

# Report on Unicity Project

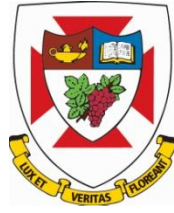
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The Institute of Urban Studies





THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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**REPORT ON UNICITY PROJECT**

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The Institute of Urban Studies is an independent research arm of the University of Winnipeg. Since 1969, the IUS has been both an academic and an applied research centre, committed to examining urban development issues in a broad, non-partisan manner. The Institute examines inner city, environmental, Aboriginal and community development issues. In addition to its ongoing involvement in research, IUS brings in visiting scholars, hosts workshops, seminars and conferences, and acts in partnership with other organizations in the community to effect positive change.

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PREFACE

This report is an evaluation of a six-week communication project known as Project Unicity. Based on reports from the people involved, surveys and attitude studies, observation and discussion, the report attempts to show the background of the project; provide a descriptive analysis of what happened during the project; and demonstrate the usefulness and ability of a community-based television system. Some attempt is also made to provide certain criteria and guidelines which future projects of this type might well benefit from.

## INTRODUCTION

In the latter part of the 1960's cable television developed rapidly as a major means of communication in Canada. The fiscal advantages of owning a cable television operation and the public demand in Canadian cities for a greater choice of television programs has accounted for the rapid growth of the Canadian cable industry. As such, Canada is currently being regarded as the most cabled country in the world. However, the potential of the industry is but partially tapped and with the continuing use of additional technology such as microwave, other broadband networks and communication satellites we can foresee cable services being extended to centers distant from the American border or isolated from large Canadian centers.

The original purpose and still the principal function of CATV is to provide the monthly subscriber with better reception and a larger selection of existing television stations than he can get from broadcasting stations.

Besides picking up, amplifying and distributing entire offerings of broadcasting stations, CATV systems also transmit directly over the cable on one or more empty channels. This forms the initial basis for the development of a new public use of the media, or what is commonly called community television.

Several other factors have contributed to the emergence of community television; unsatisfactory delivery by the media of information related to specific, particular needs of people in urban areas; the need for the expression of the views of minority groups; the regulations of CRTC; and the promotion of the concept by the National Film Board.

The concept of community television means many things to many people. To some people it is a way of revitalizing the democratic dialogue - to others a way of promoting community spirit or becoming aware of new people and new things. Community television is a form of involvement in an area that used to be the exclusive preserve of the professional broadcaster. It is community people feeling a concern over a problem, taking some portable 1/2 inch video-tape equipment, making a tape of the problem, the people involved in the problem and the reactions of outsiders, taking the tape over to the cable company and having them put it on.

It is community people feeling, scripting, taping, editing and watching programs about things that really interest or affect them. It is giving the power of modern-day communication to the ordinary citizen.

A large factor in promoting community television through regulation has been the CRTC. In 1968 the Canadian Radio and Television Commission was handed the authority to regulate and licence the cable industry. In May, 1969 the Commission came forth with guidelines which allowed and encouraged local programming (cable-casting), recognizing that it should complement, rather than compete with programming already available to the community through television. In its July 1971 policy statement on cable television, the CRTC reiterated the responsibility of the cable television system licensee for the services provided through a local programmed channel. Greatest emphasis was placed on the provision of community programming involving direct citizen participation in program planning, production and feedback. Other uses of the local programmed channel outlined in the policy statement involved the coverage of organized local activities under the direct supervision of

the cable television staff or informational programs appealing to minority audiences or of a general interest which are produced directly by professional motion picture or television procedures.

At the same time the National Film Board, through its Challenge for Change Programs, was also developing community television on cable. After the introduction of the CRTC regulations on local programming, the National Film Board began to undertake experiments in various centers, notably in Ontario and Quebec including the distribution of vast amounts of literature on the possibilities of community television. It was mainly through their early efforts that groups and individuals learned of the portable television equipment, 1/2 inch and 1 inch video-tape, and its potential for allowing television to escape from the studio and allowing people to participate on their home ground. Their experimentation showed that beginners, given minimum training, could produce not only adequate but also interesting program material. In many instances the National Film Board provided citizen groups with VTR equipment and technicians.

The concept of community television has gained momentum over the past two years. Symposiums, workshops, conferences in many centers have made people aware of developments. A score of cable systems are presently licenced to do local origination, but in very few instances, is there community programming being attempted. Local origination is being done, but this does not include allowing citizens to decide on program content and to participate in the production of these programs. Present fare on community channels is mostly of an informational nature; programs prepared by professional broadcasters or coverage of local events by the cable company. Although such

programming should be included on the community television channel, it should not be exclusively this type of programming. A rare opportunity is afforded citizens through this medium (CATV); they can themselves present their views, operate the equipment, become involved in their community, and thus learn more about themselves and their community.

There are still, however, a great many unanswered questions with regard to the implementation of community television. These include - will people become involved - what is the form or origination needed - what kind of equipment is needed - will people watch?

It was the need to test answers to these questions that lead the Institute of Urban Studies in 1969 into experimenting with public uses of communications media. The concept of community television played a large part in this study of and experimentation with new technologies.

The Institute began by exploring the potential of 1/2 inch portable video-tape units, for improving inner city communication and as a tool of community organizing. It also showed how this equipment, with a very brief training period, would allow community people to make their own video programs and statements. It also has explored the potential of community video-theatres for people without access to cable television. A lot of time was spent researching the barely touched field of legal implications surrounding community television and cable systems.

