Access to Indexing 2: Output options. Jonathan Jerme

discusses the use of MS-Access to produce nonstandard outputs.

One of the advantages that a database program like Microsoft Access has over conventional indexing programs is that it can produce a wide range of differing outputs. In fact a database user can 'write their own ticket' as far as output goes. Output from a database takes the form of a report, and reports can be prewritten, modified and even exported to other programs like Word and Excel for further manipulation if necessary. Recent versions of Access can write reports directly to HTML to produce Web pages, including graphics and active hyperlinks.

An example: Glenda was called on recently to prepare a set of abstracts and keywords for a series of web pages about technological innovations. Each page would be allocated to one category: it could have up to three technology names and up to 15 keywords. Of course the same category, technology or keyword could apply to several different pages - a many-to-

many relationship. We set up one table in Access for data about the pages and another for the keywords: a third table linked them together. Categories and keywords appeared in drop-down lists, allowing us to attach as many keywords to each site as necessary without having to retype them or check the thesaurus each time. Although the entries were made in chronological order as the pages arrived for indexing, a simple query was used to re-sort them alphabetically to make them easier to find in the drop-down lists.

To facilitate data entry we set up a form where the information for each page was entered and displayed. The form contained a subform that showed the keywords for that page and allowed us to add and modify these. A little bit of programming allowed us to add a button which counted the number of words in the abstract - handy since Glenda was working to a 25-word limit.

Because this was an ongoing project we added a 'Date Entered' field to the form. This is filled in automatically by Access when the entry is made, and allows us to isolate all the entries that were made before or after a certain date, or between two dates.

It took some tweaking to get satisfactory output from the database, but we ended up with three different reports:

- One showing the technologies broken up and listed alphabetically under their categories.
- One showing details for each page with the category, technologies and keywords listed in detail.
- One summary report showing only the page number, title and technologies.

Similar considerations applied when we were asked to supply a name and subject index for a government serial publication that was about to go up on the Web. This was a new move for the client, who wasn't sure

(Continued on page 5)

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AGM announcements pages 7 and 8
Noticeboard

Indexing courses - Victoria

6-8 March 2000, Back of the Book Indexing Course. ACER Conference Room, 19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. Cost $300 ($250 for AusSI members)
Contact: Max McMaster, ph/fax (03) 9571 6341
email: mindexer@interconnect.com.au

10 March 2000 Abstracting and Indexing for Databases/Pictorial Indexing Course. ACER Conference Room, 19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. Cost $120 ($100 for AusSI members)
Contact: Max McMaster, ph/fax (03) 9571 6341
email: mindexer@interconnect.com.au

HTML Indexer course—NSW

A one day course on Web Indexing with HTML Indexer will be run on Sat 15 April in Sydney by Glenda Browne.
Price and venue to be arranged. Details will be published in the next newsletter. Enquiries to Madeleine Davis on (02)95143176, 0417040598 (mob) or email: redcliff@hermes.net.au or Glenda Browne on (02)47398199, diagonal@hermes.net.au.

Advertising rates

Please note the increases in advertising charges:
Full page: $90; Half page: $50; Quarter page: $25.

Dates for your diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>Soc. Editors (NSW) meeting</td>
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<td>National and NSW AGMs</td>
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<td>21 Mar</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSW HTML Indexer</td>
<td>15 April</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ASI Conference, Albuquerque

There is an updated program for the ASI conference to be held in Albuquerque from May 10 to 13 at www.asindexing.org/conferences/conf2000/mt2000schedule.htm.

NSW Society of Editors

Meets monthly (usually first Tuesday of the month) at Judicial Commission Conference Centre, 5th floor Wynyard House (just above Wynyard Station) at 6.30 for 7.00. Cost $15 including drinks and light eats.

AODC 2000

The 3rd Annual Australasian Online Documentation Conference will be held at the Brisbane Sheraton from 12 to 14 April, 2000.
The Conference features speakers from the US and UK as well as local experts, and is aimed at people involved in creating online procedures, manuals, intranet content, or help systems. Cost is $995.
Call Penny Bradley at HyperWrite on (03) 98533666, e-mail pbradley@hyperwrite.com.au. or register through http://conference.hyperwrite.com.au.

