

News

General

FID International Clearinghouse for Information Education and Training

FID is very pleased to announce the move of the International Clearinghouse for Information Education and Training to the Royal School of Librarianship in Copenhagen, Denmark. Negotiations at the end of 1991 with the Danish Government and the Royal School of Librarianship came to a successful conclusion and the move from Syracuse University became a fact at the beginning of 1992. FID extends its thanks to Professor Irene Wormell (the new Director of the Clearinghouse), Professor Marta Dosa (Director of the Clearinghouse from 1983–1991) and the US National Committee for FID who were all instrumental in the move.

The International Clearinghouse was established in 1979 at the University of Maryland (USA) as a project of the FID Education and Training Committee on an experimental basis. In 1983 the Clearinghouse was established on a more permanent basis at Syracuse University (N.Y.) as a support to countries in the developing areas of the world.

In 1992 the International Clearinghouse was moved to the Royal School of Librarianship in Copenhagen, Denmark and placed under the direction of Professor Irene Wormell.

The Clearinghouse maintains contacts with information educators, researchers, policy makers and practitioners. Intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations often turn to the Clearinghouse with information queries. Schools of library and information studies in developing countries obtain materials such as course syllabi, examples of tests, unpublished reports, specialized course bibliographies, research papers, addresses of funding sources and sample teaching aids from the Clearinghouse.

Funding for the Clearinghouse has been provided in the past by the Unesco General Information Programme (1983–1986) and by the United States Commission on Libraries and Information Science and Syracuse University School of Information Studies until 1991. The Clearinghouse has been under the dedicated leadership of

Prof. Marta Dosa, a well-known educator and Chairman of the FID/ET Committee from 1983–1988.

With the move to Denmark the Danish Government through DANIDA and the Royal School of Librarianship provide the necessary funding for the operation of the Clearinghouse.

The main objectives of the Clearinghouse are to:

- Acquire, organize and service a specialized collection on information educational planning, evaluation, instruction, research and policies
- Serve as a source of sources, answering queries by locating, evaluating and repackaging information for users
- Regularly disseminate current information
- Bring users into interaction with each other by referrals and informal networking
- Conduct evaluation research and document Clearinghouse processes in order to provide a prototype that can be replicated.

The users of the Clearinghouse are mainly information educators, policy makers, practitioners and researchers in developing economies.

The Clearinghouse generates a two-way information flow:

- Information is provided TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES about new approaches, products, systems, training opportunities, and funding sources; and,
- Information is solicited FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES on new ideas, programmes, courses, papers, reports and education needs.

The Clearinghouse keeps its collection of mainly unpublished educational reports, papers and international documents relatively stable by keeping only current materials. Information needed for answering queries is searched and located in databases, libraries, and specialized resource centres. The emphasis of query answering has more and more shifted from simple document delivery to locating, extracting and condensing the information content requested by the user.

The Newsletter on Education and Training Programmes for Information Personnel

The roles of the *Newsletter* and Clearinghouse are interrelated. The *Newsletter on Education and Training Programmes for Information Personnel* is published as a quarterly insert to the *FID News Bulletin* as well as being distributed separately. For many users of the Clearinghouse and other services offered the cost involved in keeping up-to-date on international developments and new resources is forbidding. Therefore, one of the Clearinghouse's important services is the provision of current awareness services. The *Newsletter* is the forum of information exchange for a growing readership.

The *Newsletter* mainly addresses the need of educators in the developing areas of the world for useful contacts. Also important is the liaison between developing and industrial countries in order to serve international collaboration in information education.

The Clearinghouse has been placed under the direction of Professor Irene Wormell, a professor at the Royal School of Librarianship. To support her in her work, an Advisory Board will be appointed which consists of educators, information specialists in different areas, people working in industry government etc. This advisory board will assist Professor Wormell in analysing the objectives and terms of reference of the Clearinghouse and will provide a reference network for the Clearinghouse to draw upon.

