

System Development Corporation







#### A Corporation for System Development

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As the name implies, System Development Corporation is in the business of developing systems information and management systems, to be exact. These are technologically sophisticated sys-

tems, tying together advanced computing equipment, communications media, and innovative software to do things better than they have been done before.

Despite their technological power, all of SDC's systems are simply tools, a means to an end, and that end is solving real world problems. So SDC's business is more than just developing systems; in the larger sense, SDC is in the business of managing information for people—people who are busy, cost-conscious, and need fast, reliable, accurate information.

...like businessmen, who use SDC's information systems to find the information they need.

...like military officers, who rely on SDC's technology to communicate vital security information quickly and easily.

...like you and me, who may be using SDC's systems to search a patent file, or to keep abreast of Congressional activities.

SDC also builds and operates customized information systems for government officials, environmentalists, space scientists, public safety officials, structural engineers, and many more.

SDC manages their information efficiently, so that

they can manage their operations successfully.

It wasn't always that way. Indeed, SDC has changed markedly since it was first formed in 1956. America's oldest major information systems company today bears very little resemblance to the computer programming company of more than 20 years ago.

SDC was created out of America's need for a largescale, semi-automated air defense system. With the remarkable progress made in the past two decades, it is easy to forget that this system—SAGE—was a massive technical challenge at the time. SDC had to develop a whole new technology to design, develop, test, install, and maintain the system which contained more than a million computer instructions.

The work on SAGE was just the first of the company's innovations in computer system technology. SDC developed the first programming language for systems; the first natural language query system; the first largescale data base management system; the first largescale data base management system; the first operational time-sharing system; the first major inverted file retrieval system; the first bibliographic search system. The list is long and the innovations continue to this day.

In the late 1960s, SDC converted to a for-profit corporation. Building upon its substantial technical capability, SDC began to extend this capability both from within, through a vigorous Research and Development program unmatched in the industry, and from without, through acquisitions. Each acquisition and each R&D

### The System

program was directed toward increasing the company's reservoir of skills in developing advanced information systems.

As its capability broadened, SDC expanded its role. The company began to compete for—and win—total systems contracts. No longer merely a system designer or program developer, the company assumed the role of prime contractor in integrating both hardware and software for large-scale turnkey systems.

The company also entered a new and challenging market—the world of industry, with its expanding needs for improved information management. SDC broadened its markets quickly. The company was actually customizing a technology—that of information processing—and applying it to different requirements. Today, more than half of the company's revenues are derived from non-military sales.

From its original mission of serving essentially one customer, the United States Air Force, with essentially one service, software, SDC evolved into an international company that builds total systems that help people in many sectors manage their information and, thus, their jobs, with greater efficiency and economy.

The company focuses its efforts on those specific areas where its expertise in developing information systems and products fills an important need in a viable market: (1) Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence; (2) Computer Services, such as Facilities Management; (3) Space Systems; (4) Information Services; (5) Energy Systems; (6) Information Systems; and (7) Health and Social Services. In addition, SDC maintains a significant capability in key complementary fields including training, system exercise, and studies and evaluation.

From its early days as a software and training company for the military, then, SDC has grown into a broad-based corporation that manages information for millions of people each day. The change has been so dramatic that few people have a full picture of what the company does, or how it does it. That is the purpose of this brochure.

![](_page_4_Picture_7.jpeg)

The science of modern information systems has brought a technical revolution as influential as the industrial revolution. Almost everyone is touched by information processing technology. In

business, industry, the professions and government at all levels there are a host of applications. The information industry, in its infancy only two decades ago, has become one of the most pervasive influences on modern life.

The creation of an information system calls for a blend of insight, experience, and precision known as the system development process. Stated simply, this is the process by which an information management problem is identified; a solution, generally involving automation, is developed; the requisite technology is built and implemented; and the users are trained to operate the system.

In execution, however, the process is not at all simple. It requires a meshing of such disciplines as system analysis, system engineering, system management, and system production and test. It requires talent and experience. It requires systems and procedures developed just for the business of information system development.

Over the years, SDC has developed a staff skilled and trained in information system development. Nearly half of the professional staff has over 10 years of service, and collectively they represent 50,000 man-years of experience. Moreover, SDC personnel have evaluated and worked with over 300 different computers—from small desk-top models to giant super-computers—as well as countless peripheral devices.

