan, Positron's vice-president for international business development, "The system is one of the most innovative and exciting international marketing initiatives I've seen coming from government." Randy Zadra of the Department of Communications and Greg Meredith of Investment Canada say that due to the success of the multimedia display, plans are being developed to exhibit it at other trade shows and embassies around the world. For more information, contact the Investment Prospecting Division of Investment Canada (see contacts box).

China

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These officials must generally rely on funding from the central authorities. As is the case in many underdeveloped rural regions, the electricity supply can be very unreliable.

To give an idea of the constraints facing PTAs at the various levels, consider the autonomous region of Guangxi. Despite its proximity to the thriving Guangdong, Guangxi is relatively poor and underdeveloped. For a population of 46 million, there is a switching capacity of only 200 000 lines and a long-distance trunk capacity of 3 000 lines. Digital switching was introduced to the region five years ago. So far, only the municipal and provincial levels use optical fibre, microwave or digital switching. By the end of this year, all municipal level switches are expected to be digital. The immediate procurement interests of the Guangxi PTA include switching

centres, small earth-stations, low-capacity microwave and light optical fibre. Guangxi hopes to eventually extend its packet switching network to the municipal level. The Guangxi annual budget for infrastructure improvement is US\$10 million per year. Access to concessional financing is extremely important to the purchasing decisions of the province. The Guangxi PTA would welcome renewed effort on the part of Canadian companies to market products to the region.

It takes time, effort and money to establish relationships that would enable a Canadian company to sell at the various levels of the Chinese telecommunications system. However, with an average population of 40 million, each province in China can be considered an important market in its own right, and each has real, and extensive needs for imported telecommunications equipment. Canadian companies should explore the great potential of joint ventures in China's provinces.

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