



Communications
Canada

Government Telecommunications Agency

Major Orientations

1991 - 1995



Canada

Government
Telecommunications
Agency

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A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

I take a great deal of pleasure, as the first President of the Government Telecommunications Agency, in giving each and every one of you a copy of our 1991-1995 Business Plan, as modified for this release.

The analyses and objectives that were assembled, and included in the Plan last summer by all members of the management team, are acting somewhat like an engine that has already begun to set in motion the strenuous activities that await us, as a Special Operating Agency, in the next few years.

Need I remind you that the Business Plan is rather like an accountability contract that will be used as a benchmark by the Department of Communications, the Government Telecommunications Council and the Telecommunications Advisory Panel to measure the performance of GTA.

I fail to see how the Agency could be effective and succeed in its aims without your cooperation, your tireless efforts and your loyalty. These, above all else, are what I am counting on.

I therefore encourage you to read this document, to discuss it with your managers and to determine how you, as an individual, can contribute to its implementation.

Best regards,


René Guindon

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□ INTRODUCTION

This document is the slightly reworked summary of the Government Telecommunications Agency's 1991-1995 Business Plan. All confidential information and financial projections, included in the original Plan, have been omitted.

The summary provides an overview of the strategies to be followed by GTA over the next few years in fully assuming its status as a Special Operating Agency and in meeting the expectations of its clients.

□ EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Technology

Advances in hardware and software technologies have led to a proliferation of new information-related products, services and applications. Two key technologies upon which this explosion of creativity has been based are the microchip, which makes virtually unlimited processing capacity available at ever-lower costs and fibre optics, which provide virtually unlimited transmission capacity. As these technologies are applied in the field of telecommunications, the telephone network is being transformed from an analog vehicle for voice communication to a complex distributed computer system over which voice, data, text and image information is transmitted in digital format.

Suppliers of new services have come from the data processing and office equipment industries as well as from the telecommunications industry. They now find themselves competitors

in the newly-emerging information industry.

The speed with which new products are conceived and brought to market appears also to be accelerating. The life span of new applications appears to be diminishing in response to new demands from increasingly sophisticated users.

Because the evolution from analog to digital technology has eliminated the distinction between voice and data traffic, responsibility for in-house management of telecommunications is being transferred from people with traditional telephone skills to people with computer skills. Longstanding ties between GTA staff and "telephone people" working for customer organizations are being broken as a direct result of technological change.

Customers of GTA, for their part, are frequently heavy users of information technologies. In many cases they are planning programs for the future that are only possible because of the revolution that has taken place in the information industry. Some examples of such plans, and their relevance to GTA, are as follows:

Revenue Canada—Taxation

Revenue Canada—Taxation accounts for approximately 8% of GTA's business. It has a vision for future services, which is to increase electronic linkages between taxpayers, financial institutions, other government agencies and the private sector.

A program called "Electronic Taxpayer Services" will provide the public with access to tax information, help with the preparation and filing of tax returns

and enable taxpayers to settle their accounts through the electronic transfer of funds.

GTA's challenge will be to continue to find ways of either supplying or supporting these enhanced service offerings. In solving the needs of this customer, the GTA network could, for example, be used as a link in a national configuration of public switched network, bank private network and government intercity network facilities.

RCMP

This client intends to create a fully-integrated national communications network. Manual data collection and information-retrieval systems will be automated wherever possible. Officers on patrol anywhere in Canada will be able to access police files instantaneously through mobile terminals linked via local dispatch centres to nationally-maintained computer databases.

The Agency's services are currently used for voice transmission only and represent 14% of total telecommunications operating expenditures.

The challenge for GTA is to explore ways in which its client can maximize use of the government network on high density routes and benefit from GTA's purchasing power in the hundreds of small communities throughout Canada.

Transport Canada

Transport Canada's vision of the future calls for the creation of a national network of compatible systems, supported nationally, but having local

applications. This department has initiated a major project to create an Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) environment and to encourage its growth.

Although this client and GTA share a common objective in the creation of a national "communications pipeline" which can be accessed by many different systems, it has tended to operate independently of GTA and spends no more than 20% of its telecommunications operating budget with the Agency.