Perhaps most important, SDC has refined the process of system development, applying its resources as appropriate to the primary tasks of system analysis and design, system development, and operation and maintenance.

System Analysis and Design Whether SDC is devel-

#### **Development Process**

oping a proprietary system or developing a specific system under contract to a customer, the first step is to attain a detailed understanding of the problem to be solved, or the goal to be met. Despite the fact that the same basic technology is involved in all its systems, SDC does not design these systems in a vacuum. Rather, it works closely with the user in the design stage to ensure that the system will really be effective in its operational environment to make an existing operation faster, more accurate, more economical, or more manageable.

For this reason, there invariably is a collaborative relationship between SDC and the user which continues throughout the life of the system. SDC system analysts work with customer personnel, at all levels, to identify mutually the tasks to be done by the system, the tolerances within which they must be done, and the budgetary and schedule constraints.

As the system moves from analysis to design, conflicting demands are inevitable. A police department may want the computer to respond to an alarm within a split second, but such quick response may require more communications equipment than the available budget can provide. A controller may want to store all historical payrolls in his computer's memory, but this may exceed the system's capacity to perform important searches for current information.

To help the user make the necessary tradeoffs and to mold the system into shape, SDC system designers must possess many capabilities. They must be informed about the area in which they're working; they must have a broad command of data processing technology, including computers, sensors, and display devices; and they must communicate clearly both to the customer and to the system developer. For it is out of the detailed configuration diagrams and flow charts prepared by the system designer that the system will be built.

**System Development** Once the system designers have created the blueprint, the system developers build

the system. In The SDC Software Factory\* concept developed by SDC, computer programmers translate the design specifications into an overall software program design. This master program is, in turn, converted to numerous subprograms, the number depending on the size and complexity of the system.

SDC engineers with strong hardware and communications backgrounds design and acquire the necessary computer, communications and peripheral equipment. Some of the hardware is subcontracted to other vendors, some of it is bought and assembled by SDC, and some special-purpose items may be manufactured by SDC. Then, the equipment is integrated in SDC's hardware factory, and tested extensively.

Since the new system invariably improves the way people perform their operations, SDC thoroughly trains the people who will use the system. Classroom courses, extensive "hands-on" training, and full documentation all are designed to facilitate the transition to the new system. In other words, all elements of the system are fully checked out—the hardware, the software, and the people who will operate them. Only then is the system turned over to the user.

**Operation and Maintenance** Of course, the user may well be SDC. For many of its customers, SDC maintains the computing equipment at its own facility, and the customers interact with the system over phone lines from terminals in their offices.

Even when the system is delivered to a customer's site, SDC often manages the total operation under a long-term facility management contract. Here SDC supplies the programmers who continually maintain and upgrade the system, and the operations personnel who run the computer facility for the client. This arrangement lets our customers concentrate on what they do best, whether manufacturing, selling, or running a business, while SDC focuses on what it does best: managing information for people.

\*A trademark of System Development Corporation

#### Command, Control, Communications & Intelligence

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Command, Control, Communications & Intelligence systems (C<sup>3</sup>I) have historically been associated with mili-

tary systems, where they are widely used to enable commanders to understand and to react quickly to changing tactical or strategic situations.

Actually, however, a C<sup>3</sup>I system is really an interactive management information system. Such a system first provides the commander or manager with the data he needs to make a decision and also provides him the means to carry out that decision. Hence, C<sup>3</sup>I systems are not used solely by military commanders. They are equally useful as air traffic control systems and as law enforcement systems.

Developing C<sup>3</sup>I systems has been an historic role for SDC. Commencing with the huge SAGE program, SDC has developed ever more sophisticated systems which combine these vital functions. Today, SDC is also developing C<sup>3</sup>I systems for non-military applications.

For example, SDC is developing a computer-aided digital dispatching Emergency Command Control Communications System for the Los Angeles City Police Department's fleet of nearly 1000 law enforcement vehicles. It is perhaps the largest and most complex dispatch system ever built—but it was a logical outgrowth of SDC's C<sup>3</sup>I technology. Earlier, SDC designed, developed and installed the extremely successful computer-aided dispatch and communications system for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's fleet of 1000 vehicles.

