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FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

Success Factors

Success Stories

2000–01 Projects

Canada

Contents

50% recycled
material

FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

Success Factors

2000–01 Projects

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FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES
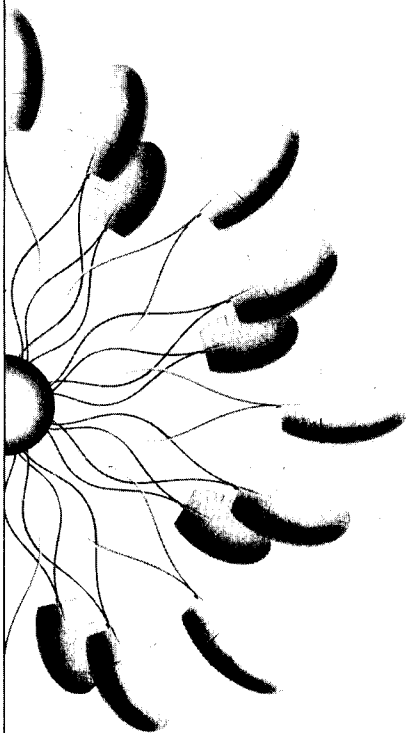
The project participants and partners were enthusiastic and committed

The enthusiasm and commitment of participants and partners are key factors to the success of the projects. This spirit creates interest and helps to involve collaborators and participants who, in turn, are committed to the success of the project.

These characteristics also help in overcoming difficulties encountered during the project implementation, bringing out creativity, seeking complementary resources and seeing the project through to its successful completion.

- *ARBORESCENCE MASKOUTAINE*

  "I was surprised at the high level of interest that the community organizations had for the site."

  Isabelle Martin, project manager at the Service de développement des technologies de l'information

- *FRANCO-FREDERICTON*

  "This project sparked everyone's enthusiasm and helped to bring together many organizations in the region."

  Diane Gauthier, information officer at the Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne

  "It was a great adventure."

  Benoît Locas of CJPN, Fredericton's French-language community radio

- COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

  "The participants took the project to heart and showed incredible team spirit. They discovered a wealth of information on the region, with one discovery leading to another. Everything was linked."

  Jeanne Huet, production manager (Kootenays)

The project relied on the expertise of certain key partners

Some project managers relied on the expertise of partners who proved to be indispensable. Others were inspired by initiatives undertaken in the same field. In this way, they were able to start off on the right foot, with a very high likelihood of successfully completing the project.

- INTERNET GUIDE TO DEVELOP TELEHEALTH

  "We relied on two key partners in the Acadian community for their outstanding expertise in on-line learning."

  Suzanne Robichaud, project coordinator

- *ANIMusique.ca*

  "Our two sites are complementary, and since theirs came before ours, they were our mentors, and their experience helped us to avoid many pitfalls."

  Carole Trottier, project manager at the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française and manager of *ANIMusique.ca*, speaking about the project partner, Québec Info Musique

The project made use of community resources

The project made use of the creativity, talents, expertise and knowledge of the community members. In some cases, community members participated as part of the team directly involved in the project implementation from start to finish. In other cases, individuals or organizations contributed to a particular aspect of the project, or certain organizations agreed to be part of the newly created site.

The involvement of community resources, individuals and organizations is one of the important factors in the success of a project. This involvement generates enthusiasm for participants and partners, helps in finding creative solutions to the difficulties encountered and helps build a solid team of volunteers without whom, in many cases, the project could not have been completed.

* COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

   "The participants were very different and we wanted each community to be creative and use the talents and skills of its own members."

   Robert Rothon, the project's originator and coordinator

   "Through the resources and technical skills of each community, new achievements are enriching the heritage of French-speaking British Columbia."

   Paulette Bouffard, Executive Director of Éducacentre

* *ARBORESCENCE MASKOUTAINE*

   "It was a true work of coordination and communication [between the various community participants]."

   Isabelle Martin, project manager with Service de développement des technologies de l'information

   Steve Patenaude of Sig-net plus attended some 20 meetings with the various groups of participants to **"promote the portal and explain what information was required."**

* PORTAL FOR FRANCOPHONE YUKON

   The organizations worked in close collaboration with Didier Delahaye of the Association franco-yukonnaise, who was responsible for the design and development of the portal: **"Some organizations already had a Web site, while others did not. I helped those that did not to develop a site. I also had to ensure a certain degree of consistency among the sites that already existed."**

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The Web site touches on various aspects of the life of Francophone communities

It is much easier to generate enthusiasm and interest and to involve the community's resources when the Web site touches on various aspects of the life of a particular community or of several Francophone communities in Canada. In some cases, sites that are created in this way can become a research tool or unique reference source about a region, a Francophone community or all of French-speaking Canada.

- *ARBORESCENCE MASKOUTAINE*

  "At first, the idea was to offer these community organizations a free Web page, via the portal page, in order to promote their services. As the project progressed, we realized that, in order to help promote the community organizations, we had to have different types of people visiting the portal page. The project gradually grew and, with various sectors expressing an interest in being linked to the portal page, we finally decided to include the entire Maskoutan community."

  Isabelle Martin, project manager with Service de développement des technologies de l'information

- *FRANCO-FREDERICTON*

  "*Franco-Fredericton* is like a central information repository. It has something on every aspect of French life in the capital."

  Marc-Antoine Demers, project coordinator and coordinator of the Centre d'accès communautaire Sainte-Anne

- PORTAL FOR FRANCOPHONE YUKON

  Didier Delahaye of the Association franco-yukonnaise, who was responsible for the design and development of the portal, would like to see the **www.afy.ca** site become "a research tool that contains all information on the Yukon's French-speaking community."

- VIRTUAL NEWSPAPERS FROM THE ASSOCIATION DE LA PRESSE FRANCOPHONE (APF)

  The APF launched its first site in 1996. However, this site "was no longer meeting the needs of the APF or of the various newspapers. With its new look, *www.journaux.apf.ca* offers greater visibility and enables users to browse the country's Francophone press."