GTA's challenge will be to ensure that this client benefits to the full from the Agency's introduction of the digital channel service. GTA will strive to maintain the delicate balance between achieving economies of scale for the government and encouraging information-handling initiatives by individual departments.

Telecommunications market trends

It was estimated that the global telecommunications market in 1990 would exceed US \$400 billion. Revenues earned by the major Canadian telecommunications carriers in 1990 would have been approximately CDN \$17 billion (between 3% and 4% of the global market). The Government of Canada market was approximately CDN \$1 billion per year.

Basic telephone services account for 85% of revenues earned by Canadian carriers. The growth rate of this mature market is less than 10% per year. Enhanced services, such as facsimile, electronic messaging, electronic transactional services and information retrieval services, account

for the remaining 15% of Canadian carrier revenues. The annual growth rate for these services is estimated to be between 20% and 30%.

Growth rates in the Government of Canada market for data and enhanced services appear erratic and have been somewhat less than in the market as a whole (16% in 1988/89 and 11% in 1989/90).

Competition

In an increasingly competitive market-place, it is no longer possible for GTA to assume that it will retain its market share just because it has a Treasury Board mandate to provide telecommunications service to the government. Unless GTA is perceived to be providing value to its customers, as well as savings to the government, market forces will erode the Agency's revenues.

The challenge for GTA is to capture departmental business for bulk acquisition without interfering with the beneficial aspects of supplier relations with the departments.

Market

There are at least two reasons why GTA must capture an additional federal government market share, particularly in the areas of data transmission and provision of enhanced services:

- a) As tariff rates for message toll and WATS services continue to decline, savings to government and the margin earned by the Agency on the Intercity Shared Voice Service could decline;

- b) More importantly, there are significant savings to government that can be realized if GTA can encourage potential data customers to consolidate their requirements for data links in much the same way as they have previously consolidated their voice requirements. Such potential savings have been identified as falling under four major headings:

- Savings by multiplexing individual data networks into a few high-speed networks that enable the government to take advantage of existing tariff structures;
- More efficient use of the existing circuits;
- Person-year savings in individual departments through organizational rationalization;
- Savings achieved by integrating voice and data services.

Federal government telecommunications expenditures for the year 1989/90 amounted to \$836 million, of which \$442 million was spent on either voice or data services. GTA captured approximately 62% of this target market.

Analysis of expenditures shows that the target market is highly concentrated and therefore vulnerable to competition. Approximately 80% of operating expenditures on voice and data services is spent by 11 major departments.

Regulation

Assuming that the Department of Communications (DOC) will accomplish its objective of creating a uniform regulatory structure across Canada, GTA will be presented with opportunities, in the long term, to diversify its supplier base in the prairie region. Existing restrictions imposed by the three prairie telephone companies have prevented GTA from using Unitel as a carrier for intercity voice services between Ottawa and major prairie cities. They have also resulted in unnecessarily high private line delivery costs to federal agencies in those provinces.

In the short term, GTA has been presented with significant new opportunities following approval by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) of a new tariff for Bell Canada's Competitive Business Network digital service. In response to the Bell initiative, Unitel filed a new Mach III tariff in April 1990, which has recently been approved.

These fundamental changes to the tariffs present GTA, as one of Canada's largest purchasers of digital service, with significant opportunities:

- a) To provide the federal government with new savings through bulk purchase of capacity suitable for the transmission of data;
- b) To slow down the rate of decline in savings on intercity voice. Savings have fallen from approximately 50% of Direct Distance Dialling (DDD) rates in 1983/84 to a forecast of 31% in 1990/91; and

- c) To develop and market new services based on the high bandwidth which, for the first time, will become available at competitive prices.

☐ **REVENUE IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES IN EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

As a result of the rapid digitization of the public switched network for long-haul traffic and the successive price decreases that have been implemented over the past few years for intercity voice grade service, GTA can no longer depend upon the intercity voice service to generate the substantial savings to government and margins that it has done in the past.