While C<sup>3</sup>I systems are coming into increasing use for non-military applications, the primary user is still the Department of Defense. Moreover, these defense systems have become increasingly complex, and SDC's long background and technical expertise is being extended each year.

In the area of air defense, SDC develops systems throughout the world. In Morocco, for example, SDC has participated in the development of an air defense system for that North African country. Here in the U.S., SDC is involved in the development of a new Tactical Air Operations Center (TAOC-85) for the U.S. Marine Corps.

In recent years, SDC has become a leader in solving the difficult problem of interoperability—the computer-based communications among dissimilar systems, such as space networks and ground stations, or among diverse military commands. SDC is extensively involved in the World Wide Military Command and Control System.

The company has also developed important elements of modern C<sup>3</sup>I systems. In the area of intelligence, for example, SDC is involved in programs which integrate massive amounts of intelligence data and quickly make it available in usable form. Also, the company is doing extensive work in image enhancement, a new technology which has great promise for improved intelligence operations.

Perhaps the best known of SDC's hardware developments is the PEPE super computer, one of the most complex data processing developments ever attempted. Designed to be a key element of this nation's ballistic missile defense C<sup>3</sup>I system, PEPE performs an incredible 288 million instructions per second, many times faster than any computer ever built. More recently, SDC has been the prime system contractor on USAF's Fourth Generation Computer System program, used for research of future weapons systems.

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## **Computer Services**

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As our society and its institutions become ever more complex and automated, there is an increasing need for

both technical and management expertise to ensure that full capability is exacted from the computer-based systems. More and more institutions are recognizing this fact and turning to SDC for its unique technical and management capability.

The company's role in computer services varies, stretching from scientific and business computer programming on the customer's computer to a full service that includes computer operation, data entry, and other support services. Most typically, SDC's role includes operation of the computer and associated software support.

For example, SDC is providing data

processing services to the Department of Transportation's big computer center in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Here, the DOT analyzes the impact of various transportation modes in an effort to optimize future transportation systems. SDC supports the center in all its application programming as well as operating the center and planning improvements in it.

The client base for SDC's computer service is as varied as the service. Other facility management clients include NASA, the Army, the Navy, the Defense Communications Agency, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The EPA is an excellent example of SDC's computer services work. As the emphasis on pollution control has increased, larger and more complex computer systems have been used to sample and monitor air and water quality. SDC is heavily involved in this program, supporting both the EPA National Network and managing the EPA's National Computer Center in North Carolina. Here SDC manages a system consisting of one of the largest UNIVAC 1110 systems in the world, linking users at 1500 nationwide terminals.

For the Navy, SDC provides complete programming support for the Naval Tactical Data System. The company also provides broad analytical and programming services in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The unifying thread among all these computer services is, again, the management of information. SDC's carefully developed capability in this field has led both private and public organizations to turn to the company for assistance in this complex field.

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man and President Dr. George E. Mueller was directing this nation's Manned Space Flight Program. While NASA's effort has since been reduced, however, other organizations and countries have become increasingly involved in space efforts, and SDC is actively supporting these efforts.

For years, SDC has been a primary software and data systems contractor for the Air Force's satellite control facility, integrating and assuring the quality of software produced by other contractors for use in the Air Force's primary space network. More recently, the company has expanded its role, serving as overall systems manager. The SDC-developed Telemetry Integrated Processing System (TIPS) is providing launch and fly-by support for all users of the Space and Missile Test Center at Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Overseas, SDC has been assisting the National Space Agency of Japan in system integration and software support for Japan's satellite launch program. The system will provide broadcast and satellite communications to Japan's far-flung communities, a need shared by many countries in Asia, Africa and South America.

For NASA, SDC is providing support in the full range of Control Data Corporation computers, including the CDC STAR 100, the industry's largest commercial computer, and the UNIVAC 1100 series. At

### **Space Systems**

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It is certainly true that the space program has been trimmed back from the level of the sixties when SDC ChairNASA's Slidell Computer Complex, SDC's work is in support of the space shuttle. At NASA's Langley Research Center, SDC is a leader in wind tunnel data reduction.

