

THE EVOLUTION OF ELECTRONIC MAIL IN CANADA

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ABSTRACT

Facsimile, Computer-based message systems, Voice mail, Teletex, Communicating Word Processors, all are examples of electronic mail technologies that are starting to come on-stream in Canada. All threaten our established communications systems with obsolescence, while also competing against each other for the users' messages. The presentation explores these new electronic mail technologies, including a basic overview, a list of the strengths and weaknesses, and an estimate of how all these systems may evolve.

The central theme of the presentation is that when taken in aggregate, the new electronic mail technologies add fundamental and needed capabilities to our communications topography and, therefore, are capable of being directly used by every business and home in Canada. There are, however, five gating factors that will hold back the implementation of these technologies. Once these gates are open, however, it is possible for the new technologies to achieve rapid rates of growth until large percentages of the population are users.

The presentation concludes by exploring potential timeframes for the evolution of electronic mail in Canada as well as some speculation about how these systems will change our day-to-day lives.

L'EVOLUTION DU COURRIER ELECTRONIQUE AU CANADA

RESUME

Facsimilé, systèmes de messages informatisés, courrier parlé, Télétex, les unités de procédés pour communication des mots, voilà des exemples des technologies du courrier électronique qui ont fait leur entrée au Canada. Toutes ces technologies nous menacent dans nos systèmes établis de communications parce que dépassées, elles compétitionnent l'une contre l'autre pour la transmission des messages des utilisateurs. La présente communication explorera ces nouvelles technologies du courrier électronique, incluant une vue d'ensemble indispensable, une liste des points faibles et forts et une estimation de la façon dont ces systèmes pourront se développer.