The situation will be further aggravated by suppliers of telecommunications services who will be faced with increased competition themselves and who will attempt to sell directly to government departments rather than deal through GTA.

☐ **INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT**

The Special Operating Agency mandate

GTA has been chosen as one of five programs of the federal government to pilot the Special Operating Agency concept. Since April 1, 1990 the Agency has been operating under the Special Operating Agency status.

GTA has submitted its transitional Business Plan for 1990/91 to the Treasury Board, requesting a number of special authorities and freedoms which would enable it to operate efficiently in a competitive environment. The Business Plan also

constitutes an accountability contract between the Agency and the Department of Communications.

GTA has freedom to set its own objectives, manage its own affairs and selectively exempt itself from DOC planning, control, personnel and financial matters. The Agency continues to operate on a self-financing basis. It accepts general direction and policy advice from the Minister of Communications and/or the Deputy Minister. It will review its activities with the Government Telecommunications Council on a periodic basis.

The Agency's mission

The mission of GTA is to bring information and telecommunications products and services to government for effective delivery of services to Canadians.

The primary objectives of the Agency as outlined in the 1990/91 transition plan are:

- a) To provide quality services to government departments and agencies at an economic cost;
- b) To plan and meet the current and future telecommunications requirements of the Government of Canada and to ensure future savings;
- c) To operate on a full cost-recovery basis;
- d) To get close to customers in order to understand their needs clearly;
- e) To organize and implement the network architect function for the Government of Canada.

Strengths of GTA

GTA possesses certain strengths that make it a force in the market-place. The challenge is to maintain these strengths and use them to their full advantage:

- a) *Regional Presence:* GTA delivers service to 147 federal government departments, agencies and crown corporations. It is well positioned to stay close to its customers in all parts of Canada and to be knowledgeable about local tariffs, conditions and requirements.
- b) *Customer Relations:* GTA has an established relationship with all government departments and agencies resulting from provision of existing services. A new opportunity to further improve relations with major customers arises from the membership of the Telecommunications Advisory Panel.
- c) *Government Insider:* As an agency of government, GTA can help build a consensus among representatives of departments who will participate in planning the evolution of the network and the introduction of new services.
- d) *Bilingual Staff:* The ability to provide service in both official languages reinforces the Agency's position with its customers.
- e) *Treasury Board Mandate:* GTA is recognized by the Treasury Board as the focal point for the government telecommunications architect function and the delivery of the common telecommunications services in Canada.

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- f) *Self-sufficiency:* GTA has a long tradition of self-sufficiency, while operating on an essentially break-even basis over time.
 - g) *Employee Loyalty:* Employees have shown loyalty and dedication often under severe PY constraints.
 - h) *Technical Skills:* The Agency has one of the largest pools of expertise in the country as a provider of telecommunications and information services and as customized solutions to the government.

☐ **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

To succeed in the increasingly hostile market-place as a provider of high-quality telecommunications and information services to the government, GTA has recognized that it must pay particular attention to certain key aspects of its business. These sensitive areas are:

Customer satisfaction

GTA will stay close to its customers:

- a) *Customer Needs:* The Agency will emphasize responsiveness to customer requirements and the provision of a total service package which includes price, quality and value-added features.
- b) *Regional Presence:* Regional offices will be given additional responsibilities in order to keep pace with the growth in customer activity outside of the National Capital Region.

- c) *Market Intelligence:* GTA will maintain a database of current information regarding the plans of customers and the capabilities of competitors.

Technical competence

- a) *Technology:* Customers must feel comfortable in turning to GTA for technical advice, confident that they are dealing with professionals who are fully conversant with both the architecture of the government network and current developments in technology.

Effective Infrastructure

It must be evident to customers that sales and technical people from GTA are supported by an effective infrastructure:

- a) *Staff:* People are the strength of the organization, and GTA will support its employees through this period of change in Agency values and expectations.
- b) *Administrative Support:* Success in the market-place requires effective support behind the scenes in terms of responsive information systems, streamlined procedures, an appropriate organization and rigorous cost control.
- c) *Capacity Utilization:* GTA will maintain attractive prices for customers and savings for government if it can not only buy in bulk, but also maximize utilization of the network, particularly in off-peak periods.

