

Telecommunications

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The size, topography and climate of Canada have significantly influenced the development of telecommunications in this country. Vast networks of telephone, telegraph, radio and television facilities are necessary to provide efficient communication among Canadians and between Canada and the rest of the world. Canada possesses a unique mix of telecommunications systems — federal, provincial, municipal and investor-owned — whose operations are coordinated to carry messages to all parts of the country by land lines, microwave, tropospheric scatter, high-frequency radio and satellite communications systems and to other parts of the world by undersea cable and international satellites.

The almost universal availability of telecommunications service at low cost has been a major factor in stimulating Canada's economic growth and a positive force in binding the country together. The requirement for more and better telecommunications services rises with the increase in population, and keeping costs and rates low necessitates constant innovation.

Canada's telecommunications carrier industry, with \$11.8 billion invested in plant, is expanding at the rate of more than \$1.5 billion a year. Investment for 1975 was \$1.6 billion, a figure expected to reach \$2.5 billion a year by 1980, increasing to \$4 billion a year by 1985.

The Canadian Telecommunications Carriers Association (CTCA), established in 1972, provides the framework for cooperation on an industry-wide basis for the major telecommunications carriers in Canada. The association consists of 21 telecommunications carrier organizations, each represented on the board of directors. It brings together in one organization the Trans-Canada Telephone System and its nine members, the Canadian Independent Telephone Association, six other telephone companies, Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Telecommunications, Teleglobe Canada and Telesat Canada.

CTCA is active in the affairs of the Geneva-based International Telecommunication Union and attempts to secure, through the Federal Department of Communications, the compatibility of the Canadian telecommunications system with those of other countries.

Telecommunications media

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Voice communications

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Telephony. There are more than 13 million telephones and 14 million miles (22.5 million km) of circuits in Canada. More than 12 million telephones of the national total are provided by the nine member companies of the Trans-Canada Telephone System (TCTS): Alberta Government Telephones, British Columbia Telephone Company, Bell Canada, The Island Telephone Company Limited, Manitoba Telephone System, Maritime Telegraph and Telephone Company Limited, The New Brunswick Telephone Company, Limited, Newfoundland Telephone Company Limited and Saskatchewan Telecommunications. Almost a million telephones are provided by Edmonton Telephones, Northern Telephone Limited, Okanagan Telephone Company, Ontario Northland Communications, Québec-Téléphone, Télébec Ltée, Thunder Bay Telephone Department and Canadian National Telecommunications. There are also about a thousand smaller telephone companies.

Canadian National Telecommunications provides telephone service for residents in the Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories, parts of Newfoundland and in northern sections of British Columbia.