The Institute had the previous year sponsored a conference from which came a group of citizens (known as the Ad-Hoc Committee) which had the mandate of further exploring the possibility of bringing regularly scheduled community television to Winnipeg.

Following this conference, the Institute continued its work in the community television field by holding a summer training workshop, funded by the Opportunities for Youth Program. This workshop trained some 300 community people in the use and theory of video-tape equipment.

From the onset of the Institute's interest in communication and especially in community television, talks were held with local cable operators, outlining proposals, sharing information and discussing methods of implementation. Technicians from the cable companies and the Institute made tests on the reliability of 1/2 inch and 1 inch video-tape on cable. And, through the efforts of the cable companies, Red River Community College and the Institute, segments of a street festival, Get Together '71, were videotaped and shown on the community cable channel.

During the summer, the Institute had also been involved in examining the Unicity concept and through surveys, discussion and observation realized that although the government had attempted to disseminate information to all citizens, many people were not aware of the plan and its implications.

At the end of the summer the Institute had VTR equipment, 300 community people trained in its use, information on and understanding of the UniCity concept, a realization that the mass media were not sufficiently educating people as to that concept; or capable of providing exposure of all candidates in the election; and a desire to attempt an experiment using community television to demonstrate to the citizens of Winnipeg that it could be done and that it was of value.



At this same time the government of Manitoba was showing a strong interest in citizen participation.

The government had already decided to reorganize the structure of local government but it maintained that it would be willing to listen to and accept suggestions from the public at large concerning specifics within this new structure.

What it was attempting to do was to create this two-way communication between the government and the governed on the subject of a very important piece of legislation. It attempted to do this through:

- mass distribution of the White Paper
- numerous public meetings
- a Municipal Amendments Committee between the second and third readings of the bill
- public meetings (after the legislation was passed) for the purposes of further explaining the Bill and its implications for citizen participation
- special committee set up to look at ways of informing and involving the citizens so that they will be provided with adequate information and opportunities to respond to this information which would develop them as active participants in their government.

The government, however, was still relying on the traditional and tested techniques of disseminating information and of receiving feedback. In this electronic age, relying entirely on townhall meetings and the printed word, does not seem to be utilizing all of the potential and real technology to its fullest extent.

The forthcoming election, the concern of the government and the desire of the Institute to further explore a new field, offered an excellent opportunity

to demonstrate the value and viability of this new media.

As a result the Ad-Hoc Committee and the Institute approached the provincial government with a plan to utilize the existing cable television system as a focus for the provision of information regarding the Unicity concept and elections.

There were obviously limitations, the most serious being time (the Unicity elections were to be held in less than two months) but the situation was too perfect to pass up. All of the ingredients were present:

- trained community people
- accessible equipment
- empty channel of cable system
- relaxation of Department of Communications programming regulations
- a new form of municipal government being introduced
- very little public understanding of the plan
- important elections coming very shortly
- an opportunity to see if a citizen information and feedback system could be set up

Since there were no precedents from which to work and therefore no real indications of how much money and how many people would be necessary to set up a community television operation, an artificial figure was chosen for the budget. This figure, \$22,300, was based on estimates derived from the different concrete areas of the project and it was difficult at the time to say whether or not the project expanded or contracted to meet that budget and whether or not it was a justifiable amount, or if the project would have been better or been worse, had it had a larger or smaller budget.

(See Appendix I).

The provincial government then contacted the federal government and both levels of government lent financial support to the idea. Approval was granted in the third week of August; and the Unicity Project was scheduled to begin broadcasting in mid September.

### Goals

The project organizers set forth to provide an accessible information medium concerning the proposed community committees and the exposure of major election issues and candidates at the ward and mayoralty levels. By means of cable television, closed-circuit programming, mobile information units, attempts were made to provide the citizen with information to help him understand his potential role in the future planning and direction of the new city government and permit him access to these communication facilities to express his views.

In summary the aims of the communication program were:

- A. to inform the public about the new City of Winnipeg Act, so that the people:
  1. will know what is involved in the act,
  2. will be favourably disposed to the plan,
  3. will use the participation opportunities it affords.
- B. To enable all candidates to present themselves over the cable to their constituents or inform the viewers about all candidates.
- C. To increase citizen participation in the communication project.
- D. To acquaint the population with the uses of community cable systems as a communication tool at their disposal.

These are the goals against which the success or failure of the project must be measured.

### Constraints

This project conceived, proposed and accepted all within a very short period of time had a number of built-in constraints:

- no precedents on which to base courses of action,
- extremely limited time in which to work,
- almost impossible job of attempting to change television viewer habits with an extremely small advertising and promotion budget,
- two simultaneous but different agendas which had to be followed - one of cablecasting Unicity information and one of trying to illustrate and promote community television,
- personnel problems caused both by required urgency of hiring and by organizational changes during the project in order to correct certain unforeseen structural and functional weaknesses,
- because of extremely limited time and heavy program schedules, the number of volunteers used was somewhat less than had been anticipated.

### Resources

Since the Institute was operating on the hypothesis that the existing communications technology could be used to improve the systems of communication, it was necessary to draw on existing VTR equipment and people from various places in the city. At the time of the Unicity proposal to government, the Institute had already made an inventory of available audio-visual equipment and had at its disposal a number of VTR units from the University and National Film Board as well as several technicians.

