

News, Trends and Comments

News

Telecommunications suppliers

Toward the end of last year it became known that the McDonnell Douglas Corporation was negotiating to acquire Tymshare inc. - and therefore Tymnet, one of the major US packet-switched telecommunications networks. An announcement to this effect was even made, before word came out that the deal was off. Now it appears to be on again, to the tune of slightly more than US\$300 million (somewhat less than the previous bid). Another example of an aero-space company's interest in operating a public data network is, of course, the (vendor-dedicated) Dialnet - to be brought into operation this year by Lockheed's DIALOG Information Services. Meanwhile, Control Data Corporation and United Telecommunications inc. have arranged to cooperate in developing the advanced "Uninet II". This network would be in place by 1985. Uninet will not however (as we indicated in our previous issue) operate under Control Data ownership, but will remain in the control of United Telecommunications.

European information

In spite of recent severe setbacks to the spirit of cooperation among the nations involved (and particularly between Germany and France), the information Eurocrats in Luxemburg are all set to go with the latest embodiment of their schemes for fostering the growth of a viable intra-European environment for information provision and use. Ultimate approval for a specialized information market development program seems now imminent. The provisional text of the European Commission's proposal of this program, budgeted at the equivalent to approximately US\$40 million over five years, to the Council of the European Communities, appears as the last item in this issue.

Disintegration

It has just been learned, as this issue was about to go to press, that the Institute for Scientific Information has decided to cease operating as an online vendor of its own data bases - apparently for the very simple reason that such activity neither was profitable nor showed any signs of becoming so. This may serve as further justification for caution on the parts of other major data-base producers who may have been considering a move toward offering their products directly

to users, though it probably does not mean that this kind of vertical integration is necessarily unworkable in the long run, since certain successful examples can be cited (as, of course, can certain other failures). What ramifications the development will have for the distribution of the ISI files in the future is not yet clear, but we shall do our best to keep readers informed.

Exclusivity for patent files access to terminate; future of vendor open to doubt

Before the end of this year, SDC Information Services of Santa Monica, California, will lose its position as sole online distributor of the patent data bases produced by Derwent Publications Ltd. There had been well founded speculation that Derwent would in fact transfer these data bases to the Columbus computer of CAS Online, for availability over the new "STN International" network (see *ISU* vol. 3 no. 6, p. 344). Although they may yet be mounted with CAS Online, they will in any event be available elsewhere as well - at the very least on SDC, DIALOG, and Télésystèmes-Questel (a French national service which operates also in North America). The ink on agreements with all these vendors has already dried, and further agreements may follow. There are of course some patent data bases already available both on Télésystèmes-Questel (the INPI files) and on DIALOG (e.g. the Claims files), and cross-file searching capacity seems a foregone conclusion in both cases. Arrangements with Télésystèmes-Questel were finalized before those with DIALOG (the latter in mid-January), but informed opinion has it that DIALOG will have the World Patents Index up (in November or December 1984?) somewhat earlier.

Insiders in the online business had long been wondering just when Monty Hyams (chairman and managing director of Derwent Publications Ltd.) would make up his mind what to do vis-à-vis SDC and other potential online distributors of his files. Already in the spring of last year some were suggesting that he would withdraw them altogether from the Santa Monica vendor, and that the move would ring a death knell for the already troubled (and unprofitable) SDC. That it will succumb in the not too distant future should not yet be ruled out, but it obviously will not go without a struggle. It has a new general manager (see below under People), will apparently maintain the Derwent files on the Orbit Search Service for at least another two years according to present plans, has signed an eight-year automated information system contract for the US Patent and Trademark Office (see below), has developed a "customized Orbit Retrieval System capable of displaying images", will "develop more customized systems", will respond to the increasingly competitive environment by specializing in "exclusive sponsored files dedicated to the technical searcher", and plans to exercise "an attitude of commercial and technical realism". Such were the statements and promises enunciated in an upbeat communication to its users at the beginning of this year. Unfortunately, putting such words on paper is considerably easier than turning them into a scenario guaranteeing long-term commercial success, or even short-term survival. Derwent patent information has been online with SDC, incidentally, since 1975.

Further cooperation among Télésystèmes-Questel, INPI (Institut national de la propriété industrielle, the French patent office) and Derwent

is in the cards - including plans to organize and mount additional patent files, and to modify the DARC chemical information system to the extent of allowing input and retrieval of 'Markush' formulae. Derwent is also attempting to develop an online statistical analysis package, perhaps in cooperation with more than one information retrieval service.

One might note that both SDC and Derwent (also in the contexts of its agreements with DIALOG and Télésystèmes-Questel) have begun to speak generically of "sponsored file" arrangements - without really making clear what this terminology connotes. We shall obviously be hearing more about this kind of approach.

New SDC contract

In addition to efforts aimed at augmenting the offerings on its Orbit Search Service, SDC Information Services (part of System Development Corporation, a Burroughs company) is actively pursuing other commercial opportunities. For one thing it intends vigorously to promote the sale or lease of its information-retrieval software for in-house use. In December, it also announced the winning of a contract with the US Department of Commerce whereby it will supply to the United States Patent and Trademark Office an automated trademark search system - involving the digital storage of images for online retrieval as part of the record in the registrations and applications data base, automatic phonetic search capabilities, a menu-driven microcomputer interface ("MarkMaster"), and detailed help screens. The contract is worth US\$12 million.

Private sector / public sector

The trade group EURIPA (European Information Providers' Association) has issued what it calls a policy statement on the roles of the public and private sectors, under the title "Public Policy and the Information Industry in Europe". It is based upon the premise that "certain fundamental questions concerning the respective roles of the public and private sectors need to be brought into the debate at an early stage, and certain ground rules laid down for the activities of public bodies". The statement's principal point, not surprisingly, is that public policy should avoid in any way impeding, inhibiting, or discouraging private investment, since it is private investment which has the natural capacity for "creating new wealth and new employment", and naturally enough we find here a vehement recitation of government culpabilities for the present under-developed state of a market-based information industry in Europe. EURIPA sees "a pressing need for public debate and a redefinition of objectives in the area of information policy in Europe" and, in hopes of stimulating the kind of information society "which will enhance the freedom and contribute significantly to the economic well-being of the peoples of Europe", proposes a set of six guidelines - the drift of which is that government involvement in the provision of information products and services must be kept to the bare minimum.