In addition to its extensive system management work, SDC also develops systems for the various space programs. Among these are systems that track and catalog space objects, provide radar surveillance, process information from telemetry data streams, and generate weather information from satellites.

Perhaps the best known of these systems is the TIROS-N program. SDC developed the large data processing storage system which processes streams of data from two weather satellites simultaneously. To handle the sheer magnitude of all this data, SDC uses a mass storage system which can store up to 350 billion bytes of data, yet can search through the equivalent of 300 computer tapes per second.

SDC is deeply involved in many different aspects of today's space efforts. Both the current efforts and those planned for the years ahead are heavily dependent upon efficient information processing. As that is SDC's primary business, the company will be a major contributor in this field for years to come.

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The deepening energy crisis has made this nation painfully aware of the urgent need to develop alternative energy sources. There is no single substitute for our dwindling petroleum supplies, so it will take a combination of nuclear power, synthetic fuels, solar power, fusion power, and conservation to meet our energy needs and decrease our reliance on foreign petroleum.

There is great promise in these alternative energy sources, but their development will require massive crash programs both to develop the necessary technology and to design and build the necessary facilities. Vast sums will have to be invested in complex developments, and few companies have the technical and management resources that will be needed.

SDC is one of those few companies with the sophisticated capabilities to meet the demands of the energy industry. Specifically, SDC applies its system engineering and management expertise to these super-projects. Initially, these skills were applied to the Alaskan Pipeline. Now, support is being provided to other major projects. SDC is thereby fulfilling a vital role in helping to ensure that these massive programs are conducted in an efficient manner.

In the area of synthetic fuels, SDC is providing system engineering and management support services for the Department of Energy's Fossil Fuel Processes Program. This important and far-reaching program will coordinate the efforts of the energy industry to accelerate the development of economic, environmentally acceptable ways of converting coal to liquid and gaseous fuels.

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In the area of nuclear energy, SDC/DMJM, a joint venture, is the System Support Contractor for the Department of Energy's Gas Centrifuge Enrichment Program. The company is providing project control and system engineering support to this long-term program to develop the gas centrifuge enrichment process and to construct a production plant to produce enriched uranium for the commercial nuclear power industry.

In the area of conservation, SDC is working with a number of electric utilities to improve the availability and overall productivity of their power plants. SDC has determined that power plant productivity can often be increased by as much as 20 percent with a systematic improvement program. SDC works closely with the utilities to isolate problem areas, perform cost-benefit analyses of potential improvements, and implement a system for tracking the improvement actions.

SDC is also involved in geothermal energy development, offshore drilling support, and solar energy. Moreover, its STARDYNE<sup>®</sup> Structural Analysis System is used by over 300 companies in 19 countries. Not only is it used in the design of nuclear generating plants, offshore drilling rigs, and similar major structures, STARDYNE is now being used to reanalyze operating nuclear power plants to ensure that they meet new regulatory auidelines.

SDC has been in the energy field for more than a decade now. SDC's energy engineering and management capabilities provide a unique resource in this nation's drive to meet tomorrow's energy needs.

### **Information Services**

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It is not always possible for a business or institution to costjustify its own computing system or to develop

a computer system for a given function. Perhaps the user company is not sufficiently large to afford the system or its development; perhaps the desired function is too specialized to integrate into its present system. Whatever the reason, many companies need a different approach to enable them to automate important information management functions.

For this reason, SDC not only develops large computer-based system installations in its customers' facilities, the company also develops large standard systems for common use by many customers. SDC provides information services to literally millions of users, either on an SDC computer or through proprietary software products to streamline a customer's processing on his own computer.

In per-transaction systems, SDC maintains many data bases with an enormous collection of vital information on its own computers. Individual customers tap this resource via telephone from terminals at their own facilities located throughout the world. SDC serves many different industries as well as governmental and educational organizations in this way. In addition to this bibliographic service, SDC performs claims administration functions which are described in another section.

The bibliographic service, called SDC<sup>®</sup> Search Service, enables businesses, libraries, and researchers throughout the world to gain access to the huge amount of significant information being published every day. A user dials SDC's computer center on his telephone, and via a terminal, he immediately gains access to files representing millions of articles, reports, books, and other data in various scientific, technical, and business areas. The system includes files in agriculture, business management, chemistry, education, engineering, energy, geoscience, patents and pollution.

