



Australian Society of Indexers Newsletter

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Visitors to the AusSI Website: *Statistics by Jonathan Jermey.*

When I became Webmaster of the AusSI site it was with the expectation that it would be a relatively quiet backwater of the web. I suppose I reasoned that if half our members accessed the site once a week each that would make for about fourteen hits a day, plus a few from outside. It is surprising and gratifying, then, on checking the detailed statistics kept for us by our host, KangaWeb, to find that we are averaging about 52 visits a day. Where are these people coming from? I can't tell you in detail, but if we go through the statistics we can get an idea.

Except where specified otherwise, figures are for the week ending 15 July 2000.

Changes over time

The site has been hosted by Kangaweb since mid-September 1999. During October 1999, perhaps because of the novelty of the site, there was a peak of interest and we totalled 2082 visitors. The numbers dropped off afterwards and have risen slowly since then to a peak of 1692 in June.

Days of the week and hours of the day

The statistics allow us to see which days of the week and hours of the day are most popular for site access. These are from an Australian perspective; visitors from overseas will be on their own local times.) Wednesday is the most popular day, closely followed by Monday, and has been since October 1999; an interesting discovery but one I can't find an explanation for.

There is a steady stream of visitors throughout the day and night, rising slightly after work between 6 and 8 pm but continuing on into the wee small hours.

Time spent by visitors

Here I have simply reproduced the table from the Web. It's clear that visitors tend to either 'hit and run'

or 'stay and browse'; relatively few of them spend more than 2 and less than 20 minutes on the site.

Fig 1. Time Spent Accessing the Web Site Per Visitor This Week

Time	% of all Visitors
Up to 2 minutes	77.0%
2 to less than 5 minutes	4.7%
5 to less than 10 minutes	1.4%
10 to less than 20 minutes	2.9%
20 minutes or more	14.0%

Most popular pages

The most popular page on the site was the Home Page (as it should be!) with 214 accesses (14.6% of all accesses). The others are shown in Figure 2.

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Noticeboard

AusSI Conference in ACT: Call for Papers/Workshops

The Australian Society of Indexers, ACT Region Branch and the Canberra Society of Editors will be jointly sponsoring a national conference of the two societies in April 2001. The Conference will be held at Rydges, Canberra, on London Circuit in the City Centre from 20–23 April 2001.

The theme of the conference will be Partnerships for Knowledge.

CONFERENCE OUTLINE

Fri Apr 20 "Issues day"—focus on Relationships and Working Together

- ◆ Editors and indexers in knowledge partnerships
- ◆ Relations with clients
- ◆ Partnerships with other professionals
- ◆ Standards and ethics

Sat Apr 21—Focus on Business and Technology

- ◆ Business planning
- ◆ Business issues: quoting, taxation, contracts and insurance
- ◆ Professional survival
- ◆ Impact of new technology on indexers and editors

Sun Apr 22—Focus on Education

- ◆ Education and training
- ◆ Accreditation, registration, professional development
- ◆ Marketing, public awareness
- ◆ The new style manual and proofreading

Mon Apr 23—Workshops

The Monday workshops will be fee paying workshops open to all, focusing on the practical aspects of editing and indexing. Conference participants will receive a discount on attendance. The Societies are calling for interested parties who would like to present papers on these topics, participate in panel discussions or run workshops. Papers on topics outside the conference themes are also welcome.

Presenters

If you wish to give a paper or arrange a workshop, please provide the following details by return mail or to the address below by 18 October 2000:

- ◆ Your name as author or workshop presenter
- ◆ Your position and contact details (for the Committee's use)
- ◆ Title of your paper or workshop
- ◆ Brief outline of your paper or workshop
- ◆ Time required (papers can be of 20 min or 40 min duration, workshops 2hr, 4hr or full day)
- ◆ For workshop presenters: any resources required, maximum participants, and your fee for presentation

For more information about the programme and workshops ring Lynn Farkas 02-62864818, email lfarkas@pcug.org.au, or Louise Forster at www@interact.net.au, or write to Partnerships For Knowledge Conference Committee, GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia.

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.

Dates for your diary

Soc. Editors (NSW) meeting	1st Tues in month
AusSI Newsletter deadline	30 Sept
WA indexing courses	18–23 Sept
AusSI ACT conference submissions deadline	18 Oct
AusSI ACT conference & workshops	20–22 & 23 Apr 2001



Noticeboard

Seeking History specialists for book review

If any AusSI member would like to review *Indexing Specialties: HISTORY* for the AusSI Newsletter, Madeleine Davis is willing to lend her copy. Please contact Glenda Browne (newsletter editor) for more information.

