

Markham firm has customs customers

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Correspondent

For most people travelling overseas or across the border to the U.S., "customs" is one term they shudder at. Now imagine that you are an importer or exporter of a product. For many companies the daily, weekly, or monthly routine of filling out all the paperwork for customs can be a nightmare. One Markham firm, Crossings Inc., has recognized the need for reorganizing the customs process.

Crossings is part of a group of specialists which have helped pioneer the development of the Electronic Data Interchange system or EDI. As Bruce Tuck, President of Crossings states, there is a real need for this system.

"We have some 30 to 40 Canadian companies on our system for importing and exporting. For instance, everything that comes in to Eatons of Canada, Motorola, Black and Decker, Emerson Electric and others is cleared through our system. All of these companies use our software to help them process the importing of goods more effectively than they have done in the past."

Simplifying a Complex Procedure Increasingly, companies are

beginning to think in terms of international objectives. With free trade already a reality, the firm expects many more import/export companies will acquire the EDI system. As Tuck mentions, "We are looking to move our software into the United States. An exporter from the United States can send all the documents up to an importer in Canada electronically. At the same time an exporter from Canada can now send the information (electronically) down to a U.S. broker and have the broker clear the goods before the trucks get out of the yard."

Norm Sartor (Supervisor Traffic and Customs Motorola Canada Ltd. Communications Division) commented on how EDI has helped his company. "We can transmit an edifax message, which prepares U.S. for the future. Approximately 90 per cent of our (Motorola) import/export business is cleared through this system."

The EDI system may appear complex for many individuals who are not familiar with computers. However, as Tuck asserts, the trade documentation system is fairly simple to understand. "We have three modules which are part of our trade documentation system. The

modules which are integrated, include an import manager, export manager and a drawback manager."

"An import manager, he continues, operates when you import goods. The module does all the calculations and fills out the proper documents. The export manager deals with the Canadian exporter who wishes to send the data electronically down to the U.S. importer or broker."

Drawback is a little more complex. Presently, when you import goods into Canada you are allowed to get your duty back. Under the Free Trade Agreement, after four years this will not be possible. So everyone who is importing now should be looking at what money they can get back from the goods they are exporting."

All three of these modules are part of one of the very first service boroughs in Canada. At the same time, Crossings Inc. is directly linked to Canada Customs

Office Automation at its Best

Crossings Inc. is the very first non-broker in Canada to achieve these standards. In many instances it is the customs brokers or actual importers who handle the paperwork. Crossings helps the importer and in some cases the customs broker do the job

more effectively and at a lower cost.

As Klaus Naujok, vice president of Crossings states, the savings for a company are tremendous. "When you can turn around and save a company \$150,000 in a year by reducing the use of an outside agent, that is substantial. The savings can be reinvested into their operations to cut down on the hiring of additional staff."

Since with the use of a computer, having the information in the process, a company can do their own work without adding additional staff or taking on additional hardware. And as a result they can basically eliminate having any outside requirements."

John Stevenson (Manager of Corporate Customs) at Emerson Electric Canada Ltd. discussed how the EDI system has been valuable. "When we finish implementing our program, the cost savings will be around \$300,000 to \$400,000 range. For Emerson, this has been the main implementation factor. The other aspect is that with EDI, it allows us to gain control of our own customs ratings."

Therefore, EDI is basically you sending your own information from one computer to another and having that person use the data without having to re-key it. As Sartor concurs, "Currently what we (Motorola) are doing is manually keying in the information. Once we have fully hooked up with the EDI system, we are looking to no keying of data. All we will have to do is enter the information on the invoice into the system."

World Influence

Crossings is also in the Trade Documentation field. Klaus Naujok, is also the Chairperson of the Technical Committee at the United Nations level, which is setting up standards for what is called the Edifax Standard. As Naujok states, "Edifax Standard stands for Electronic Data Interchange. This covers standards in commerce and transport. Edifax is the one standard that is going to be used around the world for all companies to pass information back and forth. And we are setting those standards right here in Markham."

Edifax has such a world-wide ratings.

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MARKHAM HYDRO ELECTRIC COMMISSION

1990 RATE SCHEDULE

Markham Hydro Electric Commission has announced an average 4.4% rate increase for 1990 that will take effect January 1st.

Ontario Hydro has increased the wholesale cost of power to Markham Hydro by 6.03%, but careful budgeting and effective financial controls have permitted the Commission to absorb a portion of the overall increase. Bill Burnett, Chairman of Markham Hydro Electric Commission is particularly pleased in view of their large capital program, to have kept the retail rate well below the cost of power increase for the eighth consecutive year. Mr. Burnett also emphasized that this increase is one of the lowest increases being passed on to consumers by a Municipal Utility in Ontario.

As was done in previous years, any consumption used prior to January 1, 1990 will be prorated using the 1989 rate schedule. If you have any questions regarding the new rates listed below, please contact our Consumer Service Department at 477-3810, Ext. 233 or 229.