The Clearinghouse is situated at:

The Royal School of Librarianship
6 Birketinget, DK 2300 Copenhagen S, Denmark
Tel.: +45 31 58 60 66
Fax: +45 31 32 84 02 01

Round Table for Editors of Library Journals – IFLA-91 RTELJ Elections

The results of the elections held at RTELJ Executive Committee meeting during the 57th IFLA Session in Moscow in August, 18, 1991 were:

- Mr. Michael Wise, editor of “*Focus on International and Comparative Librarianship*”, the former Secretary is now the new RTELJ Chairperson (Department of Library Science, Bayero University, PMB 3011, Kano, Nigeria – before April, 1992).
- RTELJ Secretary is the new EC member, editorial board member of the serial “*Librarianship and Bibliography Abroad*” Ms. Olga V. Timokhina (the Russian State Library (former Lenin State Library), Department of Foreign Library Science and International Library Relations, ul. Vozdvizhenka, 3, 101000, Moscow, Russian Federation, CIS, Telex 411167 GBL SU, FAX 7 095 200 22 55).
- RTELJ Executive Committee cordially congratulated newly elected RT officials and expresses its gratitude and best wishes to its former Chairman, Professor Donald G. Davis. Under his leadership RTELJ activities were beneficial for library journals cooperation.

The RTELJ membership as it stands now is the following (in alphabetical order):

Mr. Russel Bowden
The Library Association
7 Ridgmount Street
London W1C 7AE
United Kingdom

Ms. Maria Luísa Cabral
Cadernos BAD, Editor
Biblioteca Nacional
Campo Grande, 83
1751 Lisboa Codex
Portugal

Mr. Ruth C. Carter
Cataloging and Classification Quarterly,
 Editor
 University of Pittsburgh
 271 Hillman Library
 Pittsburgh, PA 15260
 USA

Mr. Donald G. Davis
Libraries and Culture, Editor
 Graduate School of Library and Infor-
 mation Science
 The University of Texas
 Education Building 564
 Austin, Texas 78712-1276
 USA

Mr. Edward Dudley
*Journal of Librarianship and Informa-
 tion Science*
 Reviews Editor
 18 Brandon Mews
 Barbican, London EC2Y 8BE
 United Kingdom

Ms. Helena Hankova
 “i’91” Editor in Chief
 c/o Uvtei
 Konviktrká 5, 11357 Prague 1
 Czechoslovakia

Mr. Paul Kaegbein
 Treasurer of IFLA Round Table on
 Research in Reading
 Chair of Library Science
 c/o Eichenhainallee 14
 W-5060 Bergisch Gladbach 1
 Federal Republic of Germany

Ms. Maria Inês Lopes
Notícia BAD, Editor
 Biblioteca Nacional
 Campo Grande, 83
 1751 Lisboa Codex
 Portugal

Courses

Short Courses – AGRICOLA and CRIS Workshops

AGRICOLA (Agricultural Online Access), produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Online, covers all aspects of the literature of agriculture. While most of the citations are in English, over one-third of the database contains citations in Western European, Slavic, Oriental and African languages. CRIS (Current Research Information System), is the database of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s reporting and documenting system for ongoing publicly-supported research in the U.S. on agriculture and forestry.

A number of workshops have been scheduled for these two databases, and cover both basic and advanced searching techniques. Such training may be especially helpful for those in the information field desirous of improving their searching skills in a specialized area. Basic (3 days), advanced (1 day) workshops are given at various locations and dates. For further information, write: AGRICOLA and CRIS Training, Special Services Branch, Educational Programs Unit, National Agri-

cultural Library, 10301 Baltimore Boulevard, Beltsville, MD 20705-2351, USA, or call for AGRICOLA: 301 344 12 04; for CRIS call 301 344 38 50.

Graduate Studies: Canada

McGill University in Montreal, Canada offers a graduate program in Library and Information Studies. The 2-year program is especially strong in library science, but also meets today's needs for education in the area of information technology. It attracts students from a wide range of backgrounds and geographical areas. The school has a well equipped laboratory for information technology, enabling students to gain practical experience in information storage and retrieval. More than 40 courses are offered regularly by the full- and part-time faculty. Further information regarding this program may be obtained from: Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, McGill University, 3459 McTavish Street, Montreal, Quebec H3A 1Y1 Canada. Tel.: 514 398 42 04; Fax: 514 398 71 93.

Information Analysis and Publishing Studies

Two new courses have been approved to commence at the Robert Gordon University Aberdeen, in September 1992. Both new courses are led by the School of Librarianship and Information Studies, and one is the only one of its kind in the UK.

