Australian Society of Indexers
Volume 27, Number 3, April 2003
Newsletter

Outlook Workshop

The National Committee of AusSI held an Outlook Workshop on Saturday 8 March 2003 at National Archives of Australia in Canberra. Its purpose was to bring together all members of the National Committee (including elected and ex-officio members and appointed state representatives) to determine a blueprint for the Committee's activities for 2003.

Attendees were Edyth Binkowski, Shirley Campbell, Caroline Colton, Prue Deacon, Lynn Farkas, Emeline Haight, Sandra Henderson, Robert Hyslop, Clodagh Jones, Jenny Restarick, John Simkin, Geraldine Triffitt, Alan Walker, Susan White, Penelope Whitten and Michael Wyatt.

The morning plenary session discussed the goals of the Society for 2003, membership, financial objectives, and the website. The morning meeting then broke into three groups, each discussing different matters. A summary of each discussion was presented at the final afternoon session.

The afternoon session began with attendees' ideas of what should be discussed that was not already on the program, including mentoring and sponsoring by the Society of projects to involve new indexers.

Membership

How do we stop the membership slide? We know a lot of people are indexing, but we need to cater for all types of members, for example, database indexers. We also know many people join the society to get some sort of training and to find a job. Also membership is always fluctuating; other similar societies have the same problem.

Most of our members are book indexers, and we need to attract database indexers, thesaurus compilers, IT companies. This requires publicity, for example, for the National Conference in Sydney in September 2003, and membership drives in states which have branches.

Several people mentioned that publishers edit less, publish faster, and turn less to indexers and more to editors. Also online publishing is becoming important, with content and thesaurus management, and information architecture required. It was suggested that the Society should reflect these changes, both in our membership and our public face. This turned discussion to the website.

Website

Emeline Haight has good ideas for reorganising this to make it more accessible and usable. The NSW branch has already contracted with a designer to give the society a corporate look, including a logo and a template for the website. Suggestions were made that the website should list branch activities, more training sessions, medal winners and life members. Also that the current information from the existing brochure on areas of indexing should be expanded. We need a piece on the purpose and benefits of indexing, showing a balance between print and online publishing. Any piece written should have its authorship acknowledged, and content should be checked for accuracy.

Suggestions were also made about Indexers Available, including a new title, and the idea that members be allowed to update their own information, using a password or PIN number. Should this list be restricted to registered indexers, or should there be separate lists? None of these issues were resolved. Alan Walker and Caroline Colton will work with Emeline Haight looking at content and usability.

Newsletter

There have been problems with deadlines, so possibly we need to pay more for better printing and courier services, so that it comes out on time. Attendees were happy with the content,

Continued on page 31

What's inside

23 Outlook Workshop
24 Noticeboard
26 Dates for your diary
28 HTML/Prep
31 From INDEX-L
32 From the literature

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GPO Box 2069, Canberra ACT 2601

Notice

AusSI Vic Branch Special Meeting

Indexing as a Business

Join us for a special meeting on Indexing as a Business on Thursday, 22 May 2003.

A Panel of experienced indexers and an experienced managing editor will lead the discussion by offering advice on the following topics before taking questions from the floor:

- ❑ Getting your first indexing job
- ❑ Quoting successfully
- ❑ Staying in business
- ❑ What do editors really want from an indexer?
- ❑ Do editors shop around for the cheapest index?
- ❑ Do editors have a price in mind before they ask you to quote?

These and other issues will be raised on the night. Bring along your burning issues and questions.

The panel

Ann M. Philpott has run a freelance business in consulting, indexing, editing, writing and proofreading services for more than eight years. Her clients include educational and trade publishers as well as businesses, corporations and government agencies and departments. Her background is diverse and includes editing and project management in-house for Cambridge University Press, journalism and editing in-house for The Salvation Army's *War Cry*, pictorial research for ABC television News and The 7.30 Report, freelance production assistant work for film and television companies, teaching in schools, youth co-ordinator work for the Australian Conservation Foundation and Toorak Uniting Church, as well as producing and directing student theatre for tertiary institutions and videos for community centres. She has recently been elected President of the Society of Indexers, Victoria.

Max McMaster has been a freelance indexer for the past ten years working predominantly on back-of-book indexing, but delving into database indexing, journal indexing and web-indexing as well. He arrived at indexing after spending nineteen years in the library and information fields, mainly involved with scientific disciplines in State government departments and CSIRO. He has in excess of one thousand indexes to his name. Max lectures on indexing to editing and publishing students at RMIT, and runs indexing training courses for the Australian Society of Indexers, CAVAL and others all around Australia and New Zealand. Max has been awarded the Australian Society of Indexers Medal on three occasions.

Pam Jonas has worked in-house as a managing editor in academic publishing at La Trobe University Press (1989–94), Churchill Livingstone (1994–95) and Australian Council for Educational Research (1995–99). Subsequently she has been involved in freelance writing and publishing ventures. As a managing editor her responsibilities included the engagement and briefing of indexers, and the negotiation of payment terms. Pam has served on the panel of the prestigious Australian Society of Indexers Medal on a number of occasions.