BIMONTHLY RATE SCHEDULE

RESIDENTIAL	
First 500 KWH	9.46¢ per KWH
Balance	5.70¢ per KWH
Minimum Bill	\$5.90

MONTHLY RATE SCHEDULE GENERAL SERVICE

DEMAND CHARGES	
0-50 KW	No Charge
Next 4950 KW	\$4.40 per KW of Demand
Balance	\$10.57
Minimum Bill Under 50 KW	\$5.90
Minimum Bill Over 50 KW	
Based on the Highest Billing Demand in Previous Eleven Months	60¢ per KW of Demand

ENERGY CHARGES	
First 250 KWH	9.46¢ per KWH
Next 12,250 KWH	6.21¢ per KWH
Next 1,729,900 KWH	4.45¢ per KWH
Balance	2.68¢ per KWH

WATER HEATER RENTAL	
40 Gallon	\$3.00 per Month, plus energy charges
60 Gallon	\$3.75 per Month, plus energy charges

TOWN OF MARKHAM HYDRO ELECTRIC COMMISSION

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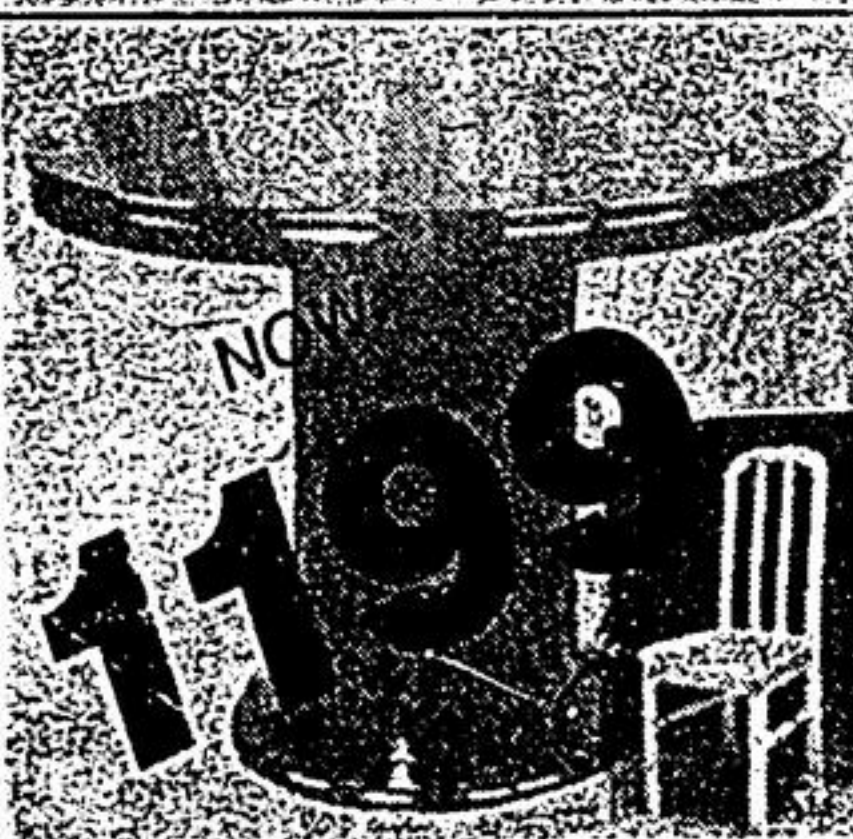
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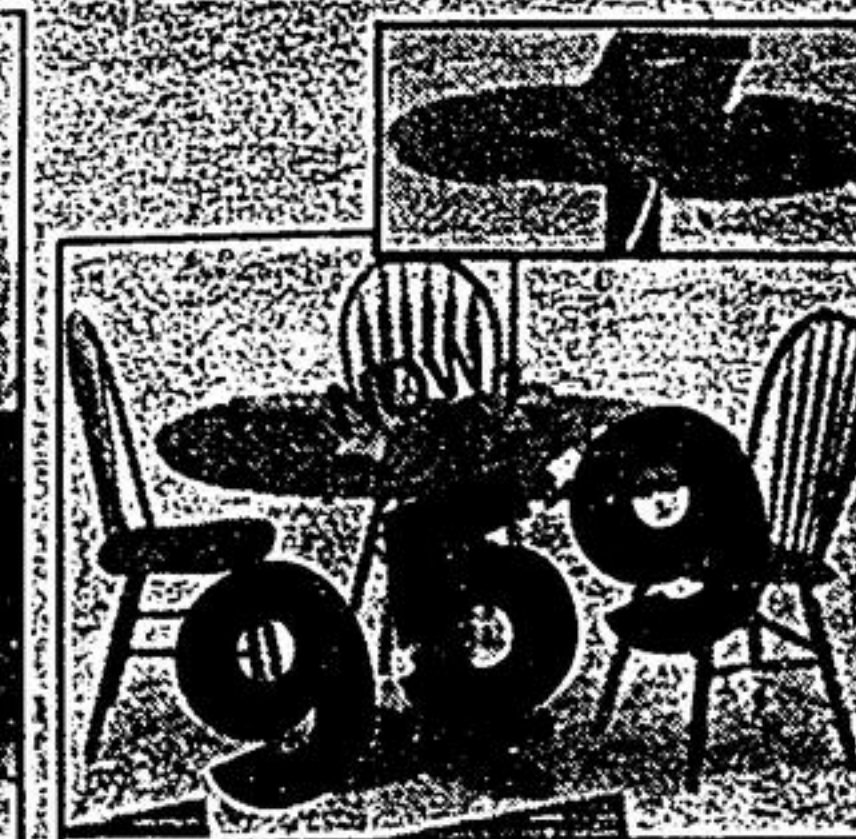
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