A new Masters degree programme in Information Analysis is intended to prepare students for careers as researchers and information analysts in the private and public sectors. More than 10,000 people work in the UK as researchers in the financial sector, the media, pressure groups, and the public services, but the new MSc. course at RGIT is the only one in Britain designed specifically to meet their needs for a professional training.

A new BA/BA(Hons) degree programme in Publishing Studies has also been established. This is the first in the UK to emphasise the nature of publishing as a business activity. The publishing industry is becoming increasingly businesslike, and this new course emphasises the business management aspects of publishing (marketing, finance, personnel), as well as the published media and the publishing industry and its practices. It has recently been estimated that most large organisations spend about 15% of their budgets on 'publishing' internal and external documents, and students graduating from this course will be as equally well equipped to work in a corporate environment as in the conventional print and electronic publishing industries.

The new courses are led by the School of Librarianship and Information Studies, but are supported by a wide range of expertise from the other elements of the University's Faculty of Management, including the Business School, the School of Public Administration and Law, and the Communication Unit. Plans for a range of additional courses are to be developed throughout the 1990s to meet the needs of a large

and growing workforce in the communication and information industries.

Further details are available from Mr. Ian Johnson, Head of the School of Librarianship and Information Studies, at the School of Librarianship and Information Studies, The Robert Gordon University, Hilton Place, Aberdeen AB9 1FP, United Kingdom. Tel.: 02 24 28 38 37.

Information Management Distance Learning Course

The National Health Service Training Directorate (NHSTD) has awarded development funding to the MSc distance learning course: *Information systems and services for health care*. Recognising the shortfall of many types of information specialists, the NHSTD has been identifying information career pathways and assessing ways of improving the supply of appropriately qualified information professionals.

Having examined the scope and nature of the MSc course, the NHSTD has awarded £ 15,000 for the current year. The Department of Information and Library Studies, University College Aberystwyth will use the award to consolidate and further extend the subject coverage of the MSc course, to develop additional student aids and to strengthen links with operational information systems.

Entering its third recruitment year in September 1992, the MSc course will add a further 25 students to the 33 already enrolled. Most students have secured full or partial support from their employers, amongst whom are health authorities, other public sector organisations and the private sector.

Further information from the Liaison Office or John Hepworth, Department of Information and Library Studies, University College of Wales Aberystwyth, SY23 3AS. Tel.: 09 70 62 21 92 or 09 70 62 21 65.

Research

*BRAIN TRAIN – Professional Education and Training Requirements in Developing Countries**

A study funded by the British Library is being undertaken to explore the impact of U.K. education on developing countries' own education programmes and the identification of teaching resources that are needed in the future. It is expected that this project will provide information which will be useful in the U.K. to library schools and funding agencies in planning educational programmes and the preparation of teaching material. It is also hoped that the findings will be useful to international organizations and other bodies concerned with improving professional education and training.

Specifically, the study will look at:

- the impact of UK education on developing countries' own educational programmes

- identification of requirements that could effect changes in UK curricula to meet the requirements of developing countries
- identification of teaching resources needed in developing countries in terms of manpower, teaching materials, etc., and how these resources should be provided.

Professional librarians, educators and information officers who are interested in the education and training of the future are invited to cooperate in this study. A wide representation from as many countries as possible is being sought. It will involve at least the completion of a short questionnaire and may require some discussion with other colleagues from the country or region.

More details on the project can be obtained from:

Stella Keenan
Information Consultant
Rooftops
27 Hill Place
Oxenholme
Kendal
Cumbria LA9 7HB
England.

Online Searching

In Schools

That students in the US are given more exposure to the online world than those in Europe is once again suggested by Dialog's annual Education Awards. The winner of the first prize, a consortium in Indiana, is particularly impressive for the range of environments which it links.

Project INSITE connects 15 school districts, the state library service, a local zoo, a university and two industrial research centres.

All use DIALOG, so one aspect of the project is training teachers how to go online. Another is how online searching, electronic bulletin boards and E-mail can be effectively integrated into the science curriculum.

In addition, however, the system gives students the chance to take part in inter-school science experiments and teleconferences, and to interact directly with research scientists and university academics to discuss issues and gather data.

Project INSITE won \$ 2000 of online connect time to be used in a Dialog Classroom Instruction Program, a scheme which now numbers over 6500 schools and colleges among its participants.

* *Education for information* 10(4) will comprise papers from a conference on this topic.