So far there has been very little reaction to the policy statement or the specific proposals which it contains, and it would not be realistic to suppose that they will indeed have much effect, unless possibly they

are backed up by concerted and continuing pressure in the various capitals.

The 1984 (fourth) EURIPA Symposium took place in Luxemburg on 21 and 22 March, and one item on the agenda was billed as a presentation/debate on "Barriers to the growth of Europe's information industry". The policy statement was described and excerpts from it read by the EURIPA chairman, but it evoked no discussion. We hope to bring you a report on the entire symposium in our next issue.

Dial more and save

As a "pilot" arrangement not exactly calculated to reduce the attractiveness of patronizing US online vendors, British Telecom has as of February been offering a 50% discount on bulk (above 500 kilosegments and/or 500 connect hours) usage of IPSS to the USA per billing quarter.

One down

Sansom Data Systemen, a Euronet-connected online information vendor located in The Netherlands, has decided, on rather short notice, to discontinue operations, effective later this spring.

Telecom info

EIC/Intelligence has announced a new information system and alerting service on various aspects of telecommunications, called Tele/Scope. For further information, you may contact the company at 48 West 38th Street, New York, NY 10018, USA; tel. (212) 944-8500, or (800) 223-6275; telex 668 298 eic.

Information service re-organization

The Centre de la documentation scientifique et technique (CDST) of the Centre national de la recherche scientifique et technique (CNRS - notice the apparent recent expansion of its title to include the indication of interest in technology matters) is in 1984 altering the organization of its bibliographic products. The basic Pascal data base is to be arranged into Pascal M and Pascal S. The former, described as "a multidisciplinary, coherent data base, covering the core of world scientific and technical literature", will subsume in excess of 300,000 references per year derived from over 4,000 journals (exhaustive coverage), 2,000 conference proceedings, 3,500 (French) theses, 2,500 reports and 1,000 books. Subjects included will be physics and chemistry, the life sciences (including psychology), applied sciences and technologies, earth sciences, and information science. (Excluded are certain fields - such as nuclear physics, aero-space technology, pure mathematics, and veterinary science.) CDST describes Pascal S, on the other hand, as "a set of sectorial data bases with an exhaustive tendency" in certain fields "where the scattering of sources necessitates more thorough treatment". Currently, Pascal S comprises eleven files, some of

which (e.g. earth sciences and information science) overlap with the more selective Pascal M data base. Those which do not overlap deal with energy, metallurgy, biotechnology, tropical medicine and oncology (CancerNet) among other areas. CDST's bibliographic print (and microform) publications (replacing the Bulletin Signalétique, and derived from the above-described Pascal M and Pascal S data bases) will fall into four categories. Pascal Sigma (produced primarily from Pascal M, and appearing ten times per annum) gives "an overall view of world scientific and technical production", and as such falls into three volumes: 1) the exact sciences and technology, 2) life sciences - fundamental and applied biology (including psychology), and 3) medical sciences. Pascal Thema (also issued ten times per year) offers exhaustive information in specific fields - i.e., those covered by the Pascal S data bases. Pascal Folio and Pascal Explore (likewise issued ten times per year) amount to SDI products, aimed at sixty-four distinct areas of interest. The difference between Folio and Explore seems slightly vague - except that the former consists only of offprints from Pascal Sigma and Thema, while the latter, drawn from Pascal M and S, caters to interest in eclectic fields and "emerging subjects, the limits of which very often go beyond the usual division of disciplines". For both the data bases themselves and the derivative print bibliographies, abstracts will be in French only - barring the exception of some also in English on a very selective basis (e.g. for biotechnology). Indexing terms and classification scheme are, however, bilingual French/English, and all (or at least almost all) titles not originally in English will be translated into that language.

Any further details on these matters, as well as on other current CDST activities, may be requested from: Division valorisation - Service promotion et commercialisation, CDST (CNRS), 26 rue Boyer, 75971 Paris Cédex 20, France; tel. (1) 358-3559, ext. 479; telex cnrsdoc 220 880 f.

The online version of the Pascal data base is currently accessible on both Télésystèmes-Questel and ESA-IRS. There has been some speculation whether it may not in fact be eventually withdrawn by CNRS from the latter.

A&I information

The Association of Research Libraries / National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services project in the USA and Canada to enrich the CONSER data base with indexing and abstracting indications, and in the process to expand that file, has received another boost in the form of a \$10,000 grant from the Xerox Foundation - raising the present funding total to more than \$240,000. Previous contributors are the Council on Library Resources, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the H.W. Wilson Foundation. Scheduling calls for project completion in April 1985, and a scheme for keeping the A&I information up-to-date has been agreed.

New legal information service

The European Legal Literature Information Service (ELLIS), a joint project of Europe Data in Maastricht, The Netherlands, and the European

Law Centre in London, is planned for world-wide availability in early 1985. The idea is to provide a multilingual information package on law and legislation in the European Community, in both online and print forms. Online access will be arranged initially through the European Law Centre's Eurolex service, and other electronic distribution channels are due to be considered. Financial support has come from the European Commission (Directorate General XIII).

Reaching out

Mead Data Central's Nexis online news data base is to be marketed in the United Kingdom by Butterworth (Telepublishing), thereby joining MDC's Lexis legal information service. Some of the Nexis offerings (e.g. the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, The Economist, and The Washington Post) will put it into direct competition with the recently developed Datasolve system (Datasolve being a subsidiary of Thorn-EMI), on the latter's home ground. Actual date of availability was not initially revealed.

Data bases

BLAISE-Line was to initiate, by the spring of this year, a pilot mounting of British Books in Print. Details from: The British Library, Bibliographic Services Division, Marketing Office, 2 Sheraton Street, London W1V 4BH, UK; tel. (01) 636-1544, ext. 242/284.