Strategic alliances

The Agency will supplement its resources by forming alliances with organizations that are strong in areas in which GTA is weak.

☐ RECOMMENDED RESPONSE TO CHANGES

For GTA to meet its objectives, it will adapt to the changing environment. It will remain close to its customers and be easy to do business with. It will respond to market pressures, but continue to meet its responsibilities as the sole common service agency for telecommunications in the federal government.

In order to meet these often-conflicting responsibilities, GTA will:

Act Immediately to remove major Identified Irritants to customers

Billing

GTA receives numerous complaints about its billing system. Invoices, attachment details and inserts present a negative image to customers and are an impediment to marketing the Agency's services.

Short- and long-term measures will be taken to ensure that bills become timely, accurate, simple, understandable and easy for customers to verify and process.

Management tools

Customers do not have the software tools to manage local service equipment. They also need help in extracting information for special

reports and in monitoring intercity usage in a timely fashion. The Consolidation Management System (CMS) is being developed to meet this need. The timetable for release of modules will be accelerated.

Access to the GTA network

Customers have complained that the calling guide is complicated and that there are too many access numbers in use. GTA will consider introduction of a single access number to the government network.

Sales support

GTA will work with suppliers of services to improve the quality of after-sales support.

Concerns of regional customers

These have not always been given the appropriate level of consideration by GTA's management.

Directory

The procedure for providing updates to government directories is cumbersome. Immediate action will be taken to make the process more user friendly.

Increase penetration of key accounts through aggressive marketing action

The Agency will emphasize customer satisfaction through better-quality service, personal attention and other support activities. It will position itself as an integrator, offering total end-to-end solutions to its customers.

In order to achieve its market-share objectives, GTA will develop closer relationships with key customers. It

will build a well-trained, highly-skilled, professional sales team. National account teams, involving both headquarters and regional staff, will be established to provide consistent coast-to-coast support for major accounts. GTA staff will use meetings of the Telecommunications Advisory Panel and the Government Telecommunications Council to demonstrate the capabilities of the Agency and to build bridges between the Agency and major users of GTA services.

Realign business portfolio

Review existing service offerings

GTA will conduct an in-depth review of its business portfolio, to ensure that services offered are still relevant and economically justifiable. Migration plans will be considered for networks and services that fail to demonstrate savings to government and long-term prospects for growth. New pricing strategies will be developed in accordance with an overall view of competitive market conditions and will recognize the contribution to savings that is made by the largest users of GTA services.

Develop new service offerings

New services will be designed to satisfy the unique characteristics of the government market as well as the mandate of the Agency. The needs of user departments, although diverse, will be addressed within the context of a single, government-wide, enterprise.

New services will be based primarily upon services provided by the private sector. All services in the GTA portfolio

will be subjected to a rigorous business case analysis.

Supplement own strengths by entering into appropriate strategic alliances

Rapid technological change has led to an erosion of traditional boundaries between industries. Many companies are finding it necessary to form alliances or undertake joint ventures with organizations in other industries in order to supplement their own skills and to exploit new kinds of opportunities.

As GTA adopts a more aggressive approach to its market and the extension of its service portfolio, a number of other alliances will be considered for the purpose of:

- Increasing GTA's buying power (and therefore its discounts);
- Turning a potential competitor into a partner. Opening up new service opportunities;
- Opening up new markets; and
- Gaining access to new skills and knowledge.

GTA will proceed with caution and due process where potential alliances challenge its existing policies and mandate.

Manage the Telecommunications Architect Program on behalf of the Federal Government

Under this program major telecommunications users will develop a government-wide strategy for integration of telecommunications with

computers utilizing Open Systems Interconnection (OSI) standards.

GTA will manage the program, which will be staffed by departmental, Agency and private sector representatives. While specific program deliverables will evolve over time, objectives and immediate milestones of the program are to:

- a) Reach agreement upon the manner in which OSI standards will be applied in an integrated government-wide network to enable the linking of existing and future departmental networks;
- b) Conduct trials of components and services within the architectural framework;
- c) Implement a new government enterprise network that complies with international standards;
- d) Coordinate customer participation in the Architect Program;
- e) Develop and implement plans to manage and use government telecommunications assets more effectively; and
- f) Coordinate plans for training telecommunications personnel throughout the government.

