

Artist's conception of MSAT (mobile satellite) which will bring reliable voice and data communications to people, places and machines everywhere.



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS



In industry, Telidon has many applications from answering tourist inquiries to analyzing the stock market and providing weather briefings for pilots. In the home, it can turn a television set into a powerful but easy to operate information tool. The user can do a variety of things from paying bills or making business transactions to shopping or playing games.

By 1983, more than 300 Canadian organizations were active in the videotex market, and more than 4 000 videotex terminals were in use. Today, Telidon systems have been sold to companies in Australia, Britain, Japan, the United States, Switzerland and Venezuela.

Towards computer compatibility

Today, computers serve not only traditional data processing needs but an ever-broadening range of applications including word processing, computer-assisted learning and computer-aided

design and manufacturing. At the same time, there are increasing requirements for communication between computers. Unfortunately, when computers are made in different countries by different manufacturers, communication is often impossible.

Overcoming the problem of incompatibility has been a high priority for Canadians. For more than ten years, they have been playing an important part in the development of international standards for open systems interconnection (OSI) to allow unrestricted communication between computers and computer-based office systems regardless of manufacturer or country of origin.

National standards are also being developed. Within Canada, librarians are now testing OSI standards for communication of bibliographic information, and banks are drafting standards tailored to their special environment.

The development of such standards is crucial to the future of office communications systems. In Canada, as in other nations, typewriters and calculators are being replaced by communicating word processors and personal computers. Disks, tapes and other forms of computer memory are taking over from filing cabinets. Information processing and communications are merging into a new field of tele-information known as informatics.

New electronic office equipment is being designed to serve multiple functions, including communications. From a single multifunctional station, workers in the office of the future will be able to communicate both orally and visually, either individually or in groups, with other stations anywhere in the world. At the same time, they will be able to perform word processing or financial analysis; consult remote databases; store and retrieve information; and share numbers, text or high-quality graphics.