People were seconded from the Department of Education, Red River Community College, high schools, Neighbourhood Service Centre, the City of Winnipeg, National Film Board, and the two Winnipeg-based universities. These people were technical people, community development people, general resource people, etc., many of which had previous dealings with Institute projects.

Provincial assistance was given through the loan of Mr. Marcel Clement from Red River Community College, who became project director. In addition, members of the Task Force on Community Committees were made available for consultation on government legislation. Three staff people from the National Film Board acted as resources during the planning stages and the early part of the actual programming.

City wide technical resources were mobilized and equipment (VTR units, vans, locales) were seconded from government, school boards, National Film Board, Information Canada, electronic firms, universities and community colleges.

Both Metro Videon and Greater Winnipeg Cablevision companies provided valuable assistance and co-operation during the planning stages and the six-weeks programming period.

### Organization

The project was to be guided by policies of a Program Steering Committee made up of members of the Ad-Hoc Committee and the Institute of Urban Studies. A senior staff member of the IUS assumed the role of the Chairman of this committee and became responsible for the direction of the project. He was to direct staff resources in areas of:

- technical operations
- programs
- scheduling
- public relations
- distribution
- evaluations

The Steering Committee was convened on one occasion, October 1st for the official report of the Chairman and of the Co-ordinator. Since the Ad-Hoc Committee was not a legal body the financing for the project was handled through the Institute of Urban Studies and the University of Winnipeg.

The facilities of a former Montessori School were put at the disposal of the project by the Province.

### Personnel

Personnel were organized into four departments:

1. Technical Division: composed of 8 people. These people were involved in equipment servicing and distribution, in the 1 inch studio at the project headquarters, in preparing graphics and in the construction of kiosks as well as other carpentry needs. They were also responsible for training community people in the use of the equipment, and were responsible for the equipment in the field. These two latter categories overlapped somewhat with the responsibilities of the Community Development people.
2. Community Development Division: composed of 8 people. Six of these people served as community organizers in the different Community Committee areas. A co-ordinator and a secretary filled the other two positions. They were to initiate community involvement and participation, lay the groundwork for the

entry of production people and equipment and to follow community productions through from beginning to end.

3. Program and Planning Division: composed of 18 people. These people consisted of a Director, people to do editing, people to handle studio productions, people to provide ideas for and to do productions, and people to man and control the mobile productions. These eighteen people were at different times under the authority of different department heads depending on what aspect of their job they were working on.
4. Specialist Personnel: composed of 7 people. A public relations director, a Unicity information consultant, a budget officer, a people resources director (co-ordination of volunteers), and three secretarial/administrative office staff.

The project began with four department heads who were paid staff and with a number of volunteers working under each department head. However, as time went on, more and more of these volunteers became paid staff. This was due primarily to the number of hours these volunteers were putting in, the interest they were showing and the need to demand even more time and effort from them. The total staff complement at the end of the project was 44 persons.

Originally, staff was recruited from the IUS summer staff and people from Get Together '71. However, hiring was done throughout the project period as jobs were defined and these positions were ordinarily filled by volunteers. No one person was assigned the job of hiring and thus individual departments hired the staff required. The lack of personnel co-ordination, training and a personnel policy contributed to several instances of general staff discontent.

The use of volunteers was a very important aspect of the project. It was planned that most of the actual production and editing would be done by community people. These people were to be drawn from over 300 people who had been through the community television workshops, trained at IUS during the summer in the use of the VTR equipment. It was also felt that a number of volunteers proficient in the areas of community development, television technology, programming skills, audio-visual systems and communications in general were available.

During the early planning stages of the project a large meeting was called for people interested in working for the project on a volunteer basis. About 100 people attended this meeting and expressed a good deal of interest but unfortunately as was the case in many other undertakings, limitation in time and full-time staff resources did not allow for adequate mechanisms to insure involvement. There is no accurate record of the number of these people who played minor roles in the project - minor roles which added greatly to the success of the project.

A staff person was given charge of co-ordination, the use of volunteers for each of the operating departments mentioned previously.

### Publicity

The tasks of the publicity staff included the administration of on-going publicity for Unicity campaign (press, radio and television), the co-ordination of all printing requirements (newspaper, brochures, etc.) and the acquisition of information kiosks and placement of mobile kiosks.



The major aims of the publicity was to make the public aware of Project Unicity and the programming schedule for Channel 9. This in itself was an almost impossible task.

As a result of interviews with the organizers of the project, two press reports, one in each major daily newspaper appeared preceeding the beginning of the report.

Small hand bills describing the project and its intent were mailed out to all of the cable subscribers at the end of September, when the project was underway.

Paid advertisements were taken out in both newspapers following the beginning of programming. Their maximum potential may have been better utilized had these ads been placed on the TV page of each newspaper.

The Community TV banners used on the vans and at kiosks were very effective, although the distribution of posters left something to be desired.

The small Community TV stickers were an excellent idea, although distribution became difficult due to time and staff limitations.

Publicity through radio and television was very successful with four spots on Channel 7 and interviews, comments and public service announcements on all major radio stations. Effective use was also made of several of the billboards at A & W Drive-Ins.

Writers for the Tribune were involved in the project and did, when they had the necessary information, write community TV schedules into their daily columns, including regular television columns. The lack of exacting listings of programs was a fault of the production department and not the publicity department.