Society for Technical Communication

The Pan-Pacific technical communication conference is being held this year in Hawaii from October 19 to 21.
Their web site (http://www.pan-pacific.org) contains preliminary information about the conference.

Son of Vickers in Sydney

Dwight Walker writes: 'I just met Michael Vickers, son of Vickers who won the Wheatley Medal in 1976!! He saw me in the Paramatta Advertiser in December. I ran for the Western Sydney Industry Awards 2000 and the local paper put a photo of me in there with a write up on WWWalker (www.wwalker.com.au). I sold copies of the Vickers' booklet on indexing when I was editor of the AusSI Newsletter.'
Noticeboard

New members

A warm welcome to the following new members:
Ms Larissa Brady, Vic
Mrs Kim Sanderson, Vic
Mr Joseph Trotta, Vic
Ms Rosemary Pryor, NSW
Ms Robyn Colman, Tas
Ms Virginia Kelk, NSW
Ms Shirley Johnstone, NSW
Ms Linda Rehill, Vic

John Simkin writes:
In my talk at Hobart I referred to a bibliography I am compiling on Australian historical fiction in which I plan to include plot summaries of the more than 2,000 works. After the talk two members mentioned that they would be interested in helping with the plot summaries. Then I was distracted before I got the members’ names and contact details. I am interested in taking up their offer and hope that this letter in the Newsletter can be used to locate them. My contact details are: (03) 9429 8817; simmo@enternet.com.au.

Indexing on Lycos

A number of indexing-related websites are now in the Lycos directory at http://dir.lycos.com/Business/Industries/Publishing/Indexing/.

If you own a web site you would like added, write to Seth Maislin at smaislin@lycos.com with only the following information (follow the example of those web sites already posted):
* complete web site address (URL)
* title of web site
* description of web site, no more than two sentences.

If you know of a web site that is not yours, but you think it should be added, write to Seth Maislin at smaislin@lycos.com with only the full URL.
(Info from Seth Maislin on Index-L).

More news pages 4 to 8

GST—Some brief notes

From the little I know about the GST, the following points seem to be relevant to indexers. This is NOT expert accounting advice, and if in any doubt you should consult a professional.

If your yearly turnover is $50,000 or more you must register for the GST. If your yearly turnover is less than $50,000 you can choose to register. If your turnover is nearly $50,000 you have to keep careful track of your income if you don’t register, to ensure that you don’t become liable to GST that you haven’t charged clients for.

To be ready from 1 July 2000 you have to apply for an ABN by 31 May. You can register electronically at the Business Entry Point at www.business.gov.au or through a tax adviser. You need the ABN to claim back GST that you have paid on goods and services for your business. Some businesses might prefer to deal only with ABN-registered suppliers (but some might prefer to deal with someone who does not charge the 10% extra—I suspect it would depend on whether they could claim it back or not). G.B.

From the editor

While editing my index for a book called Touring Sydney I came to the entry for Captain Cook. I knew there should be more locators there, and it took a moment to realise that the other pages were indexed (correctly) under Cook, Captain.

This makes me realise firstly, that when we accuse users of being ‘dumb’ they are not always all that dumb. Secondly, the ‘correct’ places to sort entries are not always intuitive. It seems wrong to separate the entries Captain Cook’s Landing Place and Cook, Captain. If there is enough space references or double entries can help.

I hope that you have had a good start to the New Year, and that many of you can make it to an AGM. The business part is often quite short, and the dinners are enjoyable places to meet other indexers.