Among files recently added to DIALOG'S service are: Congressional Record Abstracts (file 135, coverage from 1981 onwards, updated weekly, produced by Capitol Services inc.), Federal Research in Progress - Abridged (file 265, from NTIS, semiannual reloads), Federal Research in Progress - Unabridged (file 266, including records from the United States Department of Energy, and available only to users within the USA), The Middle East: Abstracts and Index (file 248, from Northumberland Press, coverage from 1980 onwards, English-language source material only, updated quarterly), the Computer Database (file 275, coverage from 1983 onwards, bi-weekly updates, produced by Management Contents, mounted in December), Family Resources (file 291, coverage from 1970 onwards, monthly to biannual updates), Marquis Who's Who (file 234, coverage from 1982 onwards, quarterly updates), PTS Defense Markets & Technology (files 80 (open access) and 980 (restricted access), coverage from 1982 onwards, monthly updates, available since February), PsycAlert (file 140, weekly updates, containing new items destined for PsycInfo (file 11), available since February), Washington Post Index (file 184, coverage from 1979 onwards, updated monthly, produced by Research Publications inc., available since February), Drug Information Fulltext (file 229, updated quarterly, annual reloads, produced by the American Society of Hospital Pharmacists, available since March), ICC British Company Directory (file 561, weekly updates, reloaded quarterly, available since March), ICC British Company Financial Datasheets (file 562, weekly updates, reloaded quarterly, available since March). Significant reloads have been carried out on Sociological Abstracts (file 37, in December), World Aluminum Abstracts (file 33, in February), International Pharmaceutical Abstracts (file 74, in

February), Books in Print (file 470, in February), and PTS Prompt (file 16, in March). DIALOG has furthermore announced the imminent availability of file 133 (Standard & Poor's Corporate Descriptions), file 214 (Peterson's College Database), file 217 (Wiley Book Catalog), file 218 (Nursing and Allied Health Literature Index), file 264 (Facts on File), file 546 (the Media General Databank - company information), as well as (no file-numbers indicated) the full-text files Magazine ASAP and Trade and Industry ASAP, both from Information Access Company, and scheduled for May. Also, file 35 changes names from Comprehensive Dissertation Index to Dissertation Abstracts Online, with the addition of post-1979 abstracts in January.

The British full-text information retrieval service Datasolve, which presently offers online access to, for example, The Economist and the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, has plans to make available The Guardian and The Washington Post, and is reported to be negotiating similar arrangements with other dailies - such as The Times (of London) and The Financial Times. Datasolve may also in the near future put up the Association Press European Newswire.

Data-Star, owned by Radio Suisse, has arranged to distribute (starting in mid-1984) an online version of Martindale, from the Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain. Also newly available or coming up are Defense Markets & Technology (Predicasts), PAIS, Chemical Industry Notes, Chemical Engineering Abstracts (from the Royal Society of Chemistry), Sociological Abstracts, Superindex, and Hoppenstedt Netherlands. Data-Star has announced that its emphases in 1984 will be on European information and full-text files, and it has also begun to provide access and support services for BRS through its marketing staff. In the works, furthermore, is greater attention to the end-user market - including a low-rate nocturnal online service aimed at owners of personal computers.

The Martindale data base, mentioned above under Data-Star, is likewise to be available on BRS later in the year. Also planned are the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature, and Drug Information Fulltext. A recent addition is the National College Databank (file label: PETE). BRS has reloaded its TERM file (see original announcement in ISU vol. 3 no. 1/2, p. 81).

New data bases recently mounted or planned for near-term availability on ESA-IRS include Packabs (file 55, coverage from 1976 onwards, bi-monthly updates, produced by the International Food Information Service in cooperation with the Fraunhofer Institut für Lebensmitteltechnologie und Verpackung), BIIPAM (file 71, French-language, dealing with metallurgy and related engineering fields, coverage from 1970 onwards, monthly updates, produced by the Centre de recherches de Pont.A.Mousson), AFEE (file 73, French-language, on water research; coverage from 1970 onwards, monthly updates, produced by the Association française pour l'étude des eaux), Transdoc (file 74, on transport economics, coverage from 1970 onwards, monthly updates), Mathfile (file 80, coverage from 1973 onwards, monthly updates, produced by the American Mathematical Society), Amperedoc (file 81, on electrical energy / public utilities, coverage from 1983 onwards, monthly updates), and Robomatix (file 84, coverage from 1983 onwards, monthly updates, from EIC/Intelligence). Furthermore, this host will be offering transit access to Finsbury's Textline and Newswire (as file 21).

DIMDI has mounted the data base Meditec (biomedical technology).

FIZ Technik has also made Meditec available, and has plans to mount the following additional bibliographic files in 1984: EPA (European patents in mechanical engineering), Packaging Science and Technology Abstracts, DITR (technical rules in all subject areas), and Management Sciences. It also intends to offer a series of product/producer, or "purchase guide", data banks.

Pergamon InfoLine in London has announced its intention to add the following files to its service in 1984: Computerpat (digital data processing patents, USA - abstracts, bibliographic information, and controlled terms), Current Biotechnology Abstracts (from the Royal Society of Chemistry), HSELine (occupational health and safety), IBSEDEX (from the Building Services Research and Information Association), the Laboratory Hazards Bulletin (from the Royal Society of Chemistry), Pesticides (from the British Crop Protection Council and the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux), and PSA (Property Services Agency - dealing with the construction industry). Computerpat and HSELine were opened to access already in February. The host also plans to implement this year a "major reload" of the Chemical Abstracts (CA Search) data base on its system.

Télésystemes-Questel has indicated that it will be adding Janssen Pharmaceutica, and Ecothek, before the middle of this year.

INKA has added the data base FORIS (social sciences research projects in the German-speaking areas, coverage from 1973 onwards, biannual updates, produced by the Informationszentrum Sozialwissenschaften, Arbeitsgemeinschaft sozialwissenschaftlicher Institute). It is now also offering Business, a file dealing with international trade and business contacts, produced by Online GmbH in Heidelberg with support from the federal government of the FRG. This file was already accessible, from late last year, on Data-Star.

Eurolex/Datasolve is now offering the legal current-awareness file Newslaw.