In addition to work on these objectives, GTA will develop a communications plan to ensure wider understanding and awareness of the Telecommunications Architect Program.

Improve the effectiveness of the Agency through attention to human resource issues

The Agency's employees are loyal and dedicated. They have a commitment to service and integrity. GTA will prepare its employees to meet the new competitive environment by instilling a greater emphasis upon customer service, entrepreneurial spirit, innovation, teamwork and results orientation.

Acceptance of these values will be achieved through leadership and training, as well as through career planning and appropriate conditions of employment.

GTA will increase the size of the marketing group and realign existing resources to support the market-oriented objectives of this Business Plan. At the same time, the Agency will draw upon technically-skilled people to respond to customer needs with market-driven solutions.

The alignment of personnel, knowledge, skills and values with the needs of the Agency are central to the success of the Business Plan.

Identify and complete development of computerized systems that are of strategic value to the Agency

GTA is heavily dependent upon computerized systems to support and deliver services. Effective information systems not only enable the Agency to respond quickly and in a flexible fashion to customer requests, but also to help solidify business relationships.

During the Business Plan period, GTA will initiate or complete development of

five systems that are seen to have strategic value to the Agency:

- *Billing System:* This system will be modified in accordance with the recommendations of our study group.
- *Consolidation Management System:* Being developed by the Atlantic Region on behalf of GTA, this system will help customers to manage their local telephone lines, equipment, orders and costs.
- *Customer Profile System:* This new system will be used to maintain a database of market intelligence and information about customers, potential customers and competitors of GTA.
- *Network Management System:* Required in response to customer requests for tools to manage their own virtual private networks, GTA will acquire this system from a carrier.
- *General Ledger System:* This package can be used more effectively to provide the Agency with budget information, regional reports and financial statements by service segment.

Modify the structure of the Agency to better support multiple responsibilities

The structure of the Agency is perceived to restrict initiative at the regional level and obviously does not yet accommodate the new Architect Program.

GTA will undertake an organizational review in order to:

- Encourage regional initiatives;
- Minimize overlapping or conflicting lines of responsibility at headquarters;
- Support an aggressive marketing strategy which will emphasize direct relationships with customers and suppliers as well as immediate response to market opportunities; and
- Position the architect function within GTA so as to assist program managers in providing leadership and support to both customers and suppliers.

☐ THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL OFFICES

Although it would be premature to redefine the role of regional offices in advance of the organizational review, it is clear that the responsibilities of GTA will be increased in the regions.

Regional Business Plans have been prepared by regional directors. Here is an outline of those plans (the extracts have been slightly edited):

Atlantic Region

Proposed Response

GTA's regional office will continue to emphasize aggressive marketing action. It will support the national programs of its customers with local solutions. The Atlantic Region's involvement in the proposed national major account marketing program will ensure Agency commitment to delivery of market intelligence throughout the

country, and to the development of marketing strategies for all major accounts.

The Atlantic Region will build strategic alliances at the local level in order to win business.

The Atlantic Region is prime to develop the Consolidation Management System, which is of strategic importance to the Agency as a whole.

The region will develop a pricing strategy that is designed to meet regional competition. The Government Voice Messaging Service, for example, is facing stiff competition from Maritime Telegraph and Telephone Company and CTG Canada, which supplies voice messaging service to the Nova Scotia Government.

Québec Region

Proposed Response

The Québec regional team will continue to emphasize an aggressive approach to marketing. It will continue to provide its customers with solutions suited to regional requirements by supporting national and regional programs for customers.

The Québec Region will develop strategic alliances on behalf of the federal community in the region. For example, a training seminar for telecommunications personnel is currently being developed jointly with the Québec Government's Direction générale des télécommunications.

The region will also contribute to the Telecommunications Architect Program by taking part in a study to determine the criteria to be used in an evaluation

of the relative merits of Centrex and PBX systems.