WA - Indexing short courses

Two short courses on Indexing are being offered in Perth in September. *Introduction to Book Indexing* and *Abstracting and Indexing for Databases and Pictorial Indexing* will be run in the week of 18-23 September. Details in August newsletter.

Contact:

Shelley Campbell, (08) 9327 7230

Linda McNamara, (08) 9264 7264.

NSW Workshop: Annual Report Indexing

About 10 indexers, editors and librarians from NSW (and one from Victoria) enjoyed an afternoon presentation on annual report indexing given by Michael Harrington, a very experienced Government publications indexer from the ACT and author of the indexing chapter in the AGPS/Ausinfo Style Manual.

We discussed:

- ◆ new annual report requirements
- ◆ things to index or not, eg financials and appendixes
- ◆ current terminology for specific topics (eg ongoing and non-ongoing for permanent and temporary staff/employees/people/human resources)
- ◆ useful 'grouping' concepts such as social justice/equity/access

See also Victorian web indexing course report on p.79

New members

A warm welcome to the following new member:
Mr Steve Moss, New Zealand.

Document Computing Symposium

The fifth Australasian Document Computing Symposium (ADCS) will be held on Friday 1 December 2000 on the Sunshine Coast (sounds nice on this wintery day).

ADCS is an opportunity for researchers and practitioners in document management and information retrieval to meet and present their work. It will cover issues ranging from the fundamentals of document architectures and standards for markup, through storage, management, retrieval, authentication and workflow, to active and virtual documents. More information from registrar@dstc.edu.au.

From the editor

I am delighted to be able to publish an article by Mr Ge on Chinese indexing. It is interesting to hear about indexing from another point of view, and terrific that we are developing contacts with indexers far afield.

With a stroke of good timing I attended Michael Harrington's excellent workshop on annual report indexing, then a few weeks later was offered my first annual report to index.

I checked my own entries with the previous index. This was quite time-consuming, but I did find a few things I had missed. One of the things I found hard about annual reports is that they don't give a context for much of what they report.

By the time you get this the Sydney Olympics will have started, and we will all be either enjoying the stimulating atmosphere or retreating into our shells. Did anyone volunteer for the Olympics video indexing project?

Cheers, Glenda Browne



(Website visitors, Cont. from page 71)

Several pages that I would have expected to see on the list haven't made it, and vice versa, but in general there seems to be a good spread of interest across the site.

Where do they come from?

In most cases it's possible to track back on visitors and determine what page or location on the Web they came from. A bare majority of visitors (50.2%) came directly to the page, suggesting that they have it in their Favorites/Bookmarks list and/or just type in the address, and an additional 3.8% were referred from our old site at Zeta. The complete list appears with notes on page 75.

Because of the relatively small numbers of referrals, and the fact that they change a great deal from one week to the next, it's hard to draw any conclusions here, but it does appear that we're well-served by the search engines and that we have some visitors with

other, quite diverse, interests!

What were they using?

Finally, the types of browsers used: 29.1% of visitors used Microsoft Internet Explorer 5.x; 21.8% used Netscape Navigator 4.x; 11.0% used Microsoft Internet Explorer 4.x and 5.6% used Netscape Navigator 3.x.

Roughly one or two percent used each of AOL, Java, Netscape Navigator 2.x, MSPProxy/2.x and Microsoft Internet Explorer 3.x.

Website usability experts always stress the importance of designing for older browser versions, and we can see the point of this here. There is a large category called 'Other', making up 25% of the total. I have to admit that I have no idea what it might include—can anyone enlighten me on this?

JJ

NB: Figure 3 follows on page 75.

Fig 2. Most Popular Pages

Page	Accesses	Percentage
/links.html – a page of links to other resources	73	5.0%
/webindexing/index.htm - home page of the Web Indexing section and /webindexing/links.htm – a page of links about Web indexing	37	2.5%
/IndexersAvailable/ - the Indexers Available section and /IndexersAvailable/names.htm – a list of names of available indexers	36	2.5%
/resources/index.htm – the resources section home page	28	1.9%
/anl/0006jul/ - the latest Newsletter	26	1.8%
/Indexer.htm – the online index to the site	25	1.7%
/resources/software/review.htm – Michael Wyatt's review of CINDEK and SkyIndex	22	1.5%
/resources/software/thesauri.htm – a description of thesaurus management software, with links to sites	20	1.4%
/profissues/index.htm – the home page for the Professional Issues section	14	1.0%