Towards the end of the project, plans began to be made for a Community TV Conference. To this end the project people designed and ordered a four-page newspaper to solicit support for and participation in the conference. The newspaper also provided information and community television and the Unicity Project.

### PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

#### Studio Production

Every ward (50) had approximately five minutes of air time per candidate. There was a total of 164 Unicity candidates all of whom had at least two opportunities to make an appearance. A small percentage (perhaps 15%) did not show. The interviews and/or discussions were taped in a one-inch studio which, according to the responses from most of the candidates contacted later was a satisfactory and fair method of coverage. The four mayoralty candidates were interviewed under slightly different circumstances and received a fairly significantly greater amount of air time, generally as a group; i.e. at Town Hall meetings, via the Peter Warren show which was telecast, and at various pre-election functions.

Coverage of school trustee candidates in the Winnipeg School Division was undertaken by Tech-Voc. High School. This aspect of the project achieved limited success because of technical difficulties encountered. The quality of the tapes used was inadequate for broadcast over cable, however, at least the students themselves were exposed to issues affecting the schools, an interesting and effective means of inspiring interest in the elections by high school students.

The Department of Youth and Education, besides assembling some short information tapes on Unicity, interviewed a number of people who spoke on Unicity and the significance of it in terms of education.

### Field Productions

The major community programming undertaken was the series of twelve community profiles. These community profiles indicated the name of the wards, ward boundaries, name of the community committee, the candidates and brief overview of the total characteristics of the area. These profiles involved community organizers, producers, community people, editors, etc. Unless video levels were not acceptable, these were broadcast over cable and where possible at a specific time so that the time scheduling could be announced in advance. Video tapes were also made on the structural process of the ward, community committee, central council concept of government, utilizing visual aids, such as charts, diagrams and calling on the assistance of community people. The importance of community committees and their relation to individuals was stressed to accent the potential role of the citizen in the new government. This information was provided in a variety of languages including French, German, Italian, Ukrainian, Chinese, Cree, etc.

In all 123 programs were taped and 117 went out over cable during the 6 week period of operation.

Approximately 60% of this programming was initiated by the community organizers with 40% being initiated by community groups and interested individuals.

Besides the programs which were shown over cable television, eleven programs were shown in various community locations. These were shown in church basements, community clubs, etc.

There were also kiosks, which were small booths containing playback units and monitors. These kiosks were set up in shopping center malls and plazas and were used to show people what the project was about, what the Unicity plan was about and to get people interested in the concept of community television.

Other community broadcasting consisted of community groups seeking a platform from which to voice their problems; a group of architects concerned with the destruction of old buildings; a group voicing their views on recreation and community issues in East Kildonan; a group protesting against the building of a bridge across Arlington Street; a group explaining and attempting to get support for their work on a People's Park in the high-rise apartment area of Fort Rouge; a group protesting against industrial pollution which is affecting their homes and way of life; a group of welfare recipients protesting against Welfare Department officials renting a cruise ship for holding policy meetings, to mention a few.

Some human interest programming on a local level was also done; a program on a senior citizen with a large model train set-up which has become a focal point for a lot of the neighbourhood children; a program on an elderly woman who raised prize winning gladiolas; two programs of Winnipeg sculptors and their work; a program on the Cercle Moliere, a French theatre and drama group, etc.

The following is an example of the programming which went on throughout the project. This programming was done the week of September 24th through to October 1st.

Friday Night

- interviews with candidates from Polo Park ward, Sargent Park ward, Weston ward, Bannatyne ward, Memorial ward, and Midland ward.
- a meeting between a group known as Pollution Probe and the candidates for mayor to discuss the candidates' views on pollution control.
- coverage of welfare recipients protesting the Department of Health and Social Development using the Lord Selkirk cruise ship on which to hold a planning seminar.
- an interview with Mary Kardash, a representative of the Labour Election Committee.

Monday Night

- interviews with candidates from Balmoral ward, Ross House ward, Bannatyne ward, and Weston ward.
- an explanation in Italian by an Italian community organizer of the new council and community committee system.
- a profile of the Assiniboine Park Community Committee area.

Tuesday Night

- interviews with candidates from Cathedral Ward, Mynarski ward, Arlington ward, and Sisler ward.
- an ad-hoc group of people protesting the condition and existence of a junk yard in their area.
- a group of inner-city architects discussing old buildings in the downtown and what potential they have.
- a profile of the East Kildonan Community Committee Area.

Wednesday Night

- interviews with candidates from Grant Park ward, Riverview ward, Cockburn ward, Roslyn ward, and Kelvin wards.
- an interview with University of Winnipeg Political Science Professor Ron Hikel concerning NDP policies in the Unicity election.
- a look at the Cercle Moliere, a French language theatre.
- a profile on the Fort Garry Community Committee.

Thursday Night

- interviews with candidates from John Gunn ward, Kern Park ward, Regent Park ward.
- interview with Mayor Clive Tallin of Tuxedo about his views on Unicity and about losing his position as mayor.
- an explanation of and promotion for the upcoming Community Television Fall Conference.
- interviews with three candidates for the position of School Trustee in Winnipeg.
- the St. Boniface Town Hall meeting held at Louis Riel School.
- an interview with the Minister for Urban Affairs, the Hon. Saul Cherniack.

