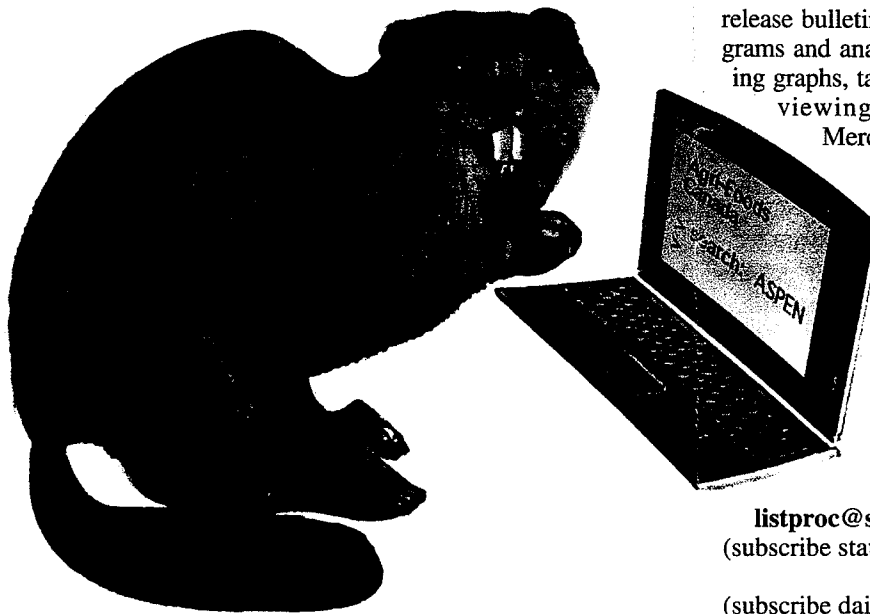


Northern Numbers:

Electronic Sources of Canadian Statistical Information

By Teresa Murphy



Before launching a new product, moving a plant to a new location, or deciding to re-engineer based on what the competition is doing, companies need facts upon which to base their decisions. They seek certainty.

When it come to facts, statistics are the most frequently used type of information. Whether the numbers relate to business conditions and trends, data on who uses specific products, or information on the latest government research, organizations need ready access.

Locating the numbers when you need them isn't always easy. In the past few years electronic products and Internet sites have exploded onto the Canadian marketplace, creating a multitude of statistical data. While some of its reliability is questionable, one thing is certain. When you go looking for existing data, chances are you'll rarely find it in one source. Instead, be prepared to search multiple sources, gleaning data that you can summarize in a report or general analysis. And always remember, statistics have a shelf life. When you go searching, get the most recent information.

Internet Resources

The best place to start looking for data could be in one of the free-of-charge federal government Internet sites. Many of the sites are not meant to contain comprehensive data. Instead they serve as pointers to government departments or agencies.

A good starting point with keyword search capability is the general federal government site (www.emr.ca/opengov/departments.html). Whether you need information on Aboriginal people, the federal debt or employment trends, go to the department that's most likely to contain that information. If you can't find what you want, you can phone the number listed at the site or use the site's e-mail feature to request more information or help.

No doubt the best source of statistical information is Statistics Canada's StatsCan Online. This is an electronic service providing access to two products: *The Daily*, Statistics Canada's official release bulletin which summarizes the findings of statistical programs and analytical studies, and provides access to data including graphs, tables, and text on an array of topics from television viewing habits to wholesale trade; and International Merchandise Trade Data Online. Databases soon to be added include CANSIM; the 1991 Census Profiles; Industrial Monitor (Industry Profiles); International Travel; Marine Transport; and Horticultural Statistics.

<http://www.statcan.ca>

gopher.statcan.ca:70

[ftp.statcan.ca](ftp://statcan.ca)

(At login prompt type: anonymous)

listproc@statcan.ca

(subscribe statcan Firstname Lastname)

(subscribe daily Firstname Lastname)