  APF President Gilles Haché

  "The site could be come a unique research tool for those interested in La Francophonie."

  Francis Potié, Executive Director of the APF

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FRANCOCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

The project helped to overcome the linguistic and geographical isolation of French-speaking Canadians and to strengthen the Francophone identity

The Internet generates great interest for Francophones living in minority situations and in remote areas. The Internet enables them to communicate among themselves and with those outside their region, to have access to information that they perhaps would not otherwise have, and to enjoy national and international visibility.

• *FRANCO-FREDERICTON*

It is now possible **"to tell the world that a Francophone community exists in Fredericton and to stay in touch with our families, whether they live in Lamèque, Montréal or England."**

Benoît Locas of CJPN, Fredericton's French-language community radio

"*Franco-Fredericton* also provides international visibility for Francophones in the region."

Marc-Antoine Demers, project coordinator and coordinator of the Centre d'accès communautaire Sainte-Anne

• VIRTUAL NEWSPAPERS FROM THE ASSOCIATION DE LA PRESSE FRANCOPHONE (APF)

"The new site offers member newspapers an intranet service that gives them quick access to news, columns, reports and editorial cartoons produced by the APF News Service. The site also allows newspapers to offer national coverage in the information provided to their readers."

Annick Schulz, Director of Multimedia and Special Projects at the APF

"Today, members are pleased with the initiative. The site helps them become known across the country."

Annick Schulz, Director of Multimedia and Special Projects at the APF

The site **"gives French-speaking communities greater visibility and better access to news from across the country."**

Alain Bessette of *L'Aquilon*, the French-language newspaper of the Northwest Territories

"Through the site, students have discovered that the French-language press exists throughout Canada."

Odette Bussières, President of Penetanguishene's French-language newspaper, *Le Goût de Vivre*, and secondary school teacher

"The site is a plus for Francophone and Acadian communities in Canada and around the world. Over the long term, the site could become a source for Francophone thought and opinion world-wide."

Annick Schulz, Director of Multimedia and Special Projects at the APF

• PORTAL FOR FRANCOPHONE YUKON

"The current site is just a first step toward building the future and ensuring the virtual presence of Yukon's French-speaking population."

Didier Delahaye of the Association franco-yukonnaise, responsible for the design and development of the portal

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

"Women will know that we are there if they need help or services. Newcomers to the Yukon and people who are considering moving here can contact us to help them integrate into the community."

Stéphanie Burchell, one of the coordinators of Essenti*Elles*

• COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

Jeanne Huet, production manager (Kootenays) hopes that these productions "will help to increase awareness on the part of non-French-speaking people in the province and of Francophones living in eastern Canada of the presence and history of Francophones in British Columbia." She added that "there are Francophones living in the west. We are very active and we are aware of our history."

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• *ANIMusique.ca*

"The site contributes enormously to creating closer connections between the artists, the public and the Francophone media across the country."

Sophie Leclerc, *ANIMusique.ca* coordinator and current director of content development

• WINDOW ON FRENCH-SPEAKING CANADA'S ARTS AND CULTURE

"Francophones in North America have a unique voice, often accented with very moving qualities. This voice deserves to be heard throughout Canada and in other French-speaking countries."

Pierre Raphaël Pelletier, multidisciplinary artist and president of the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française

The project provided an opportunity for people to become familiar with new technologies that they would not otherwise have encountered

The transition to the Information Highway requires learning, which causes apprehension for some people, especially those who have never had an opportunity to use a computer. Others may not have the financial means or knowledge to become acquainted with the Internet. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* projects contribute to increasing the number of Francophones using the Internet by providing on-line services and content in French. The projects also enable a number of partners to enter the information age on a level playing field with other Internet users.

• *MÉDIATHÈQUE VIRTUELLE*

"The desire to computerize the material and learn about a new tool was demonstrated by all partners."

Claude Gosselin, who is in charge of the resource centre of the Conseil scolaire francophone provincial and the principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle*

"I developed an approach to the information that helps initiate students to Internet research, based on their experience with traditional research."

Claude Gosselin, in charge of the resource centre of the Conseil scolaire francophone provincial and the principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle*

FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

- INTERNET GUIDE TO DEVELOP TELEHEALTH

  "The majority of the partner health centres had no previous experience in telehealth; it was a matter of knowing how this new tool could help them."

  Suzanne Robichaud, project coordinator with the Corporation hospitalière Beauséjour

- *PRESCOTT-RUSSELL À LA CARTE*

  "The project gives rural municipalities access to high-technology tools that they would never have been able to access otherwise."

  Guylaine Poirier, an urban planner in Alfred-Plantagenet

- COMMUNITY NETWORK FOR MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

  The project aimed **"to help motivate learners, familiarize them with computers and the Internet, and help them improve their French."**

  Mireille Beck, production manager (Kelowna)

- *ARBORESCENCE MASKOUTAINE*

  For Chantal Pelletier, of the Centre de la petite enfance Mafamigarde, the training was very useful. **"I was very happy because, prior to that, I did not have the skills necessary for working on a Web page."**

The project furthered the development of new software, applications and Internet tools in French

In many cases, the Francophone presence on the Internet is not limited to putting French content on-line. In fact, Francophone and Acadian communities across Canada have demonstrated great technological creativity in developing original applications and new uses for the Internet, in French. Some of these innovations are also being translated into English.

- *MÉDIATHÈQUE VIRTUELLE*

  As Claude Gosselin, who is in charge of the resource centre of the Conseil scolaire francophone provincial (CSFP) and the principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle*, explained, the project involved **"establishing a mechanism for computerizing material, and setting up a cataloguing and circulation infrastructure, as well as a window on the Internet for printed documentation, photographs, video and audio resources kept in the CSFP's resource centre and in other Francophone organizations in the province."**

  "We have limited resources for purchasing material, so we have to develop the tools."