Fig 3. Referring Domain

Referring Domain	Comments	% of all Referrals
No referrer	Direct to www.aussi.org	50.2%
www.google.com, google.yahoo.com, www.northernlight.com, www.altavista.com, www.goeureka.com.au, search.msn.com, www.uscc.alltheweb.com	Search engines (in order of popularity)	14.0%
www.zeta.org.au	From the old site	3.8%
www.html-indexer.com	David Brown's web indexing software	1.8%
www.sky-software.com	Kamm Schreiner's indexing software	1.6%
www.willpower.demon.co.uk	Information Management Consultants (UK)	1.4%
www.vicnet.net.au	A Victorian web host and portal	0.9%
www.help4u.net	A UK e-book publisher	0.9%
www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au	Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre	0.9%
www.asindexing.org	The American Society of Indexers	0.7%

Chinese indexers in Dalian. *Alan Walker writes a foreword to Mr Ge's description of the conference.*

The Dalian proceedings opened in the conference room of the Center of International Cultures at Liaoning University. As I sat at the official table, with my interpreter, I faced fifty or sixty Chinese indexers, dressed much like indexers everywhere, except for the occasional well-cut Mao suit, and one female officer in the full uniform of the People's Liberation Army. Behind them, unexpectedly, was an enormous framed photograph of Mount Fuji, all blue and white, with cherry blossoms in the foreground. With me, at the table, were senior officials of the China Society of Indexers, of the university and of the Chinese Communist Party.

That is where I was privileged to hear Mr Ge's speech. I was also grateful for Prof Li Rong's clear interpretation at the time and for her written translation, which has provided the text on the next page.

Mr Ge's speech tells us something of the philosophy and structure of the Chinese indexing society. Some of the features of social organization and the network of relationships which are an important part of the Chinese cultural value system were unfamiliar and particularly interesting to me.

Each of the six indexing associations which are now joined in an international affiliation agreement has distinct methods of operation and administration, reflecting their national cultures and traditions.

For instance, it is interesting to think about how the social and cultural conditions of the Chinese indexer might compare with the situation and needs of the indexer working freelance ("a person without a work group"), which are the basis of many of the concerns of Western indexing societies.

Once again, I express my sincere gratitude to the officers of the China Society of Indexers for their help in making it possible for me to share the experiences of the Dalian conference.

My own personal impressions of the conference, with some details of Chinese indexing software, were published in the last issue of *The Indexer* (Vol. 22 No.1 April 2000 pp.21-22). Mr Ge's speech provides more of the official flavour of the conference and details of the organisation and social consciousness of indexers and indexing in China.

Chinese index science: stepping forward to the new century. *Speech by Ge Yong-Qing, Vice-President of the Standing Committee, China Society of Indexers, at the Dalian conference of international exchange, 19 October 1999.*

I

Mr Alan Walker, and everybody present.

This meeting, which is the China Society of Indexers' 4th annual conference for the discussion of indexing science, and the second national contact working meeting, opens today in Dalian, a city located on the Bohai Sea.

At the century's turning point, we are facing a serious issue: how to accept the challenges of the coming century. What should we do to carry on the development of index science to meet the new requirements? I would like to take the opportunity to have a general discussion and exchange of views with everyone here, especially our distinguished guest from Australia. This, I think, is an issue that all people working in this field are concerned about, and must consider.

Undoubtedly index science has played an important part in present-day society. We all agree that indexes are tools that we cannot do without, whether in academic studies, or in obtaining information, or in the improvement of working efficiency, or in the promotion of scientific management.

As Pan Shuguang, professor at Suzhou University, pointed out, in the past hundred years a great many scholars have devoted themselves to studying and compiling indexes. We should not forget the role that indexes have played in the past century, when we celebrate our achievements in other areas. We can say, without exaggeration, that if it had not been for indexes, there would have been no such great achievements.

(Continued on page 77)

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(Chinese indexing, Cont. from p. 76)

The study and compilation of indexes can be traced back a very long time. Take the growth of indexing science in the twentieth century. It has borne noticeable and delightful fruits in the development of science and technology, in the growth of prosperity and the flourishing of the economy and culture, through the efforts taken by scholars and indexing professionals over the past hundred years.

The founding of China's Society of Indexers, in December 1991, marked not only the existence of indexing as a science, and its growing maturity, but also the beginning of a new epoch in our work as indexers. It tells the world that, for the first time, China has a national indexing organisation, with recognised standing and authorisation.