Friday Night

- interviews with candidates from Wildwood ward, Maybank ward and University ward.
- interview with a policeman regarding his views on Unicity and amalgamation of police forces in the Winnipeg area.

-- three members of the Winnipeg Council of Self-Help Groups discuss the effects of Unicity on their plans and programs.

Programs were done in every area of the city. The number of programs done in each of the thirteen community committee areas vary greatly and were dependent on the community organizers in each area and the interest shown by community people.

The following is an area breakdown of programs attempted. Mainly because of technical difficulties, some of these were never aired:

PROGRAMS DONE / COMMUNITY COMMITTEE AREA

6	St. James
2	St. Johns
11	Centennial
3	Midland
5	Transcona
12	St. Boniface
8	St. Vital
10	Fort Garry
9	Fort Rouge
14	Assiniboine Park
10	West Kildonan
9	East Kildonan
7	Lord Selkirk
23	Specials - Staff

EQUIPMENT

In accordance with the terms of reference of the proposed equipment was borrowed from numerous sources including; University of Winnipeg, Tec Voc High School, Red River Community College, National Film Board, Department of Youth and Education, Advance and Total Videon, etc.

From the beginning, policy was established and followed stringently with regard to equipment distribution. An equipment room was set up, staffed at all times by responsible individuals who also undertook minor equipment repair. Technicians from Red River handled any major equipment difficulties. Save for a few tapes and small cables, no equipment was lost or severely damaged.

Most of the 1 inch equipment was set up in a studio, in the auditorium of 340 Provincher and was borrowed from Red River Community College. Students and personnel from the College operated and supervised taping from the studio. The studio set up included 2 one-inch cameras, switching apparatus, lighting, backdrops, in essence, all the components of a small broadcasting studio. The major problem dealt with lighting and was difficult to remedy because of the physical characteristics of the building. These were also responsible for audio echo and size-wise was too small for groups. In the future, the interior design should be carefully evaluated when a studio of this nature is being considered.

The 1/2 inch VTR equipment was designed for use in the community and was assigned to production crews who utilized five mobile information vans. These vans were to be equipped with the following:

- 2 porta-packs VTR unit
- 1 - 23" monitor
- 1 - 3600 (for simultaneous playback)
- videotape
- lights
- microphone, cables, etc.



The vans and production crews numbering up to 4 persons, were assigned to various areas of the city where they were to work with the community organizer teams.

Once the tapes were completed and scheduled for showing they were taken to the cable system head-end, a small building from which a signal could be originated. This location at St. Norbert, 6 miles from the Provencher headquarters was sometimes awkward to utilize but the soon-to-be-completed micro-wave transmission facility will make it possible for programs to be initiated in the downtown area.

#### EVALUATION

The project Steering Committee had as part of their terms of reference, the setting up of a process of internal logistical study.

Two professors from the University of Manitoba prepared a design for the evaluation of the project. This design consisted of:

- A. the internal reporting and documenting procedures, which included: a person to keep lists of volunteers and document which ones were involved and to what extent.
- budget and office administrator to supervise and document the budget and the operation of the office,
  - an office staff to keep records of all incoming and outgoing material and people,
  - a person to keep track of all program proposals and what was done with them,
  - a person to provide technical and production documentation,
  - people to document the number and content of tapes,

- people to provide daily schedules of cable programming,
- people to document community involvement and participation,
- people to write a final report once the project was complete.

### PUBLIC REACTION

Since the purposes of the project were:

- to inform the public about the new City of Winnipeg Act -  
to allow all candidates to receive coverage, and
- to allow local issues to be identified by community people  
and then disseminated by community people, there had to be a means  
of ascertaining who watched these cable programs and what the  
various effects related to the project were.

To achieve this, three surveys were conducted:

1. A pilot survey done early in the project.
2. A telephone survey after the project.
3. A telephone survey of the candidates after the project was complete.

#### 1. Pilot Survey

This survey was conducted at Polo Park Shopping Center on September 17 between 6:00 and 9:30 p.m. This survey was set up for the following purposes:

- pre-testing of the questionnaire
- training session for interviewers
- insight into homogeneity/heterogeneity of knowledge  
and attitudes of Unicity and community TV.

From this survey it was found that half of the respondents were aware of a new community television channel. It is interesting to note that most of them had learned about this channel from radio announcements and this is in keeping with

the indication that 58% of the people stated that most of their Unicity information had come from radio programs.

The general feeling of the people interviewed was that most people would watch a community television station, only once in a while.

Approximately 13% of the people interviewed felt that most people would watch a community television station 'quite a lot'.

All of these responses, however, were directed at a very limited aspect of community television, namely the Unicity coverage. There was very little actual community programming going on, most of the programming was information oriented and cannot be considered as examples of community television.

Overall the survey indicated that despite the sound and fury created by the local councils, most people seemed quite content with the idea of one big city, although it was apparent that most people did not know a great deal about the scheme.

## 2. The Telephone Survey

This survey was done for the purpose of ascertaining who watched Channel 9 Unicity programming and of ascertaining how they felt about it.

The sample was selected from the entire Metropolitan Winnipeg area. Since there are 50 wards in the new city - 10 were randomly selected from the list of wards given in Bill 36. The survey is indicative although not necessarily definitive.

The wards chosen were checked to ensure that they adequately were representative of cable ownership across the entire area.

The number of electors in each ward were sampled randomly from the total electorate of that ward.

