



VIDEOTEX IN PRISON

A 2,000-page videotex presentation developed by the inmates of the minimum security prison in Kingston, Ontario, has been sold to Queen's University, also in Kingston.

The presentation, in text and colour graphics, depicts the social impact of engineering decisions and is being considered for use by other Canadian universities because of its easily understood format.

While the technical writing for the presentation was done by a private group, the software and page-creation development was performed by the prisoners themselves as part of a training program. The Correctional Service is operating a similar program at the maximum security prison in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

The NAPLPS videotex training program, which started in August 1982, is an extension of a data processing service initiated in the prisons in the late-1970s, also for training purposes.

The program is one of the most popular courses offered at both penitentiaries, notes Allan Schoenherr, Director of Automated Data Processing for the correctional service department.

"We have waiting lists of inmates wanting to get into the program as they know it is a marketable skill when they are released.

"Many are turning out to be top graphic designers and are being considered for work on complex business graphics applications."