For the past eight years, we have aimed at 'sincerity, honesty, opening-up and devotion', and we have worked for the improvement of indexing theory, research and study, for the prosperity of compilers and the success of publications, for the growth of index services and academic exchanges, at home and abroad.

Led by the Standing Committee, the China Society of Indexers has established three sub-committees, devoted to academic research, compilation and publishing, and education and training. At present, there are about 1200 members, including 38 institutional members. Coming from the areas of publishing, colleges and universities, research institutes, and libraries and information centres, most of the members are middle-ranking professionals. At the same time people from organs and enterprises have been accepted as members.

To vitalise the Society and to motivate the members, we have set up organisations across the country, which can be divided into three levels:

- ◆ contact departments, within provinces, autonomous regions and cities belonging to this level;
- ◆ contact stations, within counties or smaller units having substantial numbers of members; and
- ◆ contact persons, to liaise with units having no more than ten members.

The contact work meeting being held as part of this conference is for representatives from those organs to sit together and exchange their views and opinions.

The efforts made by all of our members in index

compilation and indexing research have produced many fruits. Five volumes have been accepted and published as *Indexing Research Serials*, as well as those articles which have appeared in newspapers and magazines across the country. Nineteen issues of *Index Communication* have been published. Four annual conferences and about ten meetings and discussions of various types have been held. At the same time we have run fifteen training classes. Many years' practice have proved that persistence with academic and educational activities in and outside the Society not only boosts theoretical studies, but also enlarges the group of index workers, and vitalises the Society itself.

II

With the rapid development of modern information technology and the demands for better indexing work at the beginning of the 21st century, the indexing service field will be greatly widened. Not only will this bring good opportunities for our indexing profession, but it will also confront traditional indexing working methods with many challenges. In view of this, we will propagate and spread modern index technology, and we will train every member in computerised theory and the technology of indexing work. In this way, we can become a group of modern index experts. The computerisation of indexing work has already been carried out in some developed countries. Although computerised indexing and databases have been put into application in China, much more needs to be done for the overall computerisation of our indexing work. As was said in 'Farewell to the Manual Index Age' by Prof. Zhang Qiyu at this annual conference, we should change our ideas and realise that: modern index experts should be database experts, who have a deep understanding of the computerisation of index work, namely database technology ... In the first one or two decades of the next century, we will make great progress in the field of databases. The computerisation of our index work will be fully realised, as a response to the need to develop our economy, science and culture.

In order to make a quick departure from the manual index age and to welcome the new age of indexing, we should transfer our working emphasis and take steps to push forward the task.

Besides, in the new age, we must study and think about topics such as:

- ◆ how we can apply the compilation and study of indexes to the needs of society
- ◆ how we can bring indexing achievements widely into use

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(Chinese indexing, Cont. from p. 77)

- ◆ how to train modern index experts
- ◆ how to establish good social identity for index workers

III

The China Society of Indexers has been operating for eight years. Although we have some achievements, they are far from our stated objectives, for several reasons. In the early days of the Society, we planned to compile and publish a set of indexing research books at the turn of the century; we planned to establish our own publishing house; we also thought about setting up an Indexing Development Fund for China. However, it seems that these objectives cannot be realised at present. Nevertheless, we have confidence and perseverance to keep up with the trends and to make greater contributions to modern indexing in the areas of information technology and services.

We totally understand that the world is stepping into the next information age, where technology progresses

rapidly. The problem of how to enhance international communication between indexing associations has become very important. Recently we made an agreement with indexing societies in Britain, the United States, Australia and Canada, so as to further enhance communication with them.

Alan Walker, the President of the Australian Society of Indexers, has accepted our invitation to attend our annual conference. This is a good beginning, and we warmly welcome his arrival. The Australian Society of Indexers was founded in 1976, fifteen years before ours. Their experience can be of great value to us. After Mr Walker became President of the Society in 1997, he put great emphasis on indexing standards and quality. He has made effective contributions to personnel training and co-operation with related organisations. This is something we can learn from.

Ladies and gentlemen, the new century is shedding its light on us. Let us stride forward, hand in hand, for the prosperity of our common cause, and the bright future of the field of indexing.

.....

Explore new indexes in 3D!!!

Try The Hyperbolic Tree Grocery Shopping Demo listed at www.inxight.com/demos/grocery/index.htm. This is an animated hierarchical grocery store index developed by Inxight (!!) Software.