From this survey it was indicated that 38% of the sample possessed cable television, a figure which is very representative according to the figures obtained from the cable companies.

The survey indicated that 40% of the people who had cable, watched Channel 9 at some point during the month of cablecasting.

(The following figures are based on the 40% of the people who watched Channel 9).

- 33% felt that they had learned something about Unicity.
- 49% watched more than fifteen minutes each day.
- 25% felt that people would want to become involved in producing community TV.
- 81% of these people voted in the Unicity elections.
- on the question of which media was felt to have the most influence in terms of information and opinion, the highest percentage said television.

### 3. Telephone Survey of Candidates who had been on Channel 9.

A random sample of the candidates interviewed on Channel 9 were selected and those candidates were contacted by telephone.

This survey indicated that 43% of the candidates felt that their appearance on Channel 9 had helped them in their campaign. (This survey included both successful and unsuccessful candidates).

- 31% of the candidates felt that the studio system was the best system for conducting the interviews.
- 81% felt that community TV was a viable concept and that it had an important future.
- 20% did not think it had helped them and 27% were unsure as to whether or not it had been of benefit.
- 68% of the candidates were unsure as to whether or not the studio system was the best - most of them, however, had no prior TV experience, studio or otherwise.
- 18% were somewhat sceptical as to the future of community television.

The surveys provide some indication as to how well the goals of the project were served, as the following table indicates:

AIMS	INDICATIONS AND TRENDS PROVIDED FROM PUBLIC SURVEYS
1. To inform the public about the Act so that they would know what is involved.	33% of the telephone sample felt that they had learned something about Unicity from watching Channel 9 programming.
2. To inform the public about the Act so that they will be favourably disposed to the plan.	All programs stressed citizen participation in government and most programs provided an opportunity for citizens to become involved in a government function, even if indirectly.
3. To inform the public about the Act so that the people will use the participation opportunities it affords.	It is too early at this stage to tell whether or not people will because of Community TV programs want to become more involved in government, but a lot of groups and individuals did become involved in trying to involve more people; a process which will hopefully continue.
4. To enable all candidates to present themselves over cable and to inform viewers about all candidates.	135 candidates out of a total of 164 utilized this opportunity to present themselves over cable and 43% of these felt that their appearance had helped their campaign.
5. To increase citizen participation in the communication project.	As indicated by the telephone survey approximately 40% of the people who had cable were involved by watching and some of those became actively involved and began making tapes to show their concerns. As a result of this project the number of people knowledgeable about and interested in community television was doubled. A Community Communications Corporation (non-profit) was formed immediately after the conclusion of this project. This Corporation will carry on the communication project and attempt to still further increase citizen involvement.
6. To acquaint the population with the uses of community cable systems as a communication tool at their disposal.	This was accomplished as is evident by the number of community programs made and shown over cable and by the number of phone calls and inquiries received by project staff.

PROJECT ANALYSIS(a) Financial

Due to the large number of unknown factors in a project of this type, the amount of financing needed is difficult to predetermine. The \$22,300 spent on this project seemed to be sufficient for this type of project but it is impossible to tell what difference more or less money would have made. There are no social-benefit indicators which are accurate enough to make this kind of analysis viable. The project most certainly had social benefits, that is obvious, but a justification of benefits per dollar is impossible.

On the operational level, however, recommendations as to the handling of money, purchasing of supplies and bookkeeping can be made. The project did experience some difficulties in those areas, a recommendation can be made, based on that experience.

A competent and experienced budget supervisor and bookkeeper situated on the project site, would have facilitated purchase of equipment and acquisition of supplies. During the project many things, which had not been foreseen, were suddenly found to be needed and as a result staff found themselves purchasing supplies with their own money and claiming for it later - a procedure which made central bookkeeping a very difficult task. Rather than using the offices of the Institute for the central point from which to obtain requisitions and purchase orders, an office for this should have been on the site of the project.

(b) Organization and Personnel

Most of the organizational problems were sorted out before the end of the project and were due simply to lack of time to organize properly. The Program Steering Committee was composed of people who all had other responsibilities and the job of the Committee was delegated to the Chairman who had time to more closely assess the progress of the project. There was some difficulty in the definitions of responsibility and authority between the Chairman of the Steering Committee and the Director of the Project but this was mainly in areas of responsibility and authority which had not been foreseen and which could quite easily be avoided in any future project.

A major problem during the planning stage (two weeks prior to the first scheduled cablecast) was that the person who had been working on the summer project and who had assumed the position of Director of Programming was out of town. This was handled by delegating programming responsibilities to the Production Manager, who unfortunately was totally inexperienced in handling a job of this scope. Because of this problem, an advisor from the National Film Board was handed the job of Director of Programming, a job which he handled until a week after the actual Director had returned from holidays.

Difficulties were also encountered among the Community Development Division, the Technical Division and the Program and Planning Division. One of the major difficulties involved the lines of authority. Although the Director of Programming and Planning was to assume responsibility for all production scheduling as well as initiate programming changes and ideas, all producers reported both to the Community Development Co-ordinator who

authorized field productions and to the Technical Co-ordinator who distributed the necessary equipment. The production crews were subsequently supervised by three departments whose heads did not maintain necessary ongoing communication. As a result the production crews were frequently misinformed and confused and the tapes that they produced often were much too long, unscripted and at times of poor technical quality. In addition, the production crews often did not share the community organizers focus of involving the community people in the actual production of tapes concerning the area and its citizens.

