

RELATOS DE EXPERIÊNCIA

Industrial Information at CRIQ: services for a business world In transformation

Florian Trudel

In a world where technology and markets are rapidly changing, heads of businesses are in a much more limited position than they ever were in terms of their scope of action. The fierceness of the competition has become such that if business leaders are to survive in this new environment, they need to get the most comprehensive, up-to-date information available.

In Quebec, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can count on the Centre de Recherche Industrielle du Quebec (CRIQ) for their industrial and technological information needs. Founded in 1970 by the government of Quebec, CRIQ offers its clientele services in applied research, industrial standards and industrial and technological information. Its Industrial and Technological Information Division has developed and offers information services to meet the needs of Quebec SMEs.

CHANGING BUSINESS NEEDS

Business information needs have changed dramatically in recent years.

The ever rapid transformation of the workplace has had an effect on the way business managers use and understand information. Indeed information has become a highly important strategic tool, one that needs to be developed to ensure access to the best information available, whenever required. Information tools must also be such that they enable decision makers to arrive at the most informed choices on a regular basis.

The mass arrival of new information technologies offers a wealth of information unparalleled until now. However, one still has to identify these technologies and learn how to use

them effectively since information overload can equally overwhelm the uninitiated. Furthermore, the quantity and quality of available data will be of little use to an organization if it is not shared in a productive way among its members.

The information services developed at CRIQ take into account all these changing trends observed in recent years.

THE APPROACH USED

With solutions for our clientele in mind, we discerned the three major aspects of information monitoring to assist a company in its decision-making process. The three main developmental poles focussed on by our information services are targets, means and action.

- Targets: the company's strategic endeavour is reinforced by consistent information monitoring targeted to its concerns and the issues confronting it.
- Means: the company is guided in its selection of information sources and mechanisms to effectively monitor the targets selected.
- Action: the information must be processed for the company's needs and organized to facilitate decision making for rapid action.

The approach we use aims at organizing data collection, developing new knowledge within the company and offering value-added information services.

Delivering value-added products and services is our main challenge since SMEs are not usually overly concerned with developing scientific and technological information. Furthermore,

Resumo

Trata da rápida transformação da tecnologia e dos mercados, chamando a atenção para a competição acirrada do mundo moderno. Diante dessa competição, os líderes empresariais, para sobreviver a esse novo ambiente, precisam ter as mais completas e atualizadas informações possíveis. No Quebec, desde 1970, as pequenas e médias empresas (PMES) contam com o Centro de Pesquisa Industrial do Quebec (CRIQ) para atender a suas necessidades de informação industrial e tecnológica.

Palavras-chave

Informação industrial; Informação tecnológica; Centro de pesquisas; Canadá.

our clientele does not always have the necessary means to acquire and develop this information making it necessary for us to develop services that take into account both their needs and financial ability.

THE SERVICES OFFERED

The information products we offer focus on the three above-mentioned developmental poles and are classified into four categories. Each of the categories contains a list of customer needs and the value-added dimension featured by the service.

In addition to these activities, CRIQ acts as a consultant to set up strategic monitoring centres for the plastics, environment, chemistry and wood product industries. The monitoring centres are sponsored by the Ministry of Industry, Trade, Science and Technology (MICST) and aim to reach all companies in the above-mentioned sectors. The centres foster networking among existing organizations, the sharing of expertise and development of a technological monitoring mentality among the network's participating companies.

In the area of information, the trust between user and information supplier is crucial. This relationship does not just happen by accident but is rather the result of a sustained effort on the part of our information specialists.

For CRIQ, value-added information and the advantages stemming from the different stages of information development offer the best guarantees for a stable and long-lasting relationship with our clientele.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFORMATION DIVISION

Our team is made up of 31 people with a variety of educational backgrounds in library science, science, engineering and business administration. All team members contribute, each in their own field, to the development and provision of information services for our clientele. Use of information technologies for finding, processing and diffusing information make up the daily routine of these information specialists.

	Needs/Customers	Value-added V+
Documentary Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find relevant documents obtain documents Bring subjects up-to-date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rapidly find information (KH) Diffuse in several forms (F) Provide comprehensive information
Information File	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find solutions to technical and operational problems Make up for a lack of time and resources Find support in decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer an information synopsis (C) Provide accurate, quality information (C) Tailor service to customer need (KH) Provide rapid answers (KH) Make use of experts (KH)
Study of Business Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add new products Improve technological innovation Acquire a vision for medium-term development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a multi-disciplinary team (KH) Recognize business Opportunities (KH) Structure approach to development (KH)
Technological and Commercial Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure/organize the company's information for more informed decision making Become the leader in the field Keep a competitive edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure approach (KH) Provide concepts for SMEs (C) (KH) Offer consultant role (KH)

(C) : Value-added to content
 (F) : Value-added to form
 (KH) : Value-added to know-how

Our employees have access to all the major tools for finding information: servers at international databanks, Internet, document supply networks, databanks on CD-ROM and an in-house databank offering a description of available documentary information sources.

In addition, CRIQ's library contains some 12,000 documents, 3,000 of which are reference works: directories, purchase guides, manufacturer catalogues, etc.. The rest are market studies, statistical documents and specialized documents in specific industrial fields (plastic, wood, chemistry, environment, metallurgy, food and agriculture, automation, transportation, etc.). Over and above all of this, we have a collection of 125,000 industrial standards.

There is no question that the material resources that our analysts and technicians have access to are significant. However, the network of their contacts among national and international experts developed over the years is an equally precious source of information.

For further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at the following Internet address:
 FLTRUDEL@CRIQ.QC.CA.
 Florian Trudel

**Informação industrial no CRIQ:
serviços para o mundo empresarial
em transformação**

Abstract

Discusses the rapid changes in technology and markets, calling attention to the stiff competition existing in today's world. In the face of such competition business leaders must have the most complete and up-to-date information possible in order to survive. Since 1970, small and medium-sized enterprises (PMEs) depend on Quebec Centre for Industrial Research (CRIQ) to provide for their industrial and technological information needs.

Keywords

Industrial information; Technological information; Research centres; Canadá.

Relato de experiência aceito para publicação em 15 de julho de 1996.

Florian Trudel

Consultor para fontes de Informação Industrial
Centre de Recherche Industrielle du Quebec
(CRIQ). Direction de l'Information Industrielle et
Technologique.
