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Hopkinson, Alan (2004) CDS/ISIS information [2004]. Information Development, 20 (4) . pp. 239-241. ISSN 0266-6669 [Article] (doi:10.1177/0266666904049422)

Draft pre-submission version (with author's formatting)

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CDS/ISIS INFORMATION

Alan Hopkinson

This column is a regular feature about the CDS/ISIS software package running under MS/DOS or Microsoft Windows on IBM Personal Computers and compatibles. Readers who have any comments, queries, suggestions, hints or advice on the use of the package are asked to send them direct to:

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WEBLIS

A new Integrated Library System based on CDS/ISIS, is available free of charge from UNESCO and the Institute for Computer and Information Engineering (according to a UNESCO press release of 13 August 2004).

The results of the IFLA/FAIFE survey discussed in the World Report 2003 have once again disclosed the huge gaps and differences between the regions of the world – between the information have and the information have-nots. There is a long way to go before countries, their libraries and their staff are suitably equipped and properly trained to meet the challenge of safeguarding their clients' full participation in the information and knowledge society. With regards to Internet access, the most significant problems as defined by the contributing countries are a lack of computers with Internet access, financial barriers, and training of users and staff. (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2003)

In this same spirit, UNESCO intends to respond to a large demand from national and local libraries to help them in approaching and using library automation tools. WEBLIS is a Web-based Library Integrated System based on CDS/ISIS. The system has been developed by the Institute for Computer and Infor-

mation Engineering (ICIE), Poland, based on their experience in building library systems for international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and German Technical Cooperation (GTZ). WEBLIS runs through the WWW-ISIS engine, also developed by ICIE. This achievement is also part of the efforts of UNESCO's Communication and Information Sector to encourage Free and Open Source Software (FOSS).

These tools are currently distributed by UNESCO free of charge (see http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=16841&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1094387684). It is intended that the freeware WWW-ISIS engine will be distributed as Open Source software.

UNESCO's CDS/ISIS is one of the most widely used information retrieval software packages. Beside the main software, CDS/ISIS for Windows, a number of tools are available from UNESCO or other parties in many different languages. In 2004 by mid-August, the UNESCO Secretariat in Paris had satisfied more than 3000 requests.

The current version of WEBLIS, available in English, consists of the following modules:

- cataloguing system: books, papers from books, papers from journals, journals, miscellaneous - slides, photos, audio, video, etc.
- OPAC (online public access catalogue): basic and advanced search, history, saving queries function, and ISIS Query language facilities, thesaurus-based search
- loan module: holds, reserves, loans renewals, automatic claiming by e-mail or a traditional mail in document form, 'urgent' lists
- statistical module: the generation of statistical data aggregated from the CDS/ISIS databases.

WEBLIS is a freeware package, implemented on WWW-ISIS as a platform. Its functionality and user interface is coded in HTML, print formatting language, definition files and HTTP files. If you upgrade the system by changing any of those files and would like to add your contribution to the system, you are invited to contact UNESCO.

ISISASCII 0.95 RELEASED

A new version of IsisASCII has been released and is available on UNESCO's website. This is a tool for importing ASCII delimited and tagged files into a CDS/ISIS database. This version, 0.95, includes bug-fixes and a new setup software.

CDS/ISIS 1.5 FOR WINDOWS REFERENCE MANUAL

A new English version of the *CDS/ISIS Reference Manual* has been made available on the UNESCO website.

CONFUSION ABOUT THE USE OF \$ IN ISIS

Eustache Megnigbet of Cotonou, République du Bénin reminds us that the \$ sign plays two roles in CDS/ISIS search expressions.

1. It is used in right-truncated search terms: you enter the root of the term then the \$ sign. You must enter the sign directly from your keyboard. This may be called the truncation sign.
2. It is used as an operator in search expression and is called a proximity operator. In this case, it makes restriction of the search to a field or occurrence and gives the maximum number of words between the search terms it separates. In this case, you can select it from the operator's panel provide by the CDS/ISIS for Windows search interface: CDS/ISIS automatically puts a space after and before the operator.

There are a number of such operators known as field level and proximity search operators. These operators are more restrictive types of the logical AND operator and are particularly useful for natural language searching. The field level and proximity search operators are:

- (G) same field (all occurrences of a repeatable field are treated as a single entity), for example: *water (G) soil* will retrieve all records with both water and soil provided that they occur in the same field.
- (F) same field or individual occurrence of a repeatable field; for example: *water (F) soil* will retrieve all records with both water and soil in the same field or the same occurrence of a repeatable field. ((G) and (F) are equivalent when applied to non-repeatable fields).
- . (full stop) is the same as (F), but with the additional restriction that the terms are no more

than n words apart, where n is the number of periods plus one. For example:

water . soil = adjacent

water . . soil = at most one word between water and soil

water . . . soil = at most two words between water and soil.

\$ is the same as (F), but with the additional restriction that the terms must be exactly n words apart, where n is the number of dollar signs plus one. For example:

water \$ soil = adjacent

water \$ \$ soil = exactly one word between water and soil

water \$ \$ \$ soil = exactly two words between water and soil.

Note that the operators . and \$ must be preceded and followed by one space. If an operator is not preceded by a space it would be seen as a truncation sign.

BOOK JACKETS IN CDS/ISIS

Liliana Maria Melgar Estrada of the Centro de Documentación en Cine y Arte of the Centro Colombo Americano-Medellín has contributed this item. The International Bureau of Education's HIV/AIDS Image Bank includes illustrations of book jackets. You can see this at: <http://databases.unesco.org/ibe/aidpice/>. You can create a similar feature in a bibliographic database in CDS/ISIS for Windows and display the images. You can do this either by creating a hyperlink to the image or show it directly in the record. Let us suppose you place the filename of the image in field 956^u. To show it in the record include the command in the PFT '\chpict' v956^u. Or if you want to link: Link (('Click to see the book-jacket'),'OPENFILE 'v956^u).

The file to be displayed must be in a folder identified to the system by being named in parameter 141 of SYSPAR.PAR. If the files are in the folder c:\images, then SYSPAR.PAR will contain the line 141=c:\images.

CDS/ISIS AND FOLDER NAMES

CDS/ISIS cannot access folder names with more than 8 digits. Depending on the operating system you will not see the name at all or you may see the compacted folder name (e.g. progr~1 in place of Program_files).

To be on the safe side, ensure that all folders used in connection with CDS/ISIS have names of 8 characters or less.

CDS/ISIS FOR WINDOWS ARABIZED

The Arabic version of CDS/ISIS 1.5 for Windows, jointly developed by UNESCO and the League of Arab States, Department of Information and Library, is now available. It can be requested from UNESCO's website at <http://www.unesco.org/webworld/isis>.

The new Arabic version of Winisis 1.5 runs on Windows XP and Windows 2000 and the Unicode Bidirectional Algorithm has been implemented resulting in a much improved software package. The software comes in three languages, English, Arabic

(Egyptian) and French. It contains as well a sample database in Arabic and English.

Every aspect of the normal user interface is reversed Right to Left when the software is started up in the Arabic language. A special feature allows the switch from right-to-left to left-to-right.

The Arabic version, available free of charge, can be requested through an online form in roman languages or in Arabic on the CDS/ISIS for Windows page (http://portal.unesco.org/ci/ev.php?URL_ID=5330&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201&reload=1094387446).

This work has been made possible thanks to the joint initiative of UNESCO and the League of Arab States Department of Information and Library in order to better serve Arab speaking countries.

Proof Only