Inherent in a project dealing with the use of audio-visual equipment was the attraction of young people who are mesmerized by the use of videotape. The danger in allowing these so called "video freaks" to operate without adequate direction and supervision can result in an over-emphasis of production techniques and under-emphasis of content, thus leading to an abuse of the concept of community television. These young people should not be in any way discouraged from participating but their energies and interest allied to the aims of community television.

It is difficult at this time to assess in numbers the actual amount of volunteer involvement since the records are incomplete. Once the volunteer co-ordinator was put in touch with someone who was willing to spend time on the project, she transferred the application or name to a specific department head. Unfortunately they were not too quick to pick up and utilize these volunteer people once the programming began, mostly because these department heads had enough difficulty simply trying to control their paid staff and could not even think of bringing in more people.



Criticism has been made of the inadequate reception and telephone services to those who visited or called at the Provencher headquarters offering their time or expertise.

We can however state that although not everyone who expressed a desire to participate were afforded the opportunity, a good number of people did actively participate in the production of videotapes and studio programs.

The project did illustrate that community people in a voluntary capacity can be used in this type of operation. Starting a project with all volunteer staff can be a very beneficial move - those volunteers that show initiative, aptitude and interest can later be placed on staff and the volunteers who have only a few hours a week can continue to participate when they can. The fact that some volunteers became paid staff does not detract from the fact that they were essentially untrained, interested community people.

#### COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION

In those Community Committee areas where the community development organizer understood the need to involve local people both interest and involvement were generated. In fact, one of the important results of this project was to demonstrate the need to have skilled organizers work and assist on the project to help develop involvement. As is true in many other enterprises of citizen participation, community television requires an initial effort at developing interest.

Since almost seventy-five per cent of the field production was initiated from community people, it can be assumed that the community organizers did stimulate citizen's interest and involvement in their community and in community television.

(c) Publicity

The publicity aspect of the project was oftensingled out as the most neglected part of the project. In analyzing its successes and failures one must bear in mind that this department benefitted from neither vast sums of money with which to undertake a full-fledged advertising and promotional campaign, nor did it have the time and momentum necessary to design the publicity the project should have had. Television broadcasters and program advertisers are well aware of how difficult it is to change television viewer habits. Often, hugh sums of money, much talent and effort is given a new television show only to find several months later that although it had all the makings of a success, it failed miserably to draw an audience.

Therefore the amount of publicy favourably received and the number of people who actually watched, took part in and commented on the programming attest to the viability of the concept. Any concept which can be as well received after using only a limited publicity budget, short period of time and inexperienced public relations people must be a much-needed and readily acceptable concept.

(d) Planning and Programming

The terms of reference and goals of the project focussed essentially on the provision of information surrounding the Municipal elections. However, utilizing the cable television systems as the main mode of information dissemination resulted in an additional focus; that of the production of programs by citizens on a community level. This secondary focus was essentially one of developing the community television concept because the channel used

was the one designated for community television and because citizen participation was a major element of the project.

Problems arose because all those who participated in the implementation of the proposal were faced with these two focuses. Many had knowledge and were experienced in the concept of community television, i.e. basically citizens actively participating in the production of videotapes about themselves and their community. Others, both members of the staff and volunteers, had to be constantly reminded that programs were designed for the involvement of community people and not for their individual satisfaction.

The studio productions appeared to have posed a few problems of this nature than the field productions since studio productions were used primarily for interviews of candidates and dealt mostly with election platforms. The cameras were operated by volunteers and staff - many interviewers were community people.

On the other hand, the field productions were dependent on an awareness by staff, volunteers and community people of the concepts of community television as well as information on the new governmental structure if the full implications of the terms of reference were to be fulfilled. However, time and manpower limitations did not allow for thorough training of staff. Volunteers and community people (many had attended training sessions in the summer, sponsored by the Institute) were not always aware of the concepts behind community television or those related to the participation aspect of Unicity coverage. Furthermore, volunteers were not a constant, some remaine involved for the entire duration of the project but as a rule there was a continuous turnover and supervisory staff could not provide training and necessary supervision.

The planning and programming aspects of the project were generally well done. The staff managed to produce approximately two and one-half hours of programming per evening over a six-week period. This amount of programming seems almost amazing when one considers that an established community television operation in Toronto strives hard to put out two hours of programming per week.

It must be remembered, however, that while the project was a demonstration of the usefulness of an alternate medium, it was also specialized, Unicity information - loaded programming and therefore the programs which were shown were not entirely representative of what community television is. There were throughout the project many requests from different groups who wanted to make and show tapes about particular concerns they had and that most of these tapes could not be made because of the Unicity framework within which the project was operating. This fact is an indication that many community people are ready to participate in a community-based television system. It also provides some proof of the need for a media that caters to minority programming needs. Obviously the formula of lowest common denominator information content, and the need of commercial stations to appeal to area-wide audiences does not allow the kind of information useful to only a segment of the population to be disseminated. The usefulness of an alternative media can be grounded on that reason alone.

(e) Equipment

This project illustrated quite definitively that portable 1/2 inch VTR equipment can and should be used over cable. The only problem encountered

with the 1/2 inch equipment going over the cable was due to the poor editing. However, this could not be avoided as the number of tapes to be edited necessitated a great many people doing the editing, most of them relatively untrained. When the editing was done with a Sony 3650 recorder and an experienced editor, no problem whatsoever was encountered.