  Claude Gosselin, in charge of the CSFP's resource centre and principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle*

  "I developed an approach to the information that helps initiate students to Internet research, based on their experience with traditional research."

  Claude Gosselin, in charge of the CSFP's resource centre and principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle*

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

- INTERNET GUIDE TO DEVELOP TELEHEALTH

    "The software used is quite unique, because it was developed entirely in both official languages, and includes an interface and help files that were created in French."

    Harold Jarche, head of learning services at Theorix, a project partner

- *PRESCOTT-RUSSELL À LA CARTE*

    "It is not enough just to make these data available on the Internet; we have to develop new applications in French so that the average citizen can easily access the information. And that is the real difficulty of this exercise."

    Maurice Poulin, manager of economic development with the United Counties of Prescott and Russell, and manager of the *Prescott-Russell à la carte* project

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The project demonstrates economic, artistic and cultural results

One of the criteria for a successful project, whatever it may be, is its capacity to create positive, sustainable results. Profitability is a very strong motivating factor, and in this sense the economic results of a project can be substantial — and even more so, considering that the Information Highway can lead not only to new domestic markets, but also to new opportunities internationally. And the artistic and cultural results of the projects must not be overlooked. Many projects help to create a place on the World Wide Web that French-speaking Canada and its artists deserve.

- *MÉDIATHÈQUE VIRTUELLE*

    "The substantial increase in the number of requests for loans is proof of the project's success."

    Claude Gosselin, who is in charge of the resource centre of the Conseil scolaire francophone provincial and the principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle*

- *PRESCOTT-RUSSELL À LA CARTE*

    "The project has inspired a new culture among young people, at the school and in the entire region. We hope that early learning in geomatics will lead to careers for our students and, over the long term, to the development of our region."

    Anne Laflamme, a geography teacher at the École secondaire régionale de Hawkesbury

- *ANIMusique.ca*

    "*ANIMusique.ca* is meeting a vital need in Canada. It is the only site that, in one click, can lead you to everything related to the world of Francophone music anywhere in this country."

    Louise Beaudoin, coordinator of the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française promotion office in Montréal

- WINDOW ON FRENCH-SPEAKING CANADA'S ARTS AND CULTURE

    "Whether you're a student, journalist, teacher, artist or otherwise involved in arts and culture, you have all the makings of a good *zof.ca* surfer."
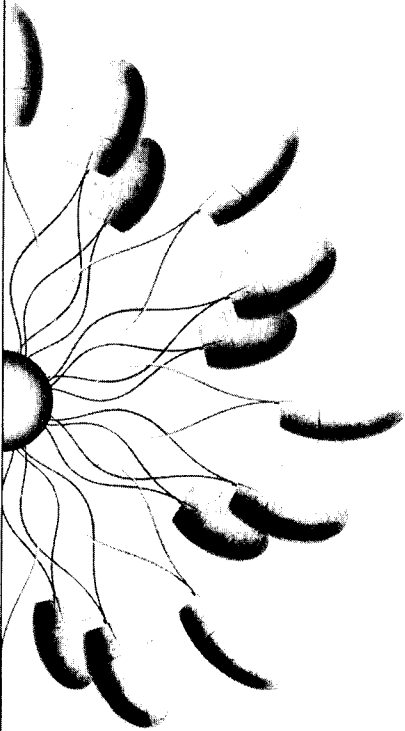
    Anne-Sophie Ducellier, Director of Communications with the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française and manager of the *zof.ca* cultural and artistic search engine

FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

Success Stories

2000–01 Projects

ANIMusique

French-speaking artists in Canada have a springboard toward the future in the *ANIMusique.ca* Web site created by the Alliance nationale de l'industrie musicale (ANIM). As a member of the larger Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF) family, the ANIM hopes to meet a pressing need — to get information onto the Web about musical artists in French-speaking Canada outside of Quebec.

In 2000–01, the ANIM and the FCCF received $30 000 in funding from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program to create the *ANIMusique.ca* site. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The project involved a substantial amount of work. The first task was to make an inventory of the active artists in French-speaking Canada and create a file on each of them; then a Web site was developed from scratch. To implement this project, the ANIM had the support of many fine collaborators. Québec Info Musique, which already has an exhaustive inventory of Québécois musical resources posted on the Web, provided invaluable assistance. According to Carole Trottier, project manager at FCCF and manager of *ANIMusique.ca*, **"our two sites are complementary, and since theirs came before ours, they were our mentors, and their experience helped us to avoid many pitfalls."**

To create its inventory, the ANIM team called upon the assistance of associations of Francophone artists across the country, such as the Association acadienne des artistes professionnels in New Brunswick, the Association des professionnels de la chanson et de la musique franco-ontariennes, and the Regroupement des artistes de l'Ouest en musique. The project also benefited from the technical expertise of ConceptArt, a foundation affiliated with the FCCF, which was responsible for the site architecture and graphics — which are outstanding.

With a colourful, spring-like design, *ANIMusique.ca* presents dozens of French-speaking musicians and singers. For each one, the site also provides a detailed biography, complete discography, contact information, reviews from the press and even audio samples of certain tunes. This site has other pleasant surprises such as an on-line newsletter, an activities schedule, performances, contests and major events, as well as information on broadcasters and the media, and useful links, for example, to the artists' personal Web sites. As Sophie Leclerc, current the director of content development, explains, **"the site contributes enormously to creating closer connections between the artists, the public and the Francophone media across the country."**

Since its official launch on June 8, 2001, this relatively new site has already sparked a great deal of enthusiasm, on the part of artists, the media, broadcasters, those involved in cultural pursuits and the general public. The team does not intend to stop now that it is doing so well, and many ideas are in the works. For example, 20 new artists will soon be added to the site and an on-line purchase service will be installed. For Louise Beaudoin, the coordinator of the FCCF's promotion office in Montréal, **"*ANIMusique.ca* is meeting a vital need in Canada. It is the only site that, in one click, can lead you to everything related to the world of Francophone music anywhere in this country."**

ANIMusique.ca is undeniably an excellent means of promoting Francophone artists as well as a tool that the media will no longer be able to do without. But for one and all, the site is also a wonderful sort of musical garden, which is very pleasant to browse through. Treat yourself to a look around. And while you're there, feel free to pick a few songs. Like beautiful flowers in a garden, they are there to be enjoyed.