Cheers, Glenda Browne
Indexes reviewed—Kingsley

Arbitration Procedures in Asia (Sweet & Maxwell Asia 1999) was submitted for review in the European Arbitration website. Part of the review dealing with the index follows:

"...the praise that must be extended to the editor and the publisher for ensuring that the work not only has an index (a declining feature in books), but actually has a professionally produced index. The indexer is even acknowledged. Mr Siebel who holds the distinction of not only being a barrister but also Vice-President of the Australian Society of Indexers. Indexes are expensive. Firstly the indexer has to be paid, and paid before the book starts producing income (other contributors if they receive anything beyond a complimentary copy can be offered modest royalties 'later'). Secondly they are a major delay on getting the product onto the shelves and selling. The temptation to cut corners by having no index, or an unprofessional index are all too obvious. Kingsley Siebel's efforts run to not only fifty-eight pages of index proper but also to the production of the tables (legislation and cases). Having though set the standard, there will eventually be the more difficult task of compiling a global index (which it is hoped that the publisher and editor are planning).

Indexes reviewed—Menzies


Humour in indexing

'If you don't find it in the index, look very carefully through the entire catalogue'

Anonymous: in Consumers guide, Sears, Roebuck and Co. (1897); Donald E. Knuth Sorting and searching (1973)

'Should not the Society of Indexers be known as Indexers, Society of The?' Keith Waterhouse 1929—in Bookends


(thanks to Julie Forrest)

Sites for freelancers


From Blue Pencil (NSW Society of Editors), Nov 1999, recommended by Madeleine Davis.

SpeechBot

"Web users will soon be able to search for spoken content using technology developed at Compaq's Gold Coast R & D centre... Speech recognition software is used to create a transcript of the program and build an index of the words. He anticipated its main use would be in Web search portals." (The Australian 11 Jan 2000)

Editorial Training

Deborah (below) will be speaking briefly at the AusSI AGM in Melbourne—see page 7 for details

---

Hey, Indexers: WANT SOME EDITORIAL TRAINING?

Deborah Doyle is a training consultant and a freelance editor, copywriter and proofreader who works on a wide range of publications. She can help you work with words for maximum effect, either

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AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF INDEXERS NEWSLETTER

Noticeboard

VOLUME 24 NO 1, JAN/FEB 2000 PAGE 4
(Access to indexing. Cont. from p. 1)

himself what format would be required. By negotiating with the client and his information services manager we were able to come up with a suitable output format using an Access report. As the site develops and the client becomes more ambitious, Access should be able to keep up with additional demands for the index.

Reagan’s biography

Jean Middleton posted to Index-L a quote from Dutch, the controversial biography of Reagan showing the mention of the index in his text. Here is the excerpt on page 170:

'At least one boy, ten-year-old Jerry Parr of Miami, Florida, vowed that he, too, would become a Secret Service agent like Brass Bancroft [character played by Reagan in a movie], "dauntless in the face of danger...fearless in the face of death!" Readers interested in young Parr’s subsequent career should check his name in the index.'

She checked the index (p. 857) and found the following:

Parr, Jerry, 170, 428-29,...

Jerry Parr went on to be the Secret Service agent who may have saved Reagan’s life during the assassination attempt.

Merged books

(Via Index-L and Blue Pencil)

Green Eggs and Hamlet - Would you kill him in his bed? Thrust a dagger through his head? I would not, could not, kill the King. I could not do that evil thing. I would not wed this girl, you see. Now get her to a nunnery. (Robin Parry, Arlington)

Fahrenheit 451 of the Vanities - An ’80s yuppies is denied books. He does not object, or even notice. (Mike Long, Burke)

Where’s Walden? - Alas, the challenge of locating Henry David Thoreau in each richly-detailed drawing loses its appeal when it quickly becomes clear that he is always in the woods. (Sandra Hull, Arlington)
APA Graduate Diploma discounts

An interesting bit of information Lorraine Doyle noted in the blue Weekly Book Newsletter for 1 December 1999 (No 1419). The APA has negotiated for its members to attend single subjects or modules of the RMIT Graduate Diploma in Editing and Publishing. Fees are approximately $300 per single subject with fees per module within individual subjects proportional to the number of weeks involved. This would probably include indexing.

Advanced Production

The Australian Publishers Association is running an all day seminar on Advanced Production in Sydney 22 February and Melbourne 29 February. Whether your end-product is CDROM, the Internet or the printed page, this all-day seminar offers you a forum in which to look at various aspects of cutting-edge technologies, their advantages and their problems; what they mean for publishing production; trouble-shooting; and effective project management in today’s production environment.