SDC maintains all these files in its large computer center in Santa Monica. Some 70 separate data bases containing over 25,000,000 citations are stored here and updated continually to add the most current information. SDC also has a computer center in Japan to enable Japanese users to take advantage of SDC Search Service on a more cost-effective basis. Satisfying the daily information needs of thousands of users around the globe, SDC Search Service exemplifies SDC's objective—helping people manage information.

Virtually all data processing today involves data base management, and SDC has developed sophisticated software systems for efficient management of data bases. SDC incorporates these systems in its turnkey systems and in its pertransaction systems. It also markets them as proprietary software products, enabling companies to streamline their data processing centers to meet the increasing demands of today's specialized data base management tasks.

SDC is continually refining these services and products, optimizing them for the changing needs of information management. Today's SDC's software products, such as ORBIT® Information Retrieval System and DS/3\* Generalized Data Management System, make the most powerful and efficient use possible of today's computers. Tomorrow's systems will be even more effective in managing tomorrow's information management needs.

\*Trademark of System Development Corporation

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### Information Systems

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As this nation has changed from an industrial to a service economy, there has been an enormous increase in the out-

put of textual information. This "paperwork explosion" has nearly inundated the American office.

Over the past 15 years, the office equipment industry has provided powerful word processors, copiers, printers, and dictation equipment. Despite major investments in this equipment, however, office productivity has increased only slightly in that time, whereas factory productivity has nearly doubled.

This anomaly can be explained by the fact that the office equipment industry has addressed only one aspect of the paperwork problem—text generation. Thus, businesses and governmental agencies are able to *generate* more and more paper more and more efficiently, but they experience great difficulty in *finding* meaningful information in a timely manner.

To meet this need, SDC is developing a family of information systems which stress text availability rather than text generation. Rather than replacing currently available text generation equipment, these products are designed to enhance and extend existing equipment capabilities through new proprietary techniques of text storage and retrieval, and information distribution and access.

The first of these functional products is called the SDC\* Records Manager. With its entirely new type of system architecture, the SDC Records Manager optimizes the storage and retrieval of free form text. Intended for use by an office staff on the documents they normally use, the SDC Records Manager can store documents as they are generated on the office's word processing system.

Most important, the SDC Records Manager does something truly unique. It can retrieve information in response to an inexact English language query, without prescribed codes or formats. When a query is made, the SDC Records Manager searches its 75,000-page file and identifies likely matches. These may include cases where the word order is different from that of the query or other words are interspersed, and even cases where words in the query or a stored document are misspelled. In one to five seconds for most queries, the number of relevant paragraphs located will be displayed on the SDC Records Manager query terminal. The user may then display the information located or refine the query.

Thus, managers or professionals working on a project can gain immediate access to all relevant information on that subject whether or not they know its location; whether or not they generated the source document(s); whether or not they even know about the source document. All of the documents generated by a work group are immediately available to managers unless access has specifically been restricted by the SDC Records Manager's password protection capability. This same data availability permits the SDC Records Manager to be used for electronic mail to and from any query terminal in the work group. With a simple command, a user can transmit any document in the file electronically to any other user(s).

The SDC Records Manager is just the first of SDC's information systems. Work group systems can communicate to provide organization-wide retrieval, electronic mail, and message capability, enabling any work group to access the non-private files of any other. They can also be extended vertically to integrate source data conversion equipment and even, in the future, speech processing.

All of these enhancements and extensions have the same basic objective as the SDC Records Manager—to improve the productivity and quality of work of managers and professionals through effective text management. In this instance, SDC is providing the tools to enable people to manage their own information.

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# Social Services

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soared beyond those of any other segment of our economy. One of the primary components of this tremendous cost increase has been the adminis-

The costs of health services in

this country have

trative work load. Modern health care generates a huge information processing requirement-to administer treatment, to maintain vital records, and to pay for treatment.

Administration of health care plans alone is a tremendous information processing task, far beyond the capabilities of most companies that offer such plans to their employees. Claims adjustors must enter a significant amount of data, such as charges, dates, and diagnoses for each claim. They must then audit and edit this data using appropriate plan rules, subtract proper deductible amounts, calculate the proper payment, and update individual history records for each participant in the plan.