Web site: **www.animusique.ca**

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FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

A Window on French-Speaking Canada's Arts and Culture

Z of stands for Zone Francophone, a Web site that provides a single window on French-speaking Canada's arts and culture. The *zof.ca* site was created by the Fédération culturelle canadienne-française (FCCF), which aims to provide Francophone communities with the cultural and artistic search engine of their dreams. According to Pierre Raphaël Pelletier, multidisciplinary artist and president of the FCCF: **"Francophones in North America have a unique voice, often accented with very moving qualities. This voice deserves to be heard throughout Canada and in other French-speaking countries."** Through *zof.ca*, this voice will become more present on the World Wide Web.
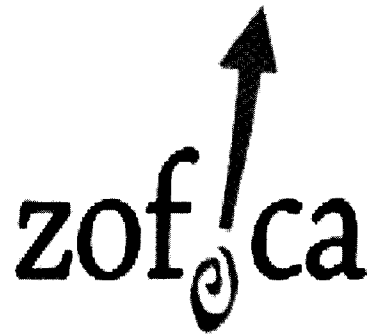
In 2000–01, the FCCF received funding of $25 000 from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program to open a window on Francophone Canada's arts and culture through the project called *Fenêtre sur les arts et la culture de la francophonie canadienne*. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The project involves enhancing the FCCF's Francoculture site. To do this, the FCCF integrated *zof.ca* with the site. *Zof.ca* is a powerful search engine combined with a very up-to-date directory of cultural and artistic organizations. With the advantage of this specialized search engine, users can navigate through information on French-speaking Canada without digressing from the subject. Searches are done by entering keywords or browsing through the directory, which is divided into 13 headings: associations, artists, distributors, artistic disciplines, copyright, events, geographical areas, training and employment, governments and agencies, media, heritage and museums, products and services, and assistance programs. **"Whether you're a student, journalist, teacher, artist or otherwise involved in arts and culture, you have all the makings of a good *zof.ca* surfer,"** says Anne-Sophie Ducellier, the FCCF's Director of Communications and manager of the *zof.ca* site.

To develop this navigation tool, the FCCF involved the participation of its 16 members across Canada. It also appealed to the generosity and experience of various partners, such as Llama Communications, which played a key role in the design and implementation of the project, and Achilles Internet, which provided technical expertise.

The official launch of *zof.ca* took place on June 8, 2001, at the annual general meeting of the FCCF, and during the regional theatre festival. More than 80 guests from the artistic and cultural community attended the event. The site has been promoted through many activities, especially during important events such as the Bourse Rideau and the Jeux de la Francophonie. The site has also enjoyed increased visibility through the creation of the Prix ZOF. In 2001, the award recognized the efforts of a representative of the private sector in furthering arts and culture in French-speaking Canada.

This promotional campaign seems to have paid off. Despite the site's relatively recent launch, it has already sparked considerable interest. This is reflected in the numerous entries posted to *zof.ca*, the many compliments received from users, and the requests received from a variety of sites, particularly European ones, to establish a link to the *zof.ca* site.

But the *zof.ca* site is also the expression of French Canadian culture that is both highly current and focussed on the future. It reflects the desire of Canada's French-speaking communities to break out of their shell, spread their wings and participate fully in the global Francophonie of the third millennium.

Web site: **www.zof.ca**

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

Franco-Fredericton

Yes, life in French is possible in New Brunswick's capital. Greater Fredericton includes more than 6000 French-speaking people: Acadians, Brayons from the Edmonston region, Québécois, military personnel from the base at Gagetown, and those employed in the public service. One Web site, *Franco-Fredericton*, now allows you to get to the heart of Francophone life in this region.

In 2000–01, Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program provided funding of $30 750 to the Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne to develop the *Franco-Fredericton* Web site. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The *Franco-Fredericton* Web site was also made possible through the financial support of several partners in the region: the Centre d'accès communautaire Sainte-Anne, the Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne, the Garderie au P'tit Monde de Franco and CJPN, Fredericton's French-language community radio. Additional support came from the participation of some 30 Francophone community organizations. **"This project sparked everyone's enthusiasm and helped to bring together many organizations in the region,"** said Diane Gauthier, the former information officer at the Centre communautaire Sainte-Anne, who spent many hours working on the project.

Marc-Antoine Demers, project coordinator and coordinator of the Centre d'accès communautaire Sainte-Anne, explains that **"*Franco-Fredericton* is like a central information repository. It has something on every aspect of French life in the capital."** The site includes schools, day-cares, libraries, and community centres and organizations, all of which contribute to the development and entertainment of each member of the French-speaking community of Greater Fredericton. The site has an on-line telephone directory of services in French, the region's French-language newspaper, direct access to Francophone community radio, and the Web sites of all its partners. *Franco-Fredericton* allows users to find out what is happening in French in the region, not only for those living in Fredericton, but also for newcomers or for anyone considering moving to the area.

Mr. Demers explains that **"*Franco-Fredericton* also provides international visibility for Francophones in the region."** CJPN, the French-language community radio, currently broadcasts on-line, giving its programs a worldwide audience. Benoît Locas of CJPN is proud to say that it is now possible **"to tell the world that a Francophone community exists in Fredericton and to stay in touch with our families, whether they live in Lamèque, Montréal or England."** Mr. Locas also enjoyed participating in the project: **"It was a great adventure,"** he said.