Other Federal Government Sites

| SITE NAME | LOCATION |
|---|---|
| Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada | http://aceis.agr.ca/ |
| Canada Council | http://www.ffa.ucalgary.ca/cc/index.html |
| Canadian Heritage (Includes parks data) | http://www.pch.gc.ca/ |
| Citizenship and Immigration Canada | http://www.ingenia.com/cicnet/ |
| Emergency Preparedness Canada | http://hoshi.cic.sfu.ca/epc/ |
| Environment Canada | http://www.doe.ca/ |
| Finance Canada | http://www.fin.gc.ca/ |
| Fisheries and Oceans Canada | http://www.ncr.dfo.ca/home.htm |
| Foreign Affairs and International Trade | http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/ |
| Health Canada | http://hpb1.hwc.ca/ |
| Human Resources and Development Canada | http://hrcd-drhc.gc.ca/ |
| Canadian Labour Market Information | http://www.sunshine.net/www/200/sn0253/ecsrvmnx.htm |
| Indian and Northern Affairs Canada | http://www.inac.ca/ |
| Industry Canada | http://info.ic.gc.ca/ic-data/index.html |
| National Defense | http://www.capitalnet.com:80/~dnd/dsea/economic.html#general |
| National Forum on Health | http://www.hwc.ca:8200/ |
| National Library of Canada | http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ gopher://gopher.nlc-bnc.ca/ |
| Natural Resources Canada | http://www.emr.ca |
| Public Works Canada | http://www.pwc-tpc.ca |
| Revenue Canada | gopher.revcan.ca/ ftp.revcan.ca/ |
| Statistics Canada | http://www.statcan.ca |
| Treasury Board of Canada | http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca |

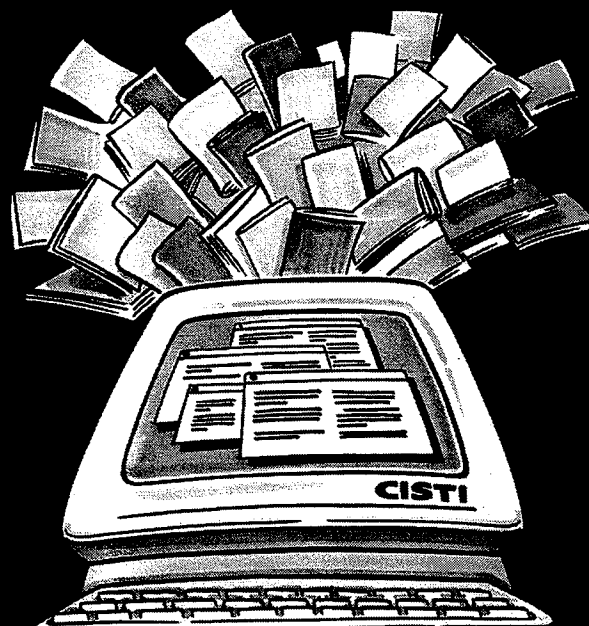
If you're looking for statistical information on any facet of housing or real estate, including MLS activity, average house prices, forecasts for housing starts or new house prices, or mortgage rates, the Canada Mortgage and Housing site probably can direct you to it. The site includes pointers and abstracts to data located in publications such as *Canadian Housing Markets*, *Housing Forecast Report*, *Mortgage Market Trends*, *National Housing Outlook*, *Rental Market Report* and *Consumer Housing Preferences* in the 1990s. There's a good summary of the services of the Canadian Housing Information Centre (CHIC). www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/cmhc.html

INFORMATION highways

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Provincial Government Sites

Often the statistics you need are likely to be provincially generated. But if you're looking for uniformity among provincial government sites chances are you'll be disappointed. The sites tend to be a mixed bag. Most contain information from press releases, which means you have to weed through each one for the statistical kernel, and links or pointers to other government agencies and ministries. The sites that shine contain summaries of government publications, the provincial budget, information by department or ministry, and links to local government or local city sites.

If you need data on Prince Edward Island, you are in luck. The site contains data on energy and minerals, industrial development, business immigration, labour market forecasting, and regional economic development. The North West Territories' site contains statistical profiles for each NWT community including population data by sex and age, education level, labour force participation and income level.

When searching provincial government sites check to see if there are links or gophers to statistical sites.

Sites With Provincial Government Information (www.compusult.nf.ca/opengov/provinces/html)

| PROVINCE | LOCATION |
|--------------------------|---|
| Yukon | http://www.yknet.yk.ca/ykhome.html |
| Northwest Territories | http://siksik.learnnet.nt.ca/nwtdata/default.html |
| British Columbia | http://www.gov.bc.ca/ |
| B.C. Gov't Stats Site | http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca |
| Alberta | http://www.gov.ab.ca/index.html |
| Saskatchewan | http://www.sasknet.sk.ca/GOVGUIDE01.html |
| Manitoba | http://www.gov.mb.ca/ |
| Ontario | http://www.gov.on.ca/ |
| Quebec | http://www.gouv.qc.ca/ |
| New Brunswick | http://www.gov.nb.ca/ |
| New Brunswick Statistics | http://www.csi.nb.ca/econ-dev/ |
| Nova Scotia | http://www.cfn.cs.dal.ca/~ab008/govtpg/dept.html |
| Prince Edward Island | http://www.gov.pe.ca/ |

Newfoundland <http://www.compusult.nf.ca/nfld/nfld.html>
 Like provincial government sites, municipal and city sites are a mixed bag of statistical information. You can find a home page for the small town of Squamish, B.C., (www.mountain-inter.net/sqchamber/squamish.html) complete with population stats, but Toronto's site won't be up until January 1996. The City of Vancouver's site (www.city.vancouver.bc.ca) and Montreal's site (www.cum.qc.ca/montreal/Welcome.html) are information rich, but there's not much for Winnipeg. Use a good search engine and hope for the best.

