

THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCH INSTITUTES

The research institutes play a key role in the numerically-controlled (NC) tool market. They train individuals who will eventually become leaders in Mexican industry. Producers who sell to research institutes gain recognition and promote a familiarity with their particular technologies. Thus, they have been willing to provide the *Centro de Diseño y Manufactura (CDM)*, Design and Manufacturing Centre of the School of Engineering with equipment at lower-than-market costs.

The *Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM)*, National Autonomous University of Mexico's major suppliers are German, Austrian and American firms. Although a *CRM* representative stated that he had heard positive comments about Canadian equipment, he said that he had no direct experience with it and no knowledge of particular Canadian suppliers.

The *Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM)*, Monterrey's Technological Institute, has a more market-oriented approach than the *UNAM*. It focusses on providing software, consulting services and technical support. As a result, its demand for equipment is not expected to grow over the medium term.

The *Instituto Politécnico Nacional (IPN)*, National Polytechnic Institute, has similar projects to those of the *UNAM*. But since it is a government-funded institution, it is suffering from budget cuts as a result of the devaluation. The *IPN*'s facilities are smaller than those of the *UNAM*.

Other Mexican universities have similar programs that are generally smaller in scale, and focus on vocational training or applying new technology to local industry — or both.