Franco-Fredericton was launched on March 20, 2001, during the Journée internationale de la Francophonie, and the launch was broadcast on-line by the community radio. The site has enjoyed much success since then. In October and November 2001, the site logged an average of 177 visits per day, 20 percent of which were from outside Greater Fredericton.

Mr. Demers, who is now in charge of maintaining the site, explains that it is necessary to constantly improve, update and promote the site. He is always looking for ways to gain exposure for the site: through advertising in newspapers and on the radio, and registering the site with various search engines on the Internet. He even recently organized an on-line treasure hunt with prizes worth $2000. More than 300 people in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Ontario participated in the contest.

The creation of *Franco-Fredericton* has led individual Francophones and Francophone organizations in Greater Fredericton to come together to help each other, as well as to strengthen connections that already existed. The site should help the community to increase its outreach beyond the region and create linkages with other Francophones in the province, in Canada and around the world. This helps to explain the importance that this community places on *Franco-Fredericton*.

Web site: **http://franco-fredericton.com**

FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

An Internet Guide to Develop Telehealth

Telehealth is a very valuable tool that the Corporation hospitalière Beauséjour in Moncton, New Brunswick, has learned to use successfully. Its telehealth programs, particularly "Télénéphro," help provide various medical services in French over long distances. Services such as consultation, diagnostic information and even treatment are provided. These remote services contribute substantially to improving the living conditions of many French-speaking patients who live far from large centres. Wishing to share its experience, the Corporation hospitalière Beauséjour team had the idea of developing an Internet guide to prepare French-speaking health professionals from all over Canada to develop telehealth projects in their own communities.

In 2000–01, the Corporation hospitalière Beauséjour received $67 500 in funding from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program to produce the *Guide Internet pour le développement de la télésanté* for a variety of French-speaking health care workers in Canada. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The Corporation hospitalière Beauséjour, which includes three health centres in southern New Brunswick that provide services in French, is a leader in "e-health," as this high-tech sector is commonly called. In order to carry out its project, the Corporation team formed partnerships across Canada. Eight public health agencies representing the four Atlantic provinces, one agency from Manitoba and a Franco-Ontarian hospital participated in defining the needs of French-speaking populations. **"The majority of the partner health centres had no previous experience in telehealth; it was a matter of knowing how this new tool could help them,"** explains Suzanne Robichaud, project coordinator. The company NBTel also took part in the project, graciously offering its expertise in integrating the health centres on the network. As well, the Société nationale de l'Acadie played a substantial role identifying the target populations.

As Ms. Robichaud emphasizes, **"we relied on two key partners in the Acadian community for their outstanding expertise in on-line learning."** The Université de Moncton, recognized for its tele-learning programs, took part in developing the educational content. In addition, the New Brunswick company Theorix generously provided its software, Theorix-SGCA (learning content management system), and trained the users. According to Harold Jarche, head of learning services at Theorix, **"the software used is quite unique, because it was developed entirely in both official languages, and includes an interface and help files that were created in French."**

The Guide, which was at first intended to be a simple Web site, has ended up being a self-administered, interactive course. This educational platform has definite benefits, such as the capability to manage registrations with the site, to bookmark information, to create forums, and to include a media library and videos. It allows users to learn at home at their own pace, and provides the opportunity to make contact and communicate with teachers and other students.

Installed on the Corporation hospitalière Beauséjour's Web site, the course has been accessible to all at no charge since its launch in May 2001. It is still too soon to know which types of telehealth projects this tool will lead to. The registration list, however, which continues to grow longer, provides a definite indication of the interest that the course has generated within Acadian and Francophone communities across Canada.

Web site: **www.telemed.chb.nb.ca**

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

Arborescence maskoutaine

National agri-food capital and a leading technology centre of Canada, the regional county municipality of Les Maskoutains enjoys a reputation that extends beyond Quebec and Canada. For all there is to know about this region of 80 000 people, located 70 km southeast of Montréal, just visit **www.maskoutain.ca**

Arborescence maskoutaine is a portal site that provides information in French on all the services available in the Maskoutan region, for all sectors of activity. The portal includes community information, and covers the education, health, tourism, media, industry and business sectors.

In 2000–01, Les Maskoutains' Service de développement des technologies de l'information (SDTI) received $67 500 in funding from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program to create a portal for the entire regional county municipality. The aim of the *Francommunautés virtuelles* program is to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

In addition to the funding from Industry Canada, the SDTI also benefited from the collaboration of several local partners, including the Centre local de développement de la MRC Les Maskoutains, the Services récréatifs et communautaires de la ville de Saint-Hyacinthe, the Corporation de développement communautaire de la MRC Les Maskoutains and Groupe Sig-net plus, which was responsible for designing the site. The project also was supported by a solid team of volunteers, including many from the area's 22 community access centres.

Isabelle Martin, project manager at SDTI, explained that most of the community organizations of the regional county municipality had neither the resources nor the skills required to have their own Web site. **"At first, the idea was to offer these community organizations a free Web page, via the portal page, in order to promote their services. As the project progressed, we realized that, in order to help promote the community organizations, we had to have different types of people visiting the portal page. The project gradually grew and, with various sectors expressing an interest in being linked to the portal page, we finally decided to include the entire Maskoutan community."**

The greatest difficulty for the project was to assemble and consult all the participants in the community: from educational institutions to the Chamber of Commerce, and all community organizations in-between. Ms. Martin adds that **"it was a true work of coordination and communication."** Steve Patenaude, of Sig-net plus, attended some 20 meetings with the various groups of participants to **"promote the portal and explain what information was required."** In addition to the information meetings for all participants, training sessions had to be organized for the community organizations to show them how to update their own Web pages. For Chantal Pelletier, of the Centre de la petite enfance Mafamigarde, the training was very useful. **"I was very happy because, prior to that, I did not have the skills necessary for working on a Web page,"** she said.