Commercial Vendors

A lot of Canadian statistical information is available on a number of commercial online services. Here is a list of Internet sites that contain information about the vendor's commercial online databases, as well as information on how to subscribe to the services.

Dialog <http://www.dialog.com>

Canadian statistical content can be found in articles and reports. CBCA (file 262), D&B Canadian Dun's Market Identifiers (file 520), and Business & Industry (file 9) stand out. File 9 has a non/usa feature and covers everything from resin prices to the outlook for Canada's pulp and paper industry to the Canadian cold, flu, allergy and sinus remedies market. Many other files contain information which can be culled by the country code.

Infomart <http://www.infomart.ca>

All major Canadian daily newspapers, newswires and magazines contain statistical information in news stories, articles and reports. Although tabular data will not appear online, it is available in the original article. CBCA, Canadian Corporate News, Canadian Forest Industries, and the Canadian Trade Index are several good sources.

Lexis/Nexis <http://www.lexis-nexis.com>

Canadian statistical information in various databases including the recently loaded The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) which contains business information services, including industry, financial and management reports.

CD-ROM, Disc and Magnetic Batch Products

Last, but not least, there are several additional resources to consider...

Canada 1986, 1991 Census Profiles (CD-ROM)
 Detailed census information.

Statistics Canada. tel: 613/951-3889; fax: 613/951-0569

Canada GeoGraph II - The Multimedia Edition (CD-ROM)
 Demographic, economic, environmental, and social data, and 1991 Census data. 18 maps, 32 overlays. Exploring, graphing and statistical analysis tools.

MECC. tel: 612/569-1500; 612/569-1551

Canada Yearbook (CD-ROM)

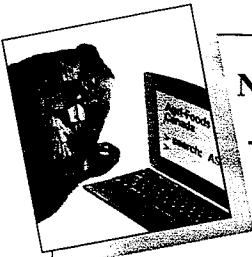
Over 200 statistical tables; information on business, the economy, government, health care, international relations, science and technology. Software enables cut/paste of charts, tables, text.

Canada Communication Group. tel: 819/956-4800; 800/565-7757; fax: 819/994-1498

Canadian Business and Current Affairs (CBCA) (CD-ROM)
 Indexing to over 100,000 articles per year from 500 Canadian business and popular periodicals and 10 newspapers. No full-text. Citations and some abstracts.

Micromedia Limited. tel: 416/362-5211; 800/387-2689; fax: 416/362-6161

...cont'd on page 44



NORTHERN NUMBERS

...cont'd from page 20

Canadian Business Disc (CD-ROM)

Complete text, including statistical information, of *Les Affaires*, *Commerce Affairs*, the *Financial Post*, *PME*; financial sections from major Canadian newspapers.

CEDROM-SNI Inc. tel: 514/278-6060; fax: 514/278-5415

Canadian Industry Norms and Key Business Ratios (Disc)

Business ratios, financial data and other information for over 400 lines of Canadian business.

Dun & Bradstreet. tel: 905/568-6000; 800/232-1026; fax: 905/568-6279

CANSIM Census Profile Data on Discs

Census data from 1981 and 1986. Software enables creation of graphic displays, tabular reports.

Statistics Canada. tel: 613/951-3889; fax: 613/951-0569

CANSIM CENSUS Summary Data System (CSDS) (Disc)
More than 1,000 tables of census data for 50,000 geographic areas.

Statistics Canada. tel: 613/951-3889; fax: 613/951-0569

Financial Post Canadian Markets Disc

1981 and 1986 Census data, 1988 estimates, projections.

The Financial Post Datagroup. tel: 416/350-6440; fax: 416/350-6501

TaxPartner (CD-ROM)

Statistical information in Revenue Canada and the Department of Finance materials as well as in commentary, and summaries from various sources.

Carswell. 416/609-0451; 800/363-3783; fax: 416/298-5094

Sources: Commercial vendors; The Internet; Gale Directory of Databases, July 1995.

(Ed. Note: Have a statistical source you cannot live without? Send me a note to bwatters@tce.on.ca and we'll publish an addendum to this list.)

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