Dow Jones News/Retrieval has added Words of Wall Street (a specialized dictionary) and Merrill Lynch Weekly Research Highlights.

The Universal Serials & Book Exchange (USBE) file (recently withdrawn from BRS) has been added to the UTLAS system in Canada. For going on two years now, USBE has been available via OCLC. (See ISU vol. 2 no. 1, p. 58.)

DRI has added IPPRC (International Public Policy Research Corporation) Political Events (brief news items, coverage from 1966 onwards, weekly updates).

Comuserve is making available Hazardline and Environmental Health News. These two files are produced by Occupational Health Services inc., which also offers online access to them.

NTIS will be distributing the World Transindex (information on available translations in scientific and technological fields) by way of a tape-leasing arrangement. The data base has already for some time been available online in Europe (on the ESA-IRS service).

The American offline information-retrieval service NRAC (National Research Application Center, formerly NERAC - New England Research Application Center) has now added Chemical Engineering Abstracts to its large collection of data bases. Other new files, including Defense Markets & Technology, are also going up.

Information on pipeline technology has been added to the BHRA Fluid Engineering Centre abstracts package, and will constitute a new sub-file of the Fluidex data base. The print equivalent, Pipelines Abstracts, is being published quarterly, beginning in January 1984.

Data bases withdrawn

MLA Bibliography	BRS
USBE	BRS
US Public Schools Directory	DIALOG
all files previously on	Samsom Data Systemen

The Austrian (and German, and Swiss) connection

Pergamon InfoLine is now represented in Austria by Manz-Info Datenvermittlungsg-GmbH. Bertelsmann Datenbanken has become the exclusive agent in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and in Austria for the business files held online by Data-Star. General representation in the FRG and Austria, as well as in Switzerland, for CAS Online, is now in the hands of the Fachinformationszentrum Chemie GmbH of Berlin.

Joining forces

As of March, Merrill Lynch and IBM have entered into a joint venture whereby they will distribute financial-market data for use with the IBM 3270 personal computer. The system involves extensive use of VDU windows, and should be implemented by the end of next year. This apparently means that Merrill Lynch's current data-supply arrangement with Quotron Systems will eventually be discontinued.

Newly connected

The domestic United Kingdom packet-switched PSS telecommunication network has established a connection with ESA-IRS's ESANET. PSS currently has roughly 2,000 users.

DP information

Data Courier, of Louisville, Kentucky, has published ABI/Selects: the Annotated Bibliography of Computer Periodicals, a work which it describes as "the first comprehensive directory of magazines and newsletters serving the computer and software industries". The book describes 533 publications, costs US\$50 (including shipping and handling within the continental USA), and may be ordered from Data Courier at 620 South

Fifth Street, Louisville, KY 40202, USA; tel. (502) 582-4111, or (800) 626-2823.

Digital disk exploitation

ISU has just learned that the huge electronics firm Philips, in The Netherlands, and Control Data Corporation, in the USA, will cooperate in establishing two companies - one in The Netherlands and one in the USA, and each called Optical Storage International - for the purpose of producing and marketing a digital optical recording system. Philips will hold a majority interest in each company, but marketing will be primarily the responsibility of Control Data. Production is scheduled to take place at a Philips plant in the United Kingdom. This development represents an amplification of previous cooperative activity between the two firms along the same line. Philips has also been working with Sony, on a compact digital disk development project (involving the new CDROM data-storage standard) - and of course some time ago agreed to cooperate with AT&T in the telecommunications area.

Broad appeal

It is reported that Telecom '83, the exhibition and forum held in Geneva last autumn, attracted in excess of 193,000 visitors. The theme which had been chosen for the event, "Telecommunications for Everyone", seems therefore to have been more or less justified as it turned out.

Tools of the trade

It has been announced that a new edition of the PRECIS Manual is scheduled for publication this spring. We shall supply further information when it becomes available. This will be the second edition - the first having appeared in 1974.

Now available from the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux (Farnham House, Farnham Royal, Slough SL2 3BN, UK; tel. (02814) 2281) are the first edition of the CAB Thesaurus (ca. 1,200 pages, in 2 vols.; £50 or US\$105 including postage), and the CAB Serials Checklist (£15 or US\$31.50) - which lists more than 10,000 serials titles.

You may order the PAIS Subject Headings List for US\$55 (\$45 for PAIS members) from the Public Affairs Information Service, 11 West 40th Street, New York, NY 10018, USA; tel. (212) 736-6629.

Kogan Page (120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK; tel. (01) 837-7891) will this spring publish a Dictionary of New Information Technology Acronyms (ISBN 0-85038-572-5; approximately 300 pages; £22.50). We haven't seen an advance copy, but it sounds like something the profession could really use. North American distribution will be handled by Gale Research Company of Detroit (Book Tower, Detroit, MI 48226, USA; tel. (313) 961-2242, or (800) 521-0707 - ISBN 0-8103-4309-6; US\$56).

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (contact: Subscription Department, 5161 River Road, Bethesda, MD 20816, USA; tel. (301) 951-1400, or (800) 638-8076) is offering the first edition of the Life Sciences Collection Thesaurus, at US\$55; and Periodicals Scanned and Abstracted, at US\$10.

Management Contents (2265 Carlson Drive, Suite 5000, Northbrook, IL 60062, USA; tel. (312) 564-1006, or (800) 323-5354) is offering the Computer Database Thesaurus & Dictionary for US\$120.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, Classifications and Patent Information Division, 34 chemin des Colombettes, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland) has had prepared, and is distributing, a bilingual (English/French), three-volume, loose-leaf Patent Information and Documentation Handbook. We are not as yet certain what the price will be. Contents deal with the guidelines and standards of the WIPO's permanent committee on patent information, the international patent classification, and other matters.

The tenth edition of the ERIC Thesaurus of Descriptors is now available from Oryx Press, 2214 North Central at Encanto, Phoenix, AZ 85004, USA, tel. (602) 254-6156; or, Clio Distribution Services, 55 St. Thomas Street, Oxford OX1 1JG, UK. The US dollar price is \$45, plus postage and handling.