The Québec regional office is currently assessing the impact of the filings by Telecom Canada as well as Unitel and formulating scenarios for the regional components of the network. It intends also to support its customers in an effort to find a way to remove such longstanding irritants as billing.

Ontario Region

Proposed Response

The Ontario Region proposes to build on the existing goodwill of our customers by actively identifying irritants and providing solutions within the region or nationally.

It will train regional employees through learning of new technologies and communication skills thereby enhancing customer service; it will also strengthen communications links with headquarters and other regions, thereby improving market intelligence and responding faster to customer requests.

It will optimize the regional network routes and local access consolidations as a service platform that can support the customers' voice and data applications.

It will improve administration through automation, Consolidation Management System and streamlined procedures, thus using GTA's administrative services as "value added".

Central Region

Proposed response

GTA's Central Region is actively supporting the Agency's responses, including actions on billing, CMS and the Architect Program.

We are also undertaking regional initiatives to explain the implications of regulatory change to customers and maximize benefits to the government from opportunities that arise in the new competitive environment.

We will identify our customer base and market opportunities, build customer profiles, develop pricing strategies to meet local competition and develop applications to meet customer needs.

The Central Regional Office will strengthen its tradition of service through training and implement changes that will enhance our business-like image with customers. We will also implement an employee development and recognition program. We will offer our staff courses that are designed to meet the knowledge requirements of our customers.

Pacific Region

Proposed Response

The Pacific Region will convert its existing trunking routes to digital routes as soon as possible. Switching equipment will be upgraded to ensure state-of-the-art performance. Opportunities will also be sought to expand the network through the formation of new consolidations and new serving areas.

Customers will participate in the Architect Program through a regional Steering Committee, under the auspices of the Telecommunications Advisory Panel. This will enable customer departments to participate in the long-range planning of telecommunications for the Government of Canada at the regional level and to have input to the regional Business Plans of GTA.

The region will participate actively in corporate MIS projects which will enhance GTA's capabilities to manage inventories, process orders, produce directories and issue bills.

The region will train staff and users to make the best use of the telecommunications services being provided for the future.

□ PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The management of GTA has undertaken to provide information on an annual basis in the form of representations to help the Government Telecommunications Advisory Committee (TAP) form judgements about the effectiveness of the Agency. Representations will be prepared at a level that is meaningful to managers of GTA and to GTC and TAP and also in a manner that can be substantiated and audited.

GTA proposes to use an approach that has been developed by the Canadian Comprehensive Auditing Foundation which identifies 12 attributes which, taken together, will allow GTC and TAP to form a balanced judgement about the effectiveness of GTA.

The 12 attributes will enable management to make representations as to:

- a) The intentions of management;
- b) The results achieved;
- c) Operational effectiveness; and
- d) The soundness of the Agency.

Specific performance indicators that will be reported upon are as follows:

Management direction

- Implementation of Business Plan strategies
- Attention to Critical Success Factors

Relevance

- Customer satisfaction with GTA's services*
- Total savings to government, generated by GTA's business activities*

Appropriateness

- Administrative expenses as a percentage of total GTA revenues*

Achievement of intended results

- Cost savings to government from using GTA
- Architect program milestones achieved
- GTA's share of total government telecommunications services market*

Acceptance

- Customer satisfaction with the quality of GTA's services and range of services negotiated and provided

Secondary Impacts

- Regional economic development

Costs and productivity

- GTA's rates as a percentage of common carrier tariffs and supplier rates, leased WATS lines or dedicated line costs
- Cost effectiveness of GTA (per unit of measurement)

Responsiveness

- New technologies adopted, new services provided, new initiatives undertaken to better meet client needs

Financial results

- Management of the Revolving Fund and rates charged

Working environment

- Value rankings and matching

Protection of assets

- Computer down time

Monitoring and reporting

- Status of GTA's library system.

☐ **CONCLUSION**

These, in brief, are the challenges that await the Government Telecommunications Agency. Each and every one of us should strive to meet them to the best of our abilities.

A new way of
doing business!



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