This seminar assumes reasonable knowledge of current printing and typesetting processes.

Cost: $335 non-members.

Enquiries and registrations for all APA seminars to Midge McCall, Australian Publishers Association 60/89 Jones St Ultimo NSW 2007 ph: (02) 9281 9788 ext 3 fax: (02) 9281 1073 email midge@magna.com.au

http://www.publishers.asn.au

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Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting and dinner 21 March

The Annual General Meeting of the Victorian Branch will be held at Graduate House, 224 Leicester St., Carlton on Tuesday 21st March, 2000. Sherry and nibbles at 7 pm prior to the commencement of dinner at 7:30 pm. Cost, including wines, soft drinks and coffee is $15 per head for members, and $30 for guests. Dress—smart casual.

During the evening there will be a brief AGM, consisting of the President’s Report, Treasurer’s Report and Election of Office Bearers. A highlight of the evening will be the presentation of the Indexers Medal awards.

Deborah Boyle of Living Proof will be our guest speaker. Her company provides training services which help maximise the skills of writers, editors and all who design and/or proofread documents for publication (see advertisement page 4).

RSVP by March 14th to Josephine McGovern tel. 03 9596 1555 or email to jenny.restarick@enquiries.csiro.au

Yes, I/We wish to be present

NAME/S

CASH/CHEQUE/S for person/s

TEL. CONTACT NO.

Please post to Josephine McGovern, #3, 30 Foote St, Brighton, Vic. 3186 or GPO Box 1251, Melbourne, Vic. 3001.

Call for Nominations—Victorian Branch Committee

Please nominate members for positions using the form below. You may copy the form but please use a separate form for each nomination. Signed nominations must reach the following address by 7th March 2000.

The Secretary, Australian Society of Indexers—Vic Branch
GPO Box 1251, Melbourne, Vic 3001

We, the undersigned members of the Australian Society of Indexers, nominate the person named for the office indicated for the year following the 2000 Annual General Meeting:

Name of person nominated

Please circle the office you are nominating the person for:

President    Vice-President    Honorary Treasurer
Honorary Secretary    Committee member/s

Signature of nominator

Signature of seconder

Signature of nominee
National and New South Wales Annual General Meetings 15 March 2000

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Society of Indexers will be held at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 15 March 2000.

The AGM will be held at the New Hong Kong Restaurant, 44 Macleay Street, Potts Point, NSW 2011, opposite the Landmark Parkroyal Hotel (tel: 9356 8481).

Street parking can be difficult in this area. The Kings Cross parking station (Ward Avenue) and the Kings Cross railway station are both five minutes' walk from the restaurant. The 311 bus stops at the front door.

The Annual General Meeting of the New South Wales Branch of the Society will also be held during this meeting. The AGMs will be followed by an Chinese banquet, at a cost of $25.00 per person, drinks included. After dinner, the outgoing President, Alan Walker, will speak on “Meeting Chinese Indexers.”

RSVP: Alan Walker by 10 March 2000
(tel: 9368 0174, fax: 9358 5593, email: president@aussi.org)

Elections
Nomination Form

We, the undersigned members of the Australian Society of Indexers, nominate the person named for the office indicated for the year following the Annual General Meeting for 2000:

Name of person nominated: ____________________________________________________________

Office (please tick): National Committee:  President  ☐
                       Vice-President ☐
                       Honorary Secretary ☐
                       Honorary Treasurer ☐
                       Committee Member ☐

Office (please tick): New South Wales Branch: President  ☐
                       Vice-President ☐
                       Honorary Secretary ☐
                       Honorary Treasurer ☐
                       Committee Member ☐

Signature of nominator: _______________________________________________________________

Signature of seconder: ________________________________________________________________

Signature of nominee: ________________________________________________________________

Nominations must reach the following address by 23 February 2000:

The Secretary
Australian Society of Indexers
PO Box R598, Royal Exchange, Sydney NSW 1225.
From the literature:

Electronic books—standards

In 'Turning the page' (Society of Editors (Vic) Newsletter. Oct 1999, pp 3, 7), Martin Heng reports on developments in standards for eBooks that will increase the chances of mass markets for eBooks, and also perhaps allow more publishers to compete in this area. This is because the new standard is based on HTML and XML (the languages used for websites). Publishers now no longer have to tailor eBooks for each device on which they will be read.