The 1984 edition of the PTS User's Manual may be ordered at US\$35 from Predicasts, Online Services Department, 11001 Cedar Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44106, USA; tel. (216) 795-3000, or (800) 321-6388. Specific guides to searching PTS Prompt and PTS Defense Markets & Technology are also available, each at this same price, and from the same address.

For details concerning The Data Communications Source Book, or to purchase a copy (at US\$195), contact Information Systems Strategy Corporation, 21515 Hawthorne Boulevard, Suite 432, Torrance, CA 90503, USA; tel. (213) 543-5565.

Contact Alex Murphy, Data Base Marketing Manager, Inter-Company Comparisons, 81 City Road, London EC1Y 1BD, UK (tel. (01) 250-3922), to order a copy of the user manual for the ICC data base, at £15 (US\$35).

£20 or US\$35 will get you the 1983 Metadex User Guide, from Metals Information, American Society for Metals, Metals Park, OH 44073, USA; tel. (216) 338-5151.

The first edition of a user guide to Information Science Abstracts is available from IFI/Plenum Data Company, 3202 Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, DE 19808, USA; tel. (302) 998-0478. It costs US\$10.

The 21st edition of the API Thesaurus is now available from the American Petroleum Institute, Central Abstracting and Indexing Service, 156 William Street, New York, NY 10038, USA; tel. (212) 587-9660. (Note: the news release which we received from API does not state a price for the thesaurus, but at circa 300 pages (and on other grounds) it would seem unlikely to be free of charge.)

The Laborlaw User's Manual is available from the Bureau of National Affairs, 1231 25th Street NW, Washington, DC 20037, USA; tel. (301) 258-1033. The price is US\$40.

Northumberland Press (1717 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15219, USA; tel. (412) 281-6179) has made available a Thesaurus of Indexing Terms in connection with its data base The Middle East: Abstracts and Index. Price: US\$5.

A Videotex/Teletext Bibliography is available from the Videotex Industry Association (1901 North Fort Meyer Drive, Suite 200, Rosslyn, VA 22209, USA; tel. (802) 522-0883) for US\$25 pre-paid.

Software switch

The Danish DIANE online host Datacentralen will by this spring have completed a changeover from STAIRS to the (STAIRS-based) BRS/Search software, and will have implemented, as well, the European common command language (CCL).

Tape services

The R.R. Bowker Company has announced that it is launching, through its electronic publishing division, "a cost-efficient method of acquiring, on magnetic tape, full or partial databases containing information drawn from Bowker's wide range of automated directories" - including Industrial Research Laboratories of the US, Who's Who in American Politics, the Standard Address Number files, Publishers, Distributors, and Wholesalers of the US, and other products not now online, as well as its current online files (Books in Print, Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory, American Men and Women of Science). This offering goes under the name "Database Services". Information supplied by Bowker suggests that the tapes may be either leased or purchased. Further details from: R.R. Bowker Co., 205 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017, USA; tel. (212) 916-1758 (Debra K. Brown), or 916-1772 (Richard Hildebrand).

The new order

CAS Online has announced that as of usage from the beginning of 1984 all European users of its service will receive (from Karlsruhe) invoices expressed in German marks. This is in connection with the new STN International arrangement (see our December issue, pages 343-345), but does not at this point apply to searchers served by the UK Royal Society of Chemistry. Also, certain special lower rates for subscribers to Chemical Abstracts have been implemented. Further information from: CAS, Online Services Department, P.O.Box 3012, Columbus, OH 43210, USA; or, from your regional representative.

Attention UK end-users

DIALOG Information Services has announced that its low-cost, off-peak-hours Knowledge Index online service is to become available in the United Kingdom. For details, contact DIALOG's representative in the UK:

Learned Information, P.O. Box 8, Abingdon, Oxford OX13 6EG; tel. (0865) 730969; telex 837 704 inform g.

Getting together

A GeoRef user group has been established in the USA, under the chairmanship of Nancy J. Pruett, 3144 Technical Library, Sandia National Laboratories, P.O.Box 5800, Albuquerque, NM 87185, USA; tel. (505) 844-6430. Membership is through the Geoscience Information Society (c/o American Geological Institute, 4220 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302; tel. (703) 379-2480).

Library automation

CLSI (i.e. CL Systems inc., 81 Norwood Avenue, Newtonville, MA 02160, USA) has established in the UK (at 46-47 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG) a wholly owned subsidiary under the name Computer Library Services International Ltd. CLSI has been in the library automation business for thirteen years, and claims to have installed over 600 systems at libraries in the USA, Canada, Europe and Australia. It has, furthermore, recently entered into a "joint marketing arrangement" with UTLAS (University of Toronto Library Automation Systems). A UTLAS news release states that this cooperation will potentially lead to "fully integrated solutions to all the major automation requirements of libraries". The two organizations intend also to develop "several new products which will facilitate, without duplication of effort, the integration of the centralized and local automation approaches for libraries". The news release claims that this agreement "brings together for the first time the two major areas of library automation, i.e., the centralized utility and the local system supplier" (have they not yet heard of the OCLC LS/2000 system, which seems in fact to have beat them to this particular punch? - see ISU vol. 3 no. 4, p. 208-209, and vol. 3 no. 6, p. 336-337).

The OCLC acquisition of Avatar Systems, which had been in the works for some time (see our August 1983 issue, under the heading "OCLC enhances", p. 208), was finalized at the end of the year, and Avatar - renamed "OCLC Washington" - operations will come under the responsibility of OCLC's senior vice president for marketing and field services, Kenneth C. Harris. OCLC has also now redesignated its model 300 terminal (a special version of the IBM PC - see the same issue of ISU, p. 207-208) as the "M300 workstation". OCLC's operating revenues for the financial year 1982/83 amounted to US\$47.8 million, an increase of 24% over the previous year.