"I was surprised at the high level of interest that the community organizations had for the site," said Ms. Martin. For the community sector alone, there are 160 organizations represented on the Maskoutan portal page. In fact, 113 of these organizations now have a presence on the Internet free of charge; the other 47 already had their own site, and are linked via the portal page. The organizations, enterprises and businesses in the other sectors that are linked to the portal page now enjoy a presence that extends far beyond the local area.

The official launch of the **www.maskoutain.ca** site, on April 30, 2001, was attended by the various participants and the regional media. From the beginning, the portal has been a resounding success. After only two months, more than 2522 people had already explored this portal site, which has become an essential reference tool for anyone wishing to obtain information on the Maskoutan area.

With this portal, the regional county municipality of Les Maskoutains now enjoys an exceptional virtual showcase of the region. See for yourself!

Web site: **www.maskoutain.ca**

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FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES

Virtual Newspapers from the Association de la presse francophone

A vid readers of Canada's French-language press will be pleased to discover French-language news on-line. In fact, Canada's French press became available on the Web on October 26, 2001.

The Association de la presse francophone (APF) launched its first site in 1996. However, this site **"was no longer meeting the needs of the APF or of the various newspapers. With its new look, *www.journaux.apf.ca* offers greater visibility and enables users to browse the country's Francophone press,"** said APF President Gilles Haché, during the launch of the new site.
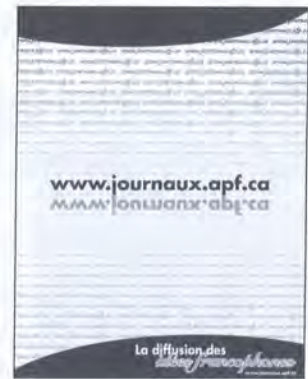
The **www.journaux.apf.ca** Web site was developed through funding from Industry Canada, the special projects fund of the Canada–national Francophone organizations agreement of the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the cultural service of the Embassy of France in Canada. In 2000–01, the APF received $53 600 from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program, which is aimed at expanding French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as encouraging French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The APF includes 24 daily and bimonthly Canadian French-language newspapers from outside of Quebec: six are based in the Atlantic provinces; twelve, in Ontario; and six, in the western provinces and territories. According to Annick Schulz, Director of Multimedia and Special Projects at the APF, **"the new site offers member newspapers an intranet service that gives them quick access to news, columns, reports and editorial cartoons produced by the APF News Service. The site also allows newspapers to offer national coverage in the information provided to their readers."** In fact, the APF's correspondent in Ottawa, posted there since 1998, pays particular attention to social and political events that have repercussions on Canada's Francophone and Acadian communities.

Through the site, members can also exchange local and provincial news with other APF newspapers. In addition, through the partnership with the French Embassy, articles from French newspapers discussing politics, the economy and culture, can be put on-line.

The site is available to all users. However, as Annick Schulz explains, **"the window open to the general public is quite small; there are a limited number of articles produced by the APF News Service and member newspapers."** The intent is to give visitors a few samples of what they would be able to find on the site if they were to subscribe. Two types of subscription are available for users: the Club subscription, which is ideal for individuals who would just like to browse through the news and subscribe to a newspaper; and News Service Plus, which is for those who would like to have access to the APF News Service and its archives. Francis Potié, Executive Director of the APF, emphasizes that **"the site could be come a unique research tool for those interested in La Francophonie."**

In the beginning, members had certain hesitations about the project. Small newspapers feared that they might lose part of their readership. However, according to Ms. Schulz, **"Today, members are pleased with the initiative. Newspapers have not lost any readers and the site helps them become known across the country."**

Alain Bessette of *L'Aquilon*, the French-language newspaper of the Northwest Territories, says that the site **"gives French-speaking communities greater visibility and better access to news from across the country."** Odette Bussières, a secondary school teacher and President of Penetanguishene's French-language newspaper, *Le Goût de Vivre*, uses the site as an educational tool in her classes: **"Through the site, students have discovered that the French-language press exists throughout Canada."**

The challenge now is to make **www.journaux.apf.ca** financially viable. The APF is currently examining various options, such as whether to sell advertising or sell content. The APF's executive director is confident and says that **"the reaction has so far been very positive."**

According to Ms. Schulz, **"the site is a plus for Francophone and Acadian communities in Canada and around the world. Over the long term, the site could become a source for Francophone thought and opinion worldwide."**

Web site: **www.journaux.apf.ca**

www.journaux.apf.ca

La diffusion des *libres francophones*

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

A Portal for Francophone Yukon

In a region as remote as the Yukon, where French-speaking people represent only 4 percent of the population, the Internet can be very important. In an attempt to reduce the geographic isolation of Yukon's French-speaking community, the Association franco-yukonnaise decided to integrate all the Yukon's Francophone organizations into one Web site.

In 2000–01, the Association franco-yukonnaise received $55 000 in funding from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program to develop an Internet gateway to all the French-language sites in the Yukon. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The Association franco-yukonnaise also received funding support from the Yukon government's Service d'orientation et de formation des adultes (SOFA) and from Évasion Nordik, a Francophone tourism agency. However, the project could not have been accomplished without the cooperation of its partners, the Yukon's Francophone organizations.

The **www.afy.ca** portal provides access to the sites of eight Francophone organizations, the region's Francophone media, a directory of services in French, and an abundance of other information on the Yukon and its history. Francophone organizations such as the bimonthly newspaper *L'Aurore boréale*, the group of women's organizations Essenti*Elles*, and the organization for young people Espoir Jeunesse, were all very pleased with the idea of having a site linked to the portal page.

The various organizations worked closely with Didier Delahaye of the Association franco-yukonnaise. He was responsible for the design and development of the portal. Mr. Delahaye explained that **"some organizations already had a Web site, while others did not. I helped those that did not to develop a site. I also had to ensure a certain degree of consistency among the sites that already existed."** All the sites were then grouped together under the portal page.