Software

SEARCHERS' TOOLBOX

A toolbox of utilities for online searchers is shortly to be released under the name of SearchStation by Jackson Smith Associates Ltd., who run the *Watching Brief* managed alerting service and produce the bibliographic data reformatting package, *RefWriter*.

"The utilities are designed for simplicity and ease of use in mind", says Alan Jackson, Director of JSA. "All are simple enough for a busy information professional or end-user to master in a very short time". The utilities, which run on IBM PC compatibles, will be available separately at £ 25 each, or £ 99 for a set of 10.

SearchStation itself is a programme which provides a friendly user interface for running the utilities and any other application software. The toolbox can be used to perform a variety of useful tasks on search dialogue files. The first of three categories of utility analyses and reports on the content of session log files. For example, identifying the field tags present in a large set of records; zooming in on particular fields by searching against a search "mask" or field value.

The second category of utility add value to records by sifting, sorting or extraction. Records may be separated automatically by source database or field content, or by matching entries in a lookup file. For example, records for classification could be grouped in files by journal name, language, document type etc. One utility provides an interface for browsing records and allows the user to discard individual ones or divert them into one of nine holding files.

The third category consists of housekeeping utilities. A de-duplicator removes records matching an appropriate "deduplication key" specified by the user; search session log summaries can be extracted automatically.

Some utilities are specific to particular services to avoid the complexities of user configuration. JSA intend to continue actively developing and extending the toolbox and welcome suggestions and ideas from online searchers.

For more details contact JSA Ltd., 119 High St. South, Rushden, Northants., NN10 0RB, UK (tel.: 09 33 31 10 13, fax: 09 33 41 07 50).

KNOWLEDGE FINDER

Users are experiencing some culture shock in moving from traditional text searching to a system where interrogation is through a graphical interface and hits are ranked by their relevance.

So says Aries Systems, whose Mac-based CD-ROM retrieval software, *Knowledge Finder*, was launched for IBM PC six months ago. "It is a completely new way of doing things," Aries' President Lyndon Holmes said.

One advantage is that searches can be made in natural language without Boolean

operators. Another is that the size of retrieved sets becomes unimportant, as the most relevant hits are displayed first.

“We have had a very favourable response to the IBM version of *Knowledge Finder*, but users do have to adapt to using a graphical interface. It is very different, but the net effect is to remove many of the barriers to novice searching”, says Mr Holmes.

Aries Systems’ approach is to rank hits according to the number of times search terms appear in each document – users specify these in plain English language with adjustments made for commonly used words.

Mr Holmes argues that it removes the ‘hit and miss’ element of Boolean searching, focusing on the content of records rather than the number of hits.

He reckons that there is a large market of end-users who are not properly catered for by traditional text searching. “Everything we see suggests that the traditional searching environment just scares end-users away,” he says.

“Over the past 30 years traditional information technology has failed to produce any groundswell of end-user searching and without significant development this is unlikely to change.”

Aries Systems produces a range of CD-ROM titles including an unabridged version of *Medline*, along with subsets of the database for medical specialists. These include discs relating to radiology, pathology and orthopaedics, with subscriptions starting at \$ 595. Prices for the complete *Medline* begin at \$ 1595.

For an IBM application 2MB of RAM and a 20MB hard disk are needed, along with a VGA monitor and a printer capable of printing raster graphics in Epson FX or LQ mode. Tel.: +1 508 475 72 00.

(*Information World Review* No. 68, March 1992).

Menus

In case you didn’t know, menu-driven systems are the latest fashion among database hosts.

The latest clutch to be launched includes FT Profile’s *Freeway*, which automates logon and assists with searching its data: ESA-IRS’ *Easy-Quest*, which is said to be the first such system to operate with no connect-time charges; and GENIOS’ *GENIOS-EASY*, which enables selection from databases in 24 main subject areas.

Meanwhile those hosts with well-established menu-driven searching are expanding their capabilities. A year after the launch of *DIALOG Menus*, there are said to be over 300 databases accessible in this way on DIALOG, while Data-Star has introduced six *FOCUS* systems with three more (on *Textline*, market research and the EC) planned for launch before June.

There is a total of 17 files accessible via DIMDI’s *GRIPS* system, with research at the Cologne-based host focused on parallel searching of database sets. ECHO has

introduced menudriven searching in nine languages, including Greek, on some of its databases, while OR Télématique is developing a natural-language interface for its juridical databases, and GBI is investigating combining online and CD-ROM.

