

### New Cable Services

Developments in information technology are enabling cable companies to supplement broadcast distribution with a wide range of new services. It is likely that a growing number of cable companies will offer their subscribers such services as teletext information channels, videotex data banks, remote emergency alarms, meter reading and teleshopping.

Two examples of new services offered via cable are:

The NABU Network of Ottawa, Ontario, which provides a system of delivering home-computer software to subscribers via the cable television network. Through the NABU Network a cable subscriber can receive the resources of large computer databases at relatively low cost;

Le Groupe Videoway Inc. of Montreal, Quebec, which has developed an integrated home information system using high technology methods in the field of teledistribution and communications. The Videoway system will include home information services such as Pay TV, electronic databases, news headline information (teletext) and other services, thus transforming the home television set into a multi-use terminal.

### New Broadcasting Policies

The advent of sophisticated information distribution technologies presents both challenges and opportunities for Canada. The challenge is to foster the Canadian broadcasting industry and culture in an era of greater availability of foreign programs. The opportunity is for the delivery of more services, both foreign and domestic, to more Canadians.

To ensure that Canadian consumers, broadcasters and other entrepreneurs benefit as much as possible from the modern technological environment, the government of Canada introduced a new broadcasting strategy on March 1, 1983. Increased viewing choice for Canadians and a stronger Canadian television production industry are its key elements.

The new policies stress cable as the prime vehicle for bringing Canadians more and better programming as well as non-programming services such as Telidon. Cable will be allowed to carry a wide range of new television channels and special services on a "tiered" basis, that is, as a package of services.

Satellite services are also seen as playing an important role, especially in isolated areas where cable systems are not practical. For this reason, individual Canadians are no longer required to obtain a licence to operate their own satellite earth stations for personal use. Certain commercial establishments, such as bars and taverns, which display but do not distribute satellite signals, may also operate earth station licences.

To strengthen Canadian programming, the government of Canada has created a new Canadian Broadcast Program Development Fund to support the production of high quality Canadian shows for both the domestic and world markets. The fund, which will rise to \$60 million in its fifth year, will be matched by other sources.

Broadcasting services to native communities in northern Canada will also be improved through a special Northern Native Broadcast Access Program.

These, and other measures that have been either adopted or proposed, are designed to enable Canada to respond to the challenges and opportunities of a new broadcasting environment.

*Cable TV subscribers can receive a wide range of new services including NABU Network's Dig Dug, a computer game. Education is one of the popular applications in this system.*