In order to make it easier for French-speaking Yukoners to contact other Francophone organizations, links to the Internet sites of Canada's major Francophone organizations were created, as well as links to Francophone organizations around the world.

The **www.afy.ca** portal helps the Yukon's Francophone organizations enjoy greater visibility, and the results are already becoming apparent. Through the portal, *L'Aurore boréale* has sold new subscriptions to readers outside of the Yukon.

Stéphanie Burchell, one of the coordinators of Essenti*Elles*, thinks that the site on **www.afy.ca** is an excellent promotional tool. It allows the organization to keep its members up-to-date in terms of activities, and to better promote its services. **"Women will know that we are there if they need help or services. Newcomers to the Yukon and people who are considering moving here can contact us to help them integrate into the community,"** Ms. Burchell said. Essenti*Elles* is even considering establishing partnerships with other groups of French-speaking women around the world. A group of women in Senegal has already contacted the organization by e-mail.

The portal enjoyed a successful launch during the opening of the new Centre de la francophonie du Yukon, on March 31, 2001. Mr. Delahaye says, however, that there is still much work to be done. The site has to be maintained and regularly updated, other information has to be added, especially educational material, and other French-speaking communities in the Yukon outside of Whitehorse have to be approached to join the site and make the content more dynamic.

Mr. Delahaye would like to see the **www.afy.ca** site become **"a research tool that contains all information on the Yukon's French-speaking community."** He adds, **"the current site is just a first step toward building the future and ensuring the virtual presence of Yukon's French-speaking population."**

Web site: **www.afy.ca**

Prescott-Russell à la carte

In easternmost Ontario, the United Counties of Prescott and Russell are a bastion of French in the province. This region, which has maintained its rural character despite its proximity to the national capital, is positioning itself among the leaders of a promising advanced technology: geomatics. In 1995, the United Counties established a geographic information system for land management purposes. Now they intend to make this mine of information available to the public and to various local partners via the Internet.

In 2000–01, Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program provided funding of $64 000 to the United Counties of Prescott and Russell for its Geographic Information Community Network project called *Prescott-Russell à la carte*. The project involves making a range of geomatics products and services related to the region available on the Internet. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

The geographic information system developed by the United Counties includes a bank of maps of the region which have qualitative data bases associated with them — soil quality, water table depth and seepage flow, the road network, and hydrographic features, for example. As so aptly put by Maurice Poulin, the United Counties' manager of economic development and manager of this project, **"it is not enough just to make these data available on the Internet; we have to develop new applications in French so that the average citizen can easily access the information. And that is the real difficulty of this exercise."** In this respect, HMNET Technologies, the region's Internet provider, was indispensable in providing technical and financial support.

Prescott-Russell à la carte is an ambitious project that includes three components. The first component, the municipal portal, provides local municipalities and various municipal services, such as public works and emergency services, with access to data bases that can facilitate their tasks. The eight local municipalities of the United Counties play a key role as partners and as clients. Guylaine Poirier, an urban planner in Alfred-Plantagenet said that **"the project gives rural municipalities access to high-technology tools that they would never have been able to access otherwise."**

The second component is the public portal, through which the general public can access a range of valuable geographic information, such as population statistics or the location of wells or public services (such as parks, schools, day-cares, libraries and so on). The 26 community access centres in Prescott and Russell, which are partners in the project, are undertaking to promote the *Prescott-Russell à la carte* services to the public and to assist people in using the applications.

Through the third component, the educational portal, various data bases are available to several schools in the United Counties to further geomatics education. The project is right on the mark in this respect, as the Ontario Ministry of Education has included this subject in the program for senior secondary students. All school partners (the Conseil scolaire des écoles catholiques de district est-ontarien, seven secondary schools and Collège d'Alfred of the University of Guelph) are currently setting up geomatics programs in their secondary and post-secondary curriculums.

A pilot program established in partnership with the École secondaire régionale de Hawkesbury as part of the current project led to the installation of a laboratory and the development of geomatics skills at the school. **"The project has inspired a new culture among young people, at the school and in the entire region. We hope that early learning in geomatics will lead to careers for our students and, over the long term, to the development of our region,"** explained Anne Laflamme, a geography teacher at the school.

"He who works hard reaps a good harvest" is both the motto of the United Counties and the code of conduct. *Prescott-Russell à la carte*, to which various partners have devoted so much work, should indeed yield good results. Mr. Poulin believes that this project could have considerable spin-offs for the future of the region. **"We hope that training a work force in geomatics will prompt high-tech companies to set up businesses in Prescott-Russell and that new horizons will open for our young people and our communities,"** he said.

Web site: **www.prescott-russell.on.ca/alacarte/English/main.html**

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

Community Network for Multimedia Production

B ritish Columbia's French-speaking communities in Sechelt, Kelowna, Kamloops and the Kootenays are telling their story on the Internet at *legrandordinaire.com*. Launched in 1999, this Web site features the history of French-speaking British Columbians. It offers an impressive variety of information in written, audio, video and photo formats, for students as well as for history lovers.

The site, which is a co-production of Éducacentre (British Columbia's French language adult education and training service) and British Columbia's French school board, originally included the history of the Francophone community of Maillardville. In 2000–01, Éducacentre received $45 000 in funding from Industry Canada, through the *Francommunautés virtuelles* program, to add four new multimedia productions, to illustrate the Francophone presence in the province. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

In addition to the funding from Industry Canada, the site also received funding from the National Literacy Secretariat as well as in-kind contributions from the following organizations working in partnership to implement the project: the Centre culturel francophone de l'Okanagan, the Association francophone de Kamloops, the Association francophone des Kootenays Ouest, the Société francophone du Pacifique, and the Société d'archivage électronique de l'Ouest.

The producers from the four areas, supported by a solid team of volunteers, chose considerably different approaches. The various projects combine text, video, sound and images to produce a highly interactive site.