IT's News

This is the clever title ("IT" standing, naturally enough, for "information technology" - an acronym which enjoys greater currency in the United Kingdom than elsewhere) of the newsletter of the Library Association Information Technology group ("LAIT", in the UK), the inaugural issue of which is labeled December 1983. Editor: Janet Waugh. ISSN:

0265-5551. Frequency: irregular. The newsletter goes out free to group members; any other inquiries should be addressed to Ms. Waugh at the Bibliographic Services Division, British Library, 2 Sheraton Street, London W1V 4BH, UK. This first issue contains two reports on meetings of domestic interest, a brief description of the UK Videotex Industry Association, and a list of certain upcoming events in the UK. LAIT dates back to the end of 1982 (cf. ISU vol. 3 no. 1/2, p. 79-80), and now counts more than 500 members.

Engineering Information restructuring steps

EI board chairman Martha E. Williams and president Herb Landau have announced the new structure as containing five divisions. Planning and product development is to be headed by Mary C. Berger, administration and finance will be in the charge of Beverly Stripling, data base production will operate under Gloria Moline, marketing reports to Geoff Worton, while the computer services unit will temporarily report to president Landau while recruiting activities are conducted.

Role definition

The Library and Information Technology Association - a division of the American Library Association - has released, through its long-range-plan implementation committee, the first draft of a LITA function statement, and invited comment from members. The text is as follows:

The Library and Information Technology Association shall concern itself with the planning, development, design, application and integration of technologies within the library and information sciences environment; with the impact of emerging technologies on library service; and with the human effect of automated technologies on users. Its focus shall be on inter-disciplinary topics such as telecommunications and systems integration rather than on specific task applications, with the intent that appropriate activity-oriented ALA divisions will subsume new technological applications as they become incorporated into the field. Within this area, LITA shall foster research, promote the development of appropriate standards, disseminate information, and provide a forum for the discussion of common concerns. Goals for LITA are:

1. Monitor new technologies with potential applications in information sciences.
2. Develop models of future library automation use.
3. Look at human effects of automation on users.
4. Facilitate attempts by members to get grants for research.
5. Become the experts on non-application issues such as telecommunications and systems integration.

The matter is to be followed up at the ALA Annual Conference on 23-28 June 1984 in Dallas, Texas. The old function statement appears on page 97 of the ALA Handbook of Organization, 1983/1984 edition.

People

British Library: the position of chief executive will pass from Sir Harry Hookway to Kenneth R. Cooper (who comes from the National Federation of Building Trades Employers) at the beginning of September this year. Sir Harry was the first person to hold this title, having taken office in 1973 when the library was formed. In other recent developments at the BL, Tony McSean has become head of the marketing and support group in the Bibliographic Services Division, and Dr. Andrew Buxton has left BLAISE (which falls under the Bibliographic Services Division) to become lecturer in information systems at University College London.

SDC Information Services has a new general manager, in the person of Cynthia Hull.

Derwent Publications has created a marketing division specifically to support its online information services, and its director (from 1 March 1984) is Jeremy Sergeant - who had been general manager of the Derwent-SDC Search Service, and will retain also that position until the Search Service is dissolved on 1 October.

Meanwhile, Derwent's founder, chairman and managing director, Montagu (Monty) Hyams, has been selected as 1984 recipient of the Skolnik award of the Division of Chemical Information, American Chemical Society. It will be bestowed in August of this year at the ACS national meeting in Philadelphia.

Betty A. Davis has apparently decided to terminate, in the course of this year, her employment with Pergamon International Information Corporation, where she became vice president for marketing in late 1982. She had formerly been marketing manager at DIALOG.

Harold M. Schoolman MD has been appointed acting director of the U.S. National Library of Medicine, replacing longtime NLM director Martin M. Cummings.

Changes at BioSciences Information Service (BIOSIS): Nancy Vaupel, head of the user services department (and former UK manager for SDC) has departed to become director of information and communications at the new Institute on Robotics located at Ann Arbor, Michigan; taking Ms. Vaupel's place is Edith Crockett, formerly product development section chief (and previously SDC manager in France); Ann Marie Cunningham comes from the Institute for Scientific Information (where she was manager, education and training) to BIOSIS as Ms. Crockett's replacement; now user communications section chief is Hyder Ali Zahed.

Changes at OCLC: Richard S. Dick, previously executive vice president of Avatar Systems, has become OCLC director of local systems and micro-computer applications, after OCLC's takeover of Avatar (see above); W. David Penniman, vice president for planning and research (and previously with Battelle Columbus Laboratories) has left in order to become director of libraries and information systems at AT&T Bell Laboratories; the local systems division has a new director in the person of Phyllis Bova Spies, this representing an internal reassignment; the appointment of Michael McGill as director for technical planning was noted in our previous issue. Now chairman of the board of trustees (succeeding Miriam A. Drake) is Russell Shank, director of libraries at UCLA.

Changes at the Library of Congress: replacing Joseph H. Howard (now director of the National Agricultural Library) as assistant Librarian for processing services is Henriette D. Avram, formerly head of the LC network development office; new chief of the shared cataloguing division is Dorothy Gregor - coming from the University of California at Berkeley where she was in charge of library technical services.

Changes at ALA: Julie Carroll Virgo has resigned as executive director of the Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, effective 30 June, and a search for her successor is underway; Ruth Frame has retired as ALA deputy executive director; Sandy Lieb is now the public information officer at ALA.

New arrangements at Chemical Abstracts Service: responsible (as assistant marketing director) for STN International - Ann B. Messmore; manager for market and business development - Newell E. Gilmour; manager for marketing communications - Richard T. Kaser.

New faces at SLA: Ellen Gerber has taken over responsibilities in the area of professional development at the Special Libraries Association in the USA, and Chris Ikehara has joined on as manager of information resources.

Marketing of the BRS/Search software is to be overall responsibility of Richard C. Simon, formerly with Battelle in Washington, DC.

Martin Hensel and Robert B. Nelson, both previously of LaserData inc. (the former as president, and the latter as vice president - marketing), have formed a partnership called Hensel-Nelson. Located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, this organization intends to do consulting work, apparently in the area of electronic information storage and distribution systems.

Andrew H. Uszak has become head of the new electronic publishing division of the R.R. Bowker Company. Uszak had been senior vice president of the data services division at Bowker.

