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Future indexing developments in World 1

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What is WORLD 1?

WORLD 1 is the Australian business name for a new system being developed by the national libraries of Australia and New Zealand, to replace the existing ABN, Ozline, NZBN and Kiwinet services. The development project is known by the name NDIS (National Document and Information System). The National Library of New Zealand is expected to announce in the near future the name under which the service will operate in New Zealand. The project is based in Canberra, with computer company CSC undertaking the development.

WORLD 1 will provide access to information both within and external to the national databases, and to documents of all kinds, not just cataloguing and indexing records. In some cases full text documents and images of documents will be included in WORLD 1, and gateways provided to other services.

Features of WORLD 1

Unlike the current ABN and Ozline services, which offer only single-database searching, WORLD 1 will offer users a choice of single database or cross-database searching, including combinations of cataloguing and indexing records in a single logical view of the database. It will be possible, for example, to search an education topic in APAIS, plus the Australian Education Index, or in a "database" consisting of the relevant index databases as well as cataloguing records in that subject area. A single result set will be provided, containing records from all sources searched.

Gateways will be provided to other information sources, allowing users to access overseas databases and retrieve records and information. In addition, it is planned to mount some large overseas databases in the WORLD 1 system during phase two of the project.

Searching in WORLD 1

The search facilities of WORLD 1 will offer powerful and friendly searching, with a single search system for all users. The users will be able to choose a search level appropriate to their level of expertise, or opt for command language searching. Much attention is being given to the development of appropriate online assistance.

The index databases

At the National Library of Australia we produce two index databases. In each case the process of preparing the indexes includes selection of articles from journals, newspapers and monographs, analysis of content, assignment of subject headings from appropriate thesauri, and the assignment of other access points (such as name headings or additional subject terms). In one case the indexer is also required to write an abstract for the item if there is no abstract in the original item.

APAIS (Australian Public Affairs Information Service) is one of Australia's oldest indexing services, having been in operation since 1945. Items for indexing cover the broad areas of social sciences and humanities, and a total of 11,500 items per annum are indexed. The Library maintains the APAIS Thesaurus, for use with this index. APAIS appears in print (monthly issues January-November, and an annual cumulation), online (the online database

covers 1978 to present) and as one of the databases on the CD-ROM AUSTROM, published by RMIT in cooperation with the Library.

AMI (Australasian Medical Index) was started in 1985 and indexes the Australian journal and conference literature in health and medicine. Approximately 5,000 items per year are indexed, and appear in the online database and on the CD-ROM HealthROM, from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services. The Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) thesaurus from the US National Library of Medicine is used as the thesaurus for this product.

At the present time both indexes are prepared using very old systems, without the capacity to load data other than via direct online entry. In the case of APAIS, there is no capacity for data validation or data correction after loading.

Indexing in WORLD 1

Although work has yet to begin on development of phase two of NDIS, which incorporates indexing, planning is well advanced, and the required functions were specified in the original Request for Tender. WORLD 1 will allow indexers to either work online to add new records immediately to the database, or offline, with upline loading or submission of files of record on disk. For those choosing to work online, as we will at the National Library, there will be workforms with Windows features, pull down menus and pick lists, the ability to cut and paste, and the setting up of links between indexing records and between index and catalogue records. Global changes of data, and online validation of records will be available to aid in rapid loading and maintenance of data.

Authority control will be enhanced, with both MeSH and the APAIS Thesaurus online to be used in data validation and selection of terms. Other authority files, such as lists of journals and names, will also be available for online use. In time it is hoped thesauri for other Ozline databases could also be made available online, as an aid to both indexing and searching.

Data Links

It will be possible to set up a number of links between records. It is advantageous to link journal article records to the national bibliographic database serial records to allow users to locate holdings of desired items. Links to authority records will make it possible to use the various authority files to enhance search retrieval and allow for automatic updating of records as thesaurus terms are updated or amended over time.

Since the start of 1995, most articles indexed for APAIS have been captured as images, and these will be made available online, linked to the corresponding citation. Negotiations with the Copyright Agency Limited have been underway for some time to resolve issues of copyright fees and payment of royalties. An independent company, SilverStream, is making those images available as a set on CD-ROM. A similar project has commenced to image articles indexed for the Australasian Medical Index.

WORLD 1 will also provide for the first time an ability to make modifications to the publication process, to improve the appearance of the printed publication, and offer users a facility for on-demand tailored bibliographic products. Users may wish to opt to produce their own regular bibliographies using a variety of indexing and cataloguing records in a format and output medium which is suited to their requirements.

When will WORLD 1 be available?

At the time of writing the implementation of Phase 1 had been delayed by some difficulties with a third-party software component. Work on other functionality within WORLD 1 has continued, and the system is expected to be launched in early 1997. Phase 2, with indexing and cataloguing functions, is to be available in late 1997.

Further information on WORLD 1

There is an internet WORLD 1 discussion list, which is open to any interested persons.

To join the list, send a message to

listproc@nla.gov.au

with no subject line and 'subscribe world-1 firstname lastname' (without the quote marks) in the body of the message.

A newsletter, WORLD 1 connections , is available on application to

The Editor, WORLD 1 Connections,
Services to Libraries Division (Box 9),
National Library of Australia, Canberra ACT 2600.

Enquiries about WORLD 1 can be directed to the Help Desk at the National Library (toll free 1800 026 155) or email market@nla.gov.au

Web Bibliography

ABN (Australian Bibliographic Network)