Robert Rothon, the project's originator and coordinator, explained that the communities themselves chose and undertook their own projects: **"The participants were very different and we wanted each community to be creative and use the talents and skills of its own members."** Mr. Rothon coordinated the project long distance from his location, and designed the portal page. The documents on the site that link to the portal page were produced entirely by the different areas.

The Centre culturel francophone de l'Okanagan created a history project for literacy learners. Mireille Beck, production manager, explained that the project aims **"to help motivate learners, familiarize them with computers and the Internet, and help them improve their French."** In fact, two of the learners who participated in the project were youth at risk and the third, although Francophone, had considerable difficulty speaking French. The project traces the history of Kelowna and its Francophone community. There are many photos and video interviews that make the visit both pleasant and enriching for young people and adults.

Kamloops' project enabled the community to put a historical booklet, entitled *Kamloops et sa culture francophone*, on-line. The booklet was published in 1985, and its on-line version includes a sound clip in which an elder member of the Francophone community recounts some of her memories.

The contribution of French-speaking people to the development of the Kootenays region was not obvious at first glance. However, the production team's research revealed that Francophones have been living in the region from the early 1800s up to the present day. According to Jeanne Huet, production manager: **"The participants took the project to heart and showed incredible team spirit. They discovered a wealth of information on the region, with one discovery leading to another. Everything was linked."** The socio-cultural documentary they produced allows each person to tell his or her own story. The participants who were already familiar with computers through previous government programs were able to practise and improve their skills.

The Société francophone du Pacifique chose to adapt a play entitled *En lisant un arbre*, which tells the story of the arrival of French-speaking people to Sechelt, their first contact with the Aboriginal people and their contribution to the history of the region. The production includes important historical and cultural material, as well as songs and artwork created by contemporary Francophone artists. Through this project, the volunteers were able to learn about Web site design.

Each production had an official launch in its community, and all four productions were launched together in Vancouver on March 30, 2001, attended by the participants from each region. The Executive Director of Éducacentre, Paulette Bouffard, stated: **"Through the resources and technical skills of each community, new achievements are enriching the heritage of French-speaking British Columbia."**

Ms. Huet of the Kootenays hopes that these productions **"will help to increase awareness on the part of non-French-speaking people in the province and of Francophones living in eastern Canada of the presence and history of Francophones in British Columbia."** She added that **"There are Francophones living in the west. We are very active and we are aware of our history."**

Now Internet users can embark on the adventure of *legrandordinaire.com.*

Web site: **www.legrandordinaire.com**

A Virtual Media Library for Francophones in Newfoundland and Labrador

F rench-speaking residents of Newfoundland and Labrador now have access to a virtual media library, *Médiathèque virtuelle.* Developed by the Francophone provincial school board, Conseil scolaire francophone provincial (CSFP), *Médiathèque virtuelle* provides access to a range of French-language documents and educational tools. For the province's Francophone communities, scattered over a vast area, the Information Highway has proven to be an excellent way to pool valuable resources and strengthen ties.

In 2000–01, the CSFP received $67 500 in funding from Industry Canada's *Francommunautés virtuelles* program to create a virtual media library and incorporate it on its Web site. The *Francommunautés virtuelles* program aims to expand French-language content, applications and services on the Internet, as well as to encourage French-speaking Canadians to make full use of information and communications technologies.

Médiathèque virtuelle was made possible through the collaboration of several organizations in the region: the CSFP, responsible for implementing the project as well as providing half of the funding; STEM Net, an organization affiliated with Memorial University, responsible for the server; the Association régionale de la côte ouest (ARCO), which provided funding contributions and digital collections; the Fédération des parents francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador, as well as the Association francophone de St-Jean and the Association francophone du Labrador. **"The desire to computerize the material and learn about a new tool was demonstrated by all partners,"** said Claude Gosselin, who is in charge of the CSFP's resource centre and is the principal architect of *Médiathèque virtuelle.*

There was an enormous amount of work. As Mr. Gosselin explained, the project involved **"establishing a mechanism for computerizing material, and setting up a cataloguing and circulation infrastructure, as well as a window on the Internet for printed documentation, photographs, video and audio resources kept in the CSFP's resource centre and in other Francophone organizations in the province."** Despite technical difficulties, which are frequent in remote regions, the students and teachers were able, as of early 2001, to locally access the school library digital catalogue and other resources. **"The substantial increase in the number of requests for loans is proof of the project's success,"** said Mr. Gosselin.

A second component is being added to the media library. It involves educational resources, including research tools that allow users to work on the Internet and on the network, various links and training programs. These tools can be used not only by teachers and students, but also by the general public. **"We have limited resources for purchasing material, so we have to develop the tools,"** explained Mr. Gosselin, who in fact developed several tools for the media library, such as the teaching tools related to reading and the natural sciences. **"I developed an approach to the information that helps initiate students to Internet research, based on their experience with traditional research."**

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http://francommunautes.ic.gc.ca

The launch of *Médiathèque virtuelle*, which took place in the school library at École Sainte-Anne in La Grand'Terre in June 2001, capped the school year. It included a reception attended by the press, notably Radio-Canada television and the province's French-language newspaper, *Le Gaboteur*. Many participants also benefited from the occasion to familiarize themselves with the media library's on-line catalogue.

Subsequent work involved "going live" from local access to Internet access. Paul-André Beaulieu, a teacher at École Sainte-Anne, designed *Médiathèque virtuelle*'s Web page and worked with STEM Net to iron out the remaining technical problems. Projects such as this one are always ongoing, and current plans involve expanding the content on the site with the addition of new collections and new tools.

For those interested in the culture of French-speaking Newfoundland, the *Médiathèque virtuelle* also offers a fascinating condensed history of the French presence on the west coast of the island, which is accompanied by photos and audio and video clips. With *Médiathèque virtuelle*, French-speaking Newfoundland and Labrador is making a grand entrance on the World Wide Web.

Web site: **www.stemnet.nf.ca/csfp**

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FRANCOMMUNAUTÉS VIRTUELLES