As for tapes which were of quality bad enough to be rejected for showing, the one inch tapes were as frequently rejected as the one-half inch tapes and that was not very frequently.

The 1/2 inch equipment not only proved itself with regard to the cable system but also with regard to general use by relatively untrained community people.

A project of this type, however, does require the use of a fair amount of this equipment as there are still technical malfunctions and breakdowns inherent in its constant use.

Only regular playback videotape equipment is needed at the cable system head-end, to process the tapes. Unfortunately, since the program and planning section failed often to provide the one head-end technician with tapes which were pre-viewed and screened for their technical quality, the head-end technician not only had to provide the transfer of one tape to another but also pre-view them to ensure that they could be cablecasted. Too seldom was the technician provided with a script to use during the intervals between programs to explain to the audience what the evening programming entailed. Possibly, there should have been two head-end technicians and additional playback equipment if it was expected that pre-views of all tapes be done and that live commentaries originate from the head-end.

SUMMARY

In review, most of the project goals were met:

- It did provide residents of Winnipeg with Unicity information and did provide a feedback system. Election candidates were afforded the opportunity of a platform otherwise unavailable and provincial leaders given an additional forum to discuss and explain the Unicity legislation. On the other hand, citizens were able to react to issues that concerned them and indicate their concerns to candidates and government officials.
- It showed that people, other than professionals, could produce programs over cable and do this over a sustained period. It also shows that a significant number are interested in watching such programs.
- It provided the impetus for citizens to continue the development of the community TV concept in Manitoba.

Evidence for the last statement is provided from the formation of Winnipeg Community Communication Incorporated, whose aim is to promote access to the media through the establishment of community TV in Winnipeg. In addition, since the project, numerous requests for advice, training and assistance have been received from both rural and urban groups in Manitoba desiring to set up some form of community TV or radio. A group in Willow Park has recently initiated, through a federal Winter Works grant, a project for a closed-circuit community television system.

Certain lessons also can be drawn from this project. It has become evident that:

1. Community television is a viable complement to the existing media. By presenting topics which are not of wide enough interest to be covered on the mass media and by providing information programs such as those covered in the Unicity project, community television can easily complement and not compete with broadcast television.

2. Community television can operate on a low-budget and make use of inexpensive equipment.

To be successful it requires a fair degree of community input both to supplement the budgetary restrictions and make use of portable equipment. It is possible under these conditions to program a few hours every night at only a fraction of the cost sustained by regular broadcast television.

3. The concept of a community-based television system on cable using portable video-tape equipment can become a useful and exciting form of community involvement.

Politicians have always been noted for their keen sense of knowing how to get to the public at election time and of knowing how to use the media which they feel people are going to watch. And, 135 candidates for office turned up for interviews on community television - they obviously felt people were watching.

People watched Channel 9 Community Television in spite of professional broadcasters pessimism, in spite of prime-time competition with commercial television and in spite of some picture tearing, bad sound and amateur interviewing. People watched because it meant something to them, because it was real, because it provided some information that they wanted and because it was being done by people like themselves.

4. The project did not answer certain questions ...
  - questions of cable control and access
  - questions of finances - although limited, where will they come from
  - questions of availability and co-ordination of equipment.

Obviously further investigation and development of this concept will have to be pursued.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The Unicity Project shows the potential use of communication in promoting and assisting people to become better informed and more involved in government and in their community. A community system of communication can provide more detailed, comprehensive information for those who want it. It provides a means for returning information, ideas and concerns from people to government. It provides another form of community organization where citizens groups can become actively involved and carry responsibility for control and management.



In the Winnipeg context, this project shows that a community communication system integrated with the new structure of local government would provide an additional means for the community committee ward structure to fulfill their purposes of citizen involvement by enabling people to become informed and aware of issues on the community neighbourhood level, and to make a response to those issues. It also shows that a similar use could be made of a community system by senior levels of government to communicate with citizens and receive responses.

There are still many questions to be answered in the area of community television. The Unicity Project demonstrates that a system like this can work, the technology is available, there is an interest and it can be done at a relatively low cost. It provides the starting point for a more continuous comprehensive development of the public use of the new communications technology.

INVOICE

September 1st, 1971 to December 31, 1971

I	(a) Regular Salaries	\$ 3,000.00	
	(b) Casual Salaries	\$ 14,671.24	
	(c) Consultant	<u>\$ 100.00</u>	\$ 17,771.24
II	Staff Benefits (University portion Canada Pension, Life Insurance, Great West Life Insurance, Disability Insurance)		\$ 139.00
III	Supplies		
	(a) Miscellaneous Office Supplies	\$ 1,022.83	
	(b) Equipment Rental & Maintenance	\$ 1,173.07	
	(c) Printing	\$ 446.50	
	(d) Service Bills (Telephone)	\$ 573.07	
	(e) Rent	<u>\$ 240.00</u>	\$ 3,455.47
IV	Travel		
	(a) Gas	\$ 398.28	
	(b) Rental	\$ 333.45	
	(c) Repair	\$ 44.61	
	(d) Taxi	<u>\$ 273.80</u>	<u>\$ 1,041.34</u>
	TOTAL CLAIM.....		\$ 22,407.05

Unicity Communications Project