The experience of an intelligence unit in a Mexican institute is presented. Some results of a study developed at Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey (ITESM) for the Mexican Galvak Company within the steel and coatings area are discussed. R&D published between 1998 and early 2001 is analysed. Main directions of research and competitive actions – including advances on steel products, improvement of steel characteristics and strategic alliances – are pointed out. This study enabled this company to redefine their R&D portfolio.