Replacing Alice D. Ball (see *ISU* vol. 3 no. 4, p. 212) as executive director of the Universal Serials and Book Exchange in the USA is Mary W. Ghikas, formerly with the Chicago Public Library.

Sherry Jespersen has become ASLIB's professional development group manager; the new information and consultancy group manager is Feona Hamilton.

J.R. de Groot has retired as librarian of the University of Leiden.

Rumors

A joint venture is in the works between BRS and CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System), for marketing purposes in connection with BRS's "Colleague" services.

International Thomson Organisation (parent of the European Law Centre) is attempting to acquire the Bureau of National Affairs.

The Harfax Industry Data Sources data base (owned by Harper & Row) is up for sale.

Trends

At last?

Is the predicted shakedown among European online information services finally beginning to occur? The withdrawal of Samsom Data Systemen and the phasing out of Derwent-SDC may lead one to think so. (See the pertinent items in the news section above.) But don't expect any miracles. The Samsom files may be transferred to another, nascent Dutch host. Furthermore, new entries on the pan-European scene are in evidence. One of these is Helecon (Helsinki School of Economics Library: currently offering five data bases in management/economics/business, three of these produced entirely by the school itself, and accessible seven days a week, twenty-four hours a day), now that Finland is connected with Euronet.

Top this one if you can

You know all about annual and quarterly reloads, monthly updating and even weekly and daily updating to online data bases. But now The Source has a full-text file, called Bizdate, which is updated with edited items by staff employees, on the average, every eleven and a half minutes.

Where will this end?

For quite some while now there has been a movement afoot to do something about ASIS. In this case, we are talking about the name (and acronym), more than about the organization (American Society for Information Science) itself. Leaving aside any discussion of the long-standing pun on the current label (i.e., putting the stress on the second syllable: "as is" - status quo), some members genuinely feel that the name doesn't sufficiently reflect the range of present interests among them, and have pushed for such a designation as American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIST). This suggestion came up for discussion (again) at the last annual meeting. Now we note that at a recent board meeting, as reported in ASIS News for February, the name International Society for Information Science and Technology (InSIST) was put forward (insistently?). Those who go back a way will know that the current name is not the original one (the organization was founded in 1937 as the American Documentation Institute) and perhaps therefore believe that another updating might not be out of order. (It is probably at any rate at this time not advisable to exchange "American" for "International".) Acronyms, however, tend to take on lives of their own, and eventually perhaps a compromise will emerge (as it did recently at ASLIB).

Milestone

The Research Libraries Group (RLG) has announced that on 23 January the Yale University Library entered into its information network (RLIN)

data base a cataloguing record for a collection of protest movement material - thereby putting into operation the RLIN manuscript/archives cataloguing facility. Kathy Morton, Yale's head librarian for manuscripts and archives, indicated that this is "a breakthrough for scholars and the archival community. Online access to information on manuscripts and archives", she said, "is now a reality." The new RLIN feature resulted from cooperation between RLG and the Society of American Archivists, under private and US government funding. The RLIN data base now contains approximately fourteen million records, covering also books, periodicals, maps, musical scores, films and sound recordings. Further information: Barbara Brown, Associate Director, Program Coordination, RLG inc., Jordan Quadrangle, Stanford, CA 94305, USA; tel. (415) 328-0920. RLG is now ten years old, and has forty-nine members.

Irresistible force

EMMS is still EMMS, but with a slight change. The "twice monthly" (twenty-four issues per annum) newsletter published by International Resource Development inc. (IRD), formerly subtitled Electronic Mail & Message Systems, has from 2 January 1984 (vol. 8 no. 1) become Electronic Mail & Micro Systems. EMMS has stated that the publication "has been blown by the same revolutionary winds that have so completely upended the corporate computer market"; microcomputer use in connection with electronic communication is becoming the order of the day. (As EMMS puts it, "users want more bang for their buck, more utility for their dollar, and they're getting it.") EMMS, by the way, is an excellent publication, and can be recommended to those who need to keep up to date on movements in its area of coverage. It does, however, have a strongly North American slant. Like IRD's special reports, it doesn't come cheap: US\$275 per year USA and Canada, US\$315 elsewhere by air (the price went up by 17% (21% overseas) this year - what EMMS described as a "modest" increase). Editor is Stephen A. Caswell. Orders: EMMS, 30 High Street, Norwalk, CT 06851, USA; tel. (203) 866-6914.

Comments

Edging into the twentieth century

Apparently the nation of Albania has now begun to think about setting up a national scientific documentation center. It has accepted United Nations Development Program help for the project, partially in the form last year of a UNDP-sponsored mission by a consultant from France.

Downloading and information provision

Informed opinion is still divided as to whether downloading is now a 'non-issue', a burning issue, a problem whose time will soon come, a

threat to the economic health of electronic information providers (and therefore ultimately to the available information supply to users), an opportunity for new market development and exploitation by these providers, and so on. In other words, almost everyone appears to have his own view of the significance of the phenomenon. One point, however, on which there has been rather broad agreement was that users of online data-base services were inclined to abide by legal/authorized downloading mechanisms - on the condition that these are made clear to them, are easy to understand and to follow, and involve simple accounting and remuneration schemes. Now this assumption is called into question by an as yet little-publicized element in the findings of the multi-client study conducted recently by Cuadra Associates of Santa Monica, California. It seems that more than three quarters of those now downloading are doing so without even inquiring about permission. This figure becomes even more impressive when one notices the Cuadra estimate of the near-term penetration level of downloading capability. Certainly, searchers have uppermost in their minds their own convenience for satisfying present information needs (either their own or in the case of intermediaries those of their clients), tempered by a natural desire not to get into any trouble as a result of their actions. The tremendous flexibility of computer information stores, in combination with local processing power, constitute a considerable temptation to do whatever you can with the stored and retrieved data within the bounds of technological capability. Fair dealing by information consumers, fair claim to return on investment by those who compile and make accessible information collections, copyright protection - it is interesting to discuss these concepts, but such discussion won't lead to a resolution of downloading disagreements. Clear contractual agreements, duly signed, are the best short-term solution. But at least in the scientific and technical areas - and in all areas when secondary or "tertiary", reference information is involved - a fundamental rethinking on the economics of information transfer has to take place. Existing and imminent technology dictates this course, and we must follow it (some information providers are already hesitantly doing so). Users want, and are ready to pay for, information products oriented to their perceived needs. They want to define these products, and they are willing to create them (through downloading and manipulation, for example) for themselves. What they can not do is to assemble the basic compilations (can we call them "proto-products"?) from which such targeted products may be derived. 'Information providers' must take care of this job, and be paid for it in some way. They can then also undertake to create the particular products which the market wants, in the appropriate forms, or leave this task for the users under some controlled arrangement. One conclusion which seems to emerge is that users perhaps will have to continue to bear some cost for making generally accessible information which they may never want to use - just as in the case of printed products to which they subscribed and for which they paid (in advance) - though it may no longer be taking up shelf space in their libraries. (They may, however, have it locally accessible on optical disks.) "Useless" information can never be entirely weeded out, certainly not at the compilation stage, and in fact can't even be objectively defined. Paying only for the information you use will never become a reality, even after downloading has genuinely become a non-issue.