As plans have become larger and more complex, the costs of claims adjustment alone have increased disproportionately. Not only is the cost-per-claim rising, but there is inevitably an increasing incidence of costly errors, such as overpayments and duplicate payments. Unaided, claims adjustors simply have been unable to keep pace with this growing information management task.

Recognizing this need, SDC developed a Claims Administration System, which is offered to corporations with medical and dental insurance plans. A computer, housed in an SDC facility, performs all the calculations based on the raw claims data entered by a clerk on a terminal in the

client's facility. Not only does this service relieve the adjustor of all arithmetic and record maintenance tasks, it provides such vital management information as benefit trends, usage, and costs.

Since the service was first offered, financial institutions, industrial corporations, utilities, and mass merchandisers have turned their claims administration processing over to SDC. The system is so streamlined that SDC has sold versions of it to several large insurance companies. One of these systems is now installed in Australia, and is processing 10 million claims a year for more than five million Australians.

SDC's Medicaid Management Information System processes another type of medical information. First developed for the state of Florida, the system processes Medicaid claims, checks for validity, approves payments to providers, and generates management reports that permit assessment of the program. A certified Medicaid processing system, the Florida system annually processes more than 12 million claims and disburses Medicaid funds in excess of \$350 million.

SDC is also assisting the state of New York in the implementation of its Welfare Management System. This comprehensive online computer system is designed to speed the eligibility determination of welfare clients who are truly qualified in the areas of income maintenance, medical assistance, services, and child support and to reduce the number of nonqualified people receiving benefits. After analyzing the eligibility determination and welfare delivery system, SDC is in the process of developing and installing a uniform system that will serve the 57 counties of upstate New York.

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### Research & Development

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tronics and computer industries. Hardware costs have decreased dramatically, and capability has increased even more dramatically. The research and development during these years has paid off handsomely.

Despite these enormous strides, the need for innovative R&D programs has not waned. Indeed, the remarkable computer-on-a-chip has really opened up the possibility for more and more useful information processing systems in the years ahead. If we are to realize this potential, our industry must pursue at least as aggressive an R&D program as it has over the past 20 years.

SDC is keenly aware of this fact. The company has achieved its leadership in information processing through supporting innovative developments. To maintain that leadership today, the company conducts an ambitious R&D program with many nationally known scientists and engineers.

The focus of the R&D program at SDC is to find new and better ways to manage information for people. Current major research projects include the broad categories—information management, signal processing, computer networks, system security, and software engineering.

In support of this research, the R&D staff has built innovative experimental systems which are being tested and refined. For example, the company has de-

Without question, the most remarkable technological advances of the past two decades have been made in the elecer industries. Hardreased dramatically, creased even more earch and developvears has paid off veloped a prototype system which allows a user to communicate with a computer in natural English. This system can be connected to a deductive mechanism which lets the computer develop new or implicit data from existing explicit data. Moreover, in the SDC voice laboratory, a computer is being taught to recognize a limited vocabulary of continuous speech.

SDC recognizes that the ever-growing deluge of information in the world today mandates innovative solutions in order to achieve practical, cost-effective information management in the years ahead. With its comprehensive R&D program, SDC will continue to develop the products and capabilities that provide these innovative solutions. As a result, SDC will have the tools to manage information for people even more effectively than it does today.

#### System Development Corporation

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Today, SDC is an international corporation with subsidiaries, joint venture companies, and operations in more than 20 different countries. SDC's 3600 employees work at 12 different major SDC facilities across the United States and at SDC offices in various parts of the globe.

To obtain a true picture of what SDC does, however, one must go beyond these facilities. For it is in the libraries, the offices, the launch control centers, the research centers that one sees the true value of SDC's work. Here, SDC's systems and services are enabling millions of people to cope with the mountains of information they face today.

For these people SDC has developed and applied the modern science of information processing. Those who use SDC's systems rarely know or care about the sophisticated technologies that SDC has developed to reduce the complexity, control the volume, extract the needed information, and hold down the costs of the massive information processing needs of our society.

They do care that these systems help them do their jobs better. And so does SDC, the company that develops systems to manage information for people.

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#### System Development Corporation

The