

Papers from the 29th NFAIS Annual Conference

Introduction

In March of 1987, the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services (NFAIS) sponsored its 29th Annual Conference, "Demystifying the Database Business: What's Really Happening behind the Hype?". Conference Chair (and current President), Ronald G. Dunn, American Chemical Society, wanted a meeting that dealt with realities — After the rhetoric, after the publicity, what is truly going on?

The sessions included Government Information Programs; the current status of Information Revolutions of the Past; Changes and Innovations in Database Production in this decade; the effect that Gateways have on users; Is Anybody Listening?; and the too frequently disregarded area of people management, Current Issues and Challenges in Human Resource Management. In addition, the Pre-Conference Seminar addressed Artificial Intelligence from the Perspective of Applications for Database Production and Information Retrieval.

The contributed papers in this issue of *Information Services & Use* are among those given at the NFAIS 29th Annual Conference. This issue, furthermore, marks the beginning of an annual appearance of selected conference papers from the NFAIS Conference of that year. We are delighted with this beginning and look forward to the collection of these papers in the years to come.

The National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services was founded in 1958 at a time when the scientific communities in the United States were jolted into research realities by the launching of Sputnik. Major secondary scientific publishers recognized the value to the US science and technology research community of information bases containing knowledge produced worldwide. They also realized that the US scientific and technological information services were not satisfying the research community's need. Their products had to be significantly improved — made both more complete and more available. They founded NFAIS to help achieve those goals.

Now, thirty years later, NFAIS continues to serve the information community through programs, publications, projects and activities designed to promote understanding and cooperation among industry professionals and to facilitate the production of and access to published information for the worldwide community of information users. And, NFAIS continues to be the primary membership

association for those organizations involved in the collection and dissemination of the world's literature in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities in the US and abroad.

That beginning and that mission are the umbrella under which NFAIS sponsors its Annual Conference. We know that much of what is shared during the four days each year should enjoy a wider distribution. For that reason, we are delighted at this opportunity through North-Holland, to share some of the conference content with *ISU* readers.

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