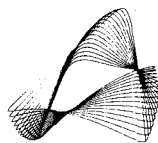


Viewdata '80, London, 1980.

VIEWDATA AND VIDEOTEXT, 1980-81: A Worldwide Report

**Transcript of viewdata '80,
first world conference
on viewdata, videotex, and teletext**



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Introduction & Preface

The use of the ubiquitous TV set as an information display and interactive personal electronic communication device will bring dramatic changes to the way in which we conduct our day-to-day lives. The effect will at first be most apparent in business with the easy availability of computer-stored information and the ability to send and receive mail electronically. The effect will then become apparent in the home with the TV set gradually enhancing its primary role of entertainment device to incorporate information acquisition, computer-aided education and electronic message transmission.

This book comprises written back-up to the presentations given at Viewdata '80 - The First World Conference on Viewdata, Videotex and Teletext.

To ensure that the preprints are as up-to-date as possible, the authors have supplied them to us in camera-ready form which does not allow for editing and for this reason we would ask for your understanding with some of the overseas papers where English is not the author's native language. In order to keep the book as up-to-date as possible, the papers have been printed in random order.

VIDEOTEL

An Extension of the Use of the Display Equipment of a Prestel TV
set for the Travel Industry

J. F. COURTNEY

DIRECTOR

Courtney Sears Marketing Ltd

England

With half of all British travel agents installing TV sets in their offices, this offers a ready made point of sale vehicle to be exploited by the principals whose products are sold through those outlets.

However, this is just a means to an end. The development of Video technology could mean a revolution in the way travel agents sell and display their products and train their staff.

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Never before has the retail travel agent's business been so complex. The required knowledge of products and prices is a nightmare, and a tangled web of regulations, which is subject to continual change.

Coupled with this, travel agents trading in inclusive tours are being threatened by specialised companies backed by the latest technology selling direct to the public.

It is small wonder that travel agents, in trying to solve these problems, have turned to technology.

My hope is that the introduction of computerisation for the retailer will be so successful that the travel agent can concentrate on the tasks that this industry so desperately needs - that of expanding the travel and leisure markets in the face of the fierce competition for discretionary income. What has been so sad about the "direct sell" issue, has been the parochial attitudes of the retailers in rising to meet this challenge.

That is why there is a danger in turning to technology as a panacea for all the problems that beset a travel agent today. The current technological stampede in our industry would appear to be an accountants dream - masses of information instantly available at the touch of a button. Management of the business made easy, with instant ticket returns, instant mailing lists, instant availability lists, and soon instant bookings and instant tickets. All transactions recorded and safely stored.

But I would remind the accountants, the organisation and method men, and the business managers of the industry that we are in a business to sell a product that, at the point of sale, cannot be seen, touched, or sampled, and the motivation that leads individuals to buy the products we market and sell are many and varied.

In my view, it is an absolute necessity for the travel industry to provide, at all levels of marketing, the dreams, and if you like, the "sizzle" that is associated with travel and holidays.

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