

# **Executive Summary**

## **Background**

The strengths of Canada's distance learning industry have evolved from the dual infrastructures developed for distance education and telecommunications. These have positioned Canada with the capacity to deliver innovative and flexible solutions to meet education and training needs. New models of teaching and learning are emerging to address the need for human resource development through the provision of lifelong learning opportunities. These new models are supported by the convergence of media and technologies for learning which enable effective education and training to be delivered as required to individuals and groups in institutions, community based learning centres, workplaces and homes.

Developments in electronically distributed media have created a new industry, the distance learning industry. The distance learning industry operates in both the public and private sectors, is knowledge based and develops technologies which enable learning through communication, conferencing, networks, curriculum development, curriculum production, administration, learning management, evaluation and resource management. The distance learning industry is described here, in this report, as having seven sectors which overlap and are interdependent:

- Hardware and equipment
- Enabling applications software
- Content and learning programs
- Telecommunications and electronic delivery systems
- Learning settings
- International education and training
- Industry specialists

## **The Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of this report is to examine Australia and New Zealand as potential markets for the Canadian Distance Learning Industry. The first task was to describe the distance learning industry in terms of its products, services and suppliers. Secondly, to gather market information on Australia and on New