Or even more interesting and a real lateral thinking effort, try www.webbrain.com. This is a wonderful animated index with true crossreferences. The list categories are based on the Netscape Open Directory Project at www.dmoz.com—a huge open source project of 24,000 volunteer editors mapping the Web.

Madeleine Davis

From the Literature: NSW Society of Editors.

Blue Pencil (Sept 2000) contains a short piece on 'Hiring an indexer' by Michael Wyatt, in which he bemoans unrealistically short deadlines.

It also has a report on the meeting on 'Editorial training and education', with details of editing courses run by Macquarie University (Diploma and a new Certificate and Masters); Macleay College; the NSW Writers' Centre; and Robin Appleton (corporate and one-on-one). GB

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Victorian web indexing course. Jennifer Csorba reports on the web indexing course run by the Victorian Branch.

On Tuesday 11 July 2000, 13 people with an assortment of backgrounds, including indexing, publishing and librarianship took part in "Web Indexing Workshop". Gavan McCarthy, Helen Morgan and Joanne Evans of the Australian Science and Technology Heritage Centre (ASTHEC) conducted the day's course, using their experiences of putting a print publication *Technology in Australia 1788 - 1988*, published originally by the Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE), online.

"The vision was that the comprehensive index to the book would act as a gateway to both the narrative text in *Technology in Australia...* and the relevant entries in *Bright Sparcs* or *Australian Science at Work*". *Bright Sparcs* is a register of currently over 3,000 people involved in the development of science, technology and medicine in Australia, including references to their archival materials and bibliographic resources (www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/bparcs/). The Web Indexing course itself can be located on the Internet, and it is this format we followed throughout the day: www.austehc.unimelb.edu.au/training/asim/program.htm.

The day began by introducing ourselves, including the presenters who had an interesting array of backgrounds, and outlining what we expected to gain from the workshop. These expectations were written up on the board and referred to as we moved through the sessions. We discussed just what web indexing was, and what its relationship to search engines meant for the end user.

An interesting dialogue ensued regarding the differences between printed indexes and those on the web. I think one of the more interesting insights is that where an indexer of a printed resource uses a number of *see* or *see also* references, the web indexer would lean towards double-posting the entries more often. It is preferable that a user is only three clicks away from a resource rather than being referred around the index before locating the resource.

The *Technology in Australia* online project was then described in detail. The scanning process; text manipulation into individual paragraphs; database creation; and the many side benefits of such technology such as the ability to develop links to *Bright Sparcs* and *Australian Science at Work* entities. Also the referencing techniques: changing the index references from page numbers to individual paragraph references. Then the actual user interface was discussed, including navigational tools and a free text search engine requirement.

The concept of Search Engines versus the Index was explored in our first case study. In general we are all aware that Search engines worked fine in the early stages/years of the Internet, but now a 'critical mass' of information is

easily reached and only those search engines where some type of human judgement is involved can be regarded as useful. The First Case study used the *Technology in Australia* project to demonstrate the usefulness of either the Index or Search Engine as navigational tools, and when it was best to use either tool.

After a lovely lunch in one of the local restaurants we were given an overview of Metadata, what it was and how it was developed. A number of examples were shown of this hidden data in the source of an html page. We were then given the opportunity of using metadata to index a sample article. The general feeling was that it felt like 'cataloguing an item' using the Dublin Core metadata protocols or schemas.

From this demonstration we moved on to discuss how the indexing of a simple resource can be used as part of a subject gateway to other resources.

We spent some time looking at 'Future Directions, Future Effects' of Information infrastructure, a model which is seeking to make the Internet resources maintainable, as at the moment resources on the Internet are so vast that no one person can see its infrastructure as manageable. The coming of XML which relies on structural codes versus HTML which is based more on presentation tags will allow for an easier transference of data between entities/organisations.

Finally, what is required to be a Web Indexer

- ◆ Know the web - what is shaping the Internet, what makes an indexable resource ?
- ◆ Be a user of the web - look for good and bad examples of indexing
- ◆ Know how to create HTML - look at the source code of good and bad sites
- ◆ Know about Website design - again look for good and bad, can the browser access the index easily ?
- ◆ Know about search engines - how they work, how you can add value
- ◆ Start looking at XML - the upcoming format, what does it mean for indexing?

I would like to extend a special thank you to Gavan, Helen and Joanne for developing an enlightening insight into Web Indexing and to the Australian Society of Indexers, Victorian Branch for organising this workshop.

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 \$26 half year (July to Dec)

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