Pricing

It may be an unwarranted impression, but it does seem that the professional press has recently become keener than ever to follow carefully the developments in pricing of online data-base access. Not just the noteworthy news of alterations in the pricing structures at Mead Data Central and SDC, but even the routine new-year price rises (and a few decreases) across a great spectrum of files on various spinners. ISU does not wish to add to the verbiage, but notes that the Gesellschaft für Information und Dokumentation (GID) has now started a loose-leaf updating publication dealing with prices for online retrieval (and other services) from circa 1,000 files on seventy-five services in Europe, North America and Japan, which it is offering for subscription purchase (DM120 in the first year) as part of its "Quo Vadis" service. For more information, contact: GID, Zentralbereich Ergebnistransfer, Lyoner Strasse 44-48, 6000 Frankfurt a.M. 71, FRG; tel. (0611) 6687424.

Sensitivity

Noting a recent decision by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) "to contract out its library and computer operations to Aspen Systems, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of the American division of a Holland-based firm" [i.e., Wolters Samsom], a front-page item in the February 1984 issue of the SpecialList - the newsletter of the Special Libraries Association in the USA - states that this move, in addition to other infelicities, "also raises some concern about foreign business roles in the United States", and suggests that such commercial-sector arrangements are hazardous in view of the "sensitive nature" of some of the information involved.

Cross-ideological imperative

The USSR has joined the ranks of those who are entering upon crash programs in research and development in data-processing technology. The new division for data processing, computer technology and automation which had earlier been proposed within the context of the Soviet Academy of Sciences (see ISU 2(6), December 1982, p. 341), has now been set up. One of its tasks is the development of a 'strategic conception concerning basic research' in this area. One of the objectives of the overall program is "a solution of the problem of artificial intelligence". Also involved are human factors research, videodisk technology, 'fifth-generation' machines and 'knowledge bases', as well as natural-language input and output, and consideration of the socio-economic aspects of information technology. The Soviet Union intends furthermore to create an automated network linking together the information centers of various economic and scientific installations, together with document-reproduction and document-delivery facilities. This is all taking place as the result of a charge by the central committee of the communist party of the USSR to the Academy of Sciences to develop a long-term strategy - in connection with an estimate that by the year 2000, almost half of all jobs will reside in the key sectors of electronics and information technology. (Sound familiar?) The Soviet

Academy of Sciences has now decided in principle, incidentally, to pursue a policy of self-sufficiency and independence in regard to secondary STI services.

Information transfer efficiency

Meanwhile, back in the capitalist west, it appears that there still exist some fundamental problems with our information supply mechanisms. A professor from Erlangen in the FRG is reported to have recently stated that three quarters of all medical information is superfluous. Some of this is in fact either incorrect or of unacceptable scientific standard. So far as the corporate world is concerned, a Battelle researcher has claimed that "there exists a puzzling imbalance between the financial and technological information available to management. The average upper-level corporate executive is deluged with information on finance, sales, and production performance, but receives virtually no objective information on the firm's technological health." Part of the solution lies in a more effective use of patent data, according to a certain R.S. Campbell. (Sources: Nachrichten für Dokumentation 35(1), February 1984, p. 65; British Library (Reference Division), Science Reference Library, SRL News no. 29, December 1983, Industrial Property News, p. 14-15.)

Paradox

ASLIB: The Association for Information Management (formerly "The Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux", and then just "ASLIB") has this year begun to issue a monthly Current Awareness Bulletin, a separate publication evolving from the corresponding section of the old version of its ASLIB Information (which continues, in a revised style). The bulletin's subtitle is "A review of information management literature". The arrangement of references follows a classification scheme, but this scheme strangely enough allocates to the rubric "Information management" (one of a total of more than fifty rubrics) the status of a subcategory, under "Information systems and services" (one of twelve information-related major categories). In the inaugural issue of the bulletin, out of many hundreds of citations, only three (to journal articles from mid-1983) are ranged under the rubric "Information management".

The French have a word (or two) for it

It is refreshing and reassuring that our Gallic colleagues have indeed, it seems, come up with their own alternate designations for the phenomenon commonly known as "downloading": "téléchargement", and "téléprélèvement". The latter is an especially nice choice (which we hope prevails over the former), even though Fowler would surely have characterized both as 'barbarisms' (a charge which can not be laid against the English term).

Shakedown and Ratchetting below the Creep Range

No joking, this is the title of a recent publication (EUR8702EN) announced in the January 1984 issue of the Information Market newsletter of DG XIII A of the European Commission. For Belgian francs 600, payable to the European Communities Office for Official Publications in Luxembourg, you can acquire the 208-page full text behind this intriguing title. (Note: if you aren't a metallurgist, you may however be in for a slight disappointment.)



This is the logo which was adopted for the third national conference of the Association of College and Research Libraries (a division of the American Library Association) held early this month in Seattle, under the theme "Academic libraries: myths & realities". The representation pertains to a Nootka Indian legend of "Woodpecker and the Thunderbirds", and depicts a thunderbird latching onto a 'mock whale'.