So is all this frantic activity to target end-users reaching its mark? Data-Star for one believes it is – it says its menu-driven system is attracting a new type of customer – those who do not see the acquisition of information as a major part of their job.

Dialogue is equally certain – it says the users of *DIALOG Menus* are predominantly desk searchers, not information professionals, and that it expects the trend to continue with the introduction of a menu-driven *Textline* later this year.

It's a story echoed by others, among them ESA-IRS, which asserts that 35% of its customers are end-users, and DIMDI, which talks of an increasing demand for easy searching which cuts out the information broker.

Only ECHO, the EC's non-commercial host, is ready to admit that there may be some clouds in this menu-driven paradise.

Those accessing its natural-language database *People's Europe* are on the whole not end-users, it says, but our old friends, the information specialists – testing whether the system actually works . . .

(*Information World Review* No. 68, March 1992).

ESA-IRS New Command

At "Infobase 92", 28–30 April in Frankfurt, ESA-IRS launched its new powerful command SUPERSELECT. SUPERSELECT enables the searcher to include in just one command, all functions of the previous SELECT, COMBINE, and LIMIT commands. It also adds many new functions to the system, so that the searcher can specify even more effectively the information he wants.

With SUPERSELECT, the searcher can do all the following within the same command:

- * Obtain a single user set after a complex query
- * Include positional and boolean operators in any order
- * Make use of new positional operators
- * Easily search for more than one author, corporate source and search for structured names (s cs = el(w)segundo)
- * Easily mix different prefixes
- * Refer to previous set numbers, no matter what operators were used in those sets
- * Search for phrases containing special characters (e.g. the hyphen in "SOUTH-ASIA")
- * Perform all the normal operations possible using the previous SELECT, COMBINE, and LIMIT commands
- * Use "select step" to get user sets for each logical step of the search

An additional important benefit of the SUPERSELECT command is the reduction of the overall response time when used to enter complex operations.

The ESA-IRS service is since April fully accessible via the Internet network. Internet is a non for profit worldwide scientific network for universities, research centres and governmental institutions. It has existed in the U.S.A. since the late seventies and in Europe for 3–4 years.

To access ESA-IRS via Internet the customer should enter TELNET 192.106.252.1.

Detailed access procedures can be obtained from:

ESA-IRS, Esrin
Via Galileo Galilei
00044 Frascati
Italy
Telephone Helpdesk +39 6 94 18 03 00
Fax: +39 6 94 18 03 61

or from the ESA-IRS offices and National Centres throughout Europe.

Databases

Free Database Offered

A free database has been launched, with potential users offered either a complimentary CD-ROM or free online time by its producer, the UK's Open University.

This, however, will only be during the development stage of the file, which covers distance learning and lists over 15,500 courses run by 400 institutions, mainly within the British Commonwealth.

Over 3000 references to literature on the subject are included, and the data provider, the International Centre for Distance Learning, plans to expand coverage to the rest of the world.

Though based at the Open University, the Centre is externally funded, most notably by the United Kingdom.

Tel.: +44 0 908 65 35 37

(*Information World Review* No. 69, April 1992).

Software

Use in Education

Pupils in a school in Newcastle, UK, are being immersed in a French 'virtual city' to help them learn the language. Others are learning about health and safety hazards in the workplace through entering a 'virtual factory'.

All this started earlier this year, via the first schools-based virtual reality project in Europe, designed to explore the educational uses of this technology. Virtual reality tricks the brain into thinking it is somewhere else, and allows people to interact with computer-generated worlds.

Applications so far have mainly been for entertainment, but there is thought to be much potential for corporate training; it is hoped that this schools project, involving 16–18-year-olds studying 'A' levels, will help to confirm this.

Experiments at West Denton School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, will include asking language students to find their way about, and shop, in foreign cities; to deal with everyday hazards in an engineering workshop; and to site Henry Moore sculptures to maximum advantage.

They will use hardware and software from Dimension International, of Aldermaston, UK, including a special headset incorporating LCD displays.

The project, costing £ 100 000, is partly funded by the UK government and also involves cooperation from local industry.

Dimension International: tel.: + 44 0 734 81 00 77; fax: 81 69 40.

(*Information World Review* No. 69, April 1992).