Several major publishers have signed the agreement, including HarperCollins and Penguin Putnam; the most significant member of the group is Microsoft. None of the parties to the agreement are Japanese.

What does it mean for us? Well, perhaps more indexing to be done in an electronic environment. For more info see http://www.openebook.org/G.B

Electronic books—novels

In 'The e-book alternative' (Australian Author Vol 31 (3) Nov 99), Sherry-Anne Jacobs discusses novels on the web (p. 16). Novels are put on web if they are out-of-print; or simultaneously with print publication. There doesn’t seem to be a lot of money in it, though. She writes ‘I believe one American author has earned more than $1,500 for her first ebook over 3 years and it’s still “in print”. But I think that’s as high as earnings have gone so far. By comparison, a typical paper book advance in Australia and the UK can be in the area of $3-5,000 depending on genre and publisher, and considerably more for established authors.’

Australian Book WebRing

The Australian Book WebRing (Australian Author Vol 31 (3) Nov 99, p.15) at http://www.books.aus.net/webring/ is aimed at booksellers, publishers, authors and readers. I tried the ring but I seemed to get to sites with no obvious link to the next site on the ring; also it was hit and miss whether the site would be relevant or not. Next time I’ll request the list of sites on the ring, rather than travelling through at random.

incite Dec 1999 in Weavers web, p. 34.

'Oingo aims to improve the relevance of Internet search results by checking first which of several possible meanings of a word you want, for example, train as in teach or train as in transport. Try it out at http://www.oingo.com/.'

I searched for 'index' and was offered the choice of all meanings, or specific meanings, including a few towns called Index. G.B.

From the literature:


Technical Writers’ Discussion Forum: Geoffrey Marnell (p. 6) writes: 'You can subscribe to Australian Technical Writers by sending an email to austechwriter-subscribe@egroups.com. Leave all other fields in your email message blank.'

Money: 'The writer on page 7 suggests 'Accept no less than $50 an hour for mid-range skills. Be tough. Want the agents less than they want you.'

Indexing the screen


The report found that relevant journals had been indexed more widely and deeply than supposed in international indexes and in local sources such as APAIS. Finding the source material proved to be the problem.

Database history

An unpaged insert in NFAIS newsletter April/May 1999 contains the article ‘40 years of database distribution and use: an overview and observation’ from the 1999 Miles Conrad Memorial Lecture, NFAIS Annual Conference, Philadelphia, February 23, 1999 by Charles P. Bourne. Bourne was a major contributor to the creation of the Dialog information system and discusses the history and significant changes over time.

Initially there was little subject access to the database (e.g. title word searching only, or assigned subject headings only). There was then a shift to a reliance on less controlled indexing of file content [e.g., raw source text searching in lieu of controlled indexing and authority control; and less precision in index construction (e.g., generally no distinction of “Weed” as personal name vs. company name vs. object name vs. place name)].

The NFAIS newsletter of July 1999 notes a new web address for NFAIS: www.nfais.org

A delicate monster

The August 1999 issue of Australian Library Journal contains a review of the book A most delicate monster; the one-professional special library by Jean Dartnall (ISBN 0949060402). I wonder if this is the same person as AusSI member, Jean Dartnall? G.B.
Newsletter and Webmaster contacts
Editor: Glenda Browne
Webmaster: Jonathan Jenney
e-mail: webmaster@aussi.org
web: http://www.aussi.org
ISSN: paper: 0314-3767
electronic: 1326-2718
This newsletter is sent free to all members of the Australian Society of Indexers. It is published 11 times a year, with a combined issue for Jan/Feb. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Society.
Copy should be sent to the editor by the last day of each month for publication in the middle of the next month. I am delighted to receive contributions, both large and small, from members. Please contact me if you have any questions about suitable items for publication. The editor reserves the right to cut and edit material.
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