

## TELIDON CALLING: PLANNING THE CONTENT

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Telidon represents a new breed of technology - a sophisticated marriage of computers and television to produce a new media service, generally called videotex, when wire-linked, or teletext, when broadcast. With this dual capacity for distribution, and an advanced graphics capability based on an alpheometric systems design, Telidon represents a breakthrough on the world telecommunications front. It is not only a new technology, it is in many ways a new medium of expression. That it is a new media can be appreciated, perhaps, only in a comparison to other, existing forms of media such as film, television, newspapers, magazines, computerized information data banks. In reviewing Telidon attributes, it may be enough to say that it is an efficient means of textual-graphic communication over distance. As such, it involves human, economic and technical issues, which must all be taken into account when planning the content to be communicated. All these issues interact to form the framework for Telidon applications design - the critical first stage in content production. This design process involves: setting objectives for the information package; making decisions regarding the general format and theme of the package; examining the capabilities and limitations of the tree structure supporting the package; evaluating the Telidon tools available to create the information; identifying and designing the presentational factors to be used. Beyond the design of individual applications for the system, there is the overall complexity of coordinating and implementing data base opportunities for interested information providers, from the public and private sectors.

The need for a diversity of information on the Telidon system is critical to its success, yet in examining the human, economic and technical issues involved, there is no doubt that certain limitations currently exist which limit the data base opportunities available to providers and to the public. However, an examination of current content limitations is to give an unbalanced perspective to the overall capabilities of Telidon. To achieve a balanced viewpoint of the overall system, one must look to the future developments of the technology to assess its potential impact. Some of these developments will be in the areas of computer-to-computer communication, increased graphics capabilities, full alphanumeric/random access interactive capabilities, the capacity for handling electronic mail and its related transactional facilities, audio with Telidon, a transparency mode for captioning of TV programs (for the deaf, for multilingual opportunities) and so on. All developments will have an impact on the nature of content planning and production and its role in an Information Society.