6 p.m. for drinks and nibbles for a 6.30 start at the Australian Council for Educational Research, 19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. RSVP by 15 May to Karen Gillen on 9808 5471 or karen_gillen@yahoo.com.au Cost: free to members; $15 for non-members but free to those who join on the night.

Membership forms will be available on the night. AusSI subscriptions are $52 personal and corporate; $26 full-time student (ID proof required). Benefits of membership include free entry into the online national freelance indexers' register, 'Indexers Available', on the website http://www.aussi.org; substantial discounts on back-of-book, journal, database and pictorial indexing courses run by the Society, 11 newsletters per year, regular free events conducted throughout the year, and networking opportunities.

UNSW Continuing Professional Development Courses

Introduction to Book Indexing 23, 30 May, 6 June

Those who will benefit from this course include those who are or who are planning to become indexers, editors responsible for indexing, librarians responsible for compiling indexes. The course will cover the following topics:

- ❑ Introduction to indexing
- ❑ Methods
- ❑ Analysis of text
- ❑ Selecting terms
- ❑ Principles of subject access
- ❑ Headings and subheadings
- ❑ Cross references
- ❑ Alphabetical arrangement

- ❑ Style
- ❑ Editing for publication
- ❑ Dealing with editors and publishers
- ❑ Indexing as a business
- ❑ Computer-aided indexing

Computer-aided Indexing

This is a one-day workshop on computer-aided indexing, The introductory session is an overview of indexing theory and what kinds of indexing computers can and cannot do. Subsequent sessions concentrate on a variety of microcomputer proprietary software packages used for preparing indexes. The functionalities, capabilities and constraints of these packages will be discussed and demonstrated and there will be hands-on tutorials and practice sessions.

The software packages to be discussed and demonstrated are word processor and desktop publishing generated indexes, full text indexes, and indexing software—CINDEX, SKY Index and Macrex.

A discount is available for participants enrolling in this course and Book Indexing.

Subject Cataloguing and Classification

This is a one-day workshop that will give you guidance on cataloguing and classification tools such as AACR2, MARC, LCSH, SCIS and Dewey, or will enable you to refresh the knowledge you gained some time ago. This workshop can be offered to groups, such as school librarians, and tailored to their particular needs.

Registration fee $245 which includes lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

Web Documents and Intranet Indexing 20 June 2003

This one-day workshop has been radically updated from last year's workshop 'Indexing Web Pages and Documents'. Indexing is all about access and Web sites and intranets are not useful unless they are easily accessible. This workshop explores the skills of subject analysis, evaluation and annotation and their application to Web documents and Web sites. The concepts of metadata, including XML, and subject gateways are explored. The workshop will include such topics are:

- ❑ indexing individual electronic documents for Web delivery
- ❑ indexing Web sites with both internal and external links, including the use of site maps
- ❑ the issue of moving content online and the demands of moving print to web
- ❑ creating subject gateways
- ❑ the use of existing classification schemes, thesaurus & data dictionary terms as access points
- ❑ the use of metadata (Dublin Core, AGLS, XML etc.)
- ❑ the use of automated indexing tools and metadata creation tools
- ❑ optimising Web documents for search engine retrieval

Registration fee $245 which includes lunch and morning and afternoon teas.

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mhenninger@unsw.edu.au .

Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand

Focus On Users. The New Zealand Conference for Technical Communicators

4–5 September 2003 Centra Auckland Airport Hotel, Auckland, New Zealand

Society of Editors' National Conference

A diverse and interesting program is developing for this conference, including topics such as, intriguingly, the long-term future of the book, new tools for old editors, and the new grammar. There will also be several workshops, including one on editing for the Web and electronic publications, which is sure to be a hit. For more details go to our web site at `http://www.editorscanberra.org`. Conference organiser Robin Bennett is still seeking speakers and workshop topics and presenters. Suggestions and offers can be sent to her at `conference@editorsqld.com`

ASI conference

'Northern Entries' is the title of the 35th Annual Conference of the American Society of Indexers, and it is going to be an exciting and informative event. The conference is scheduled for 19–21 June 2003, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver, BC. That's right, British Columbia. For only the second time in history, ASI has partnered with the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada/Société canadienne pour l'analyse de documents (IASC/SCAD) for a joint international conference.

This year's conference, organized jointly under the leadership of Frances S. Lennie, and Judy Dunlop, will feature breakout sessions with topics of interest to both beginning and experienced indexers, plenary sessions to remind us of why we love this business, and even a closing keynote speaker to help us explore why we became indexers and give some practical

Continued on page 30

Dates for your Diary

Apr 30 AusSI joint meeting with Canberra Society of Indexers—see Noticeboard

May 22 AusSI Vic Branch special meeting 'Indexing as a Business'—see Noticeboard

May 23, 30 & Jun 6 Introduction to Book Indexing, UNSW—see Noticeboard

Jun 19–21 ASI conference, Vancouver, Canada

Jun 20 Web Documents & Intranet Indexing, UNSW—see Noticeboard

Jun 27–29 SI conference 'A Scots Quair', Strathclyde University, Glasgow, Scotland

July 18–20 National Editors' Conference 2003 Brisbane conference@editorsqld.com

Sep 4–5 Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand—see Noticeboard

Sep 12–13 AusSI International Conference 'Indexing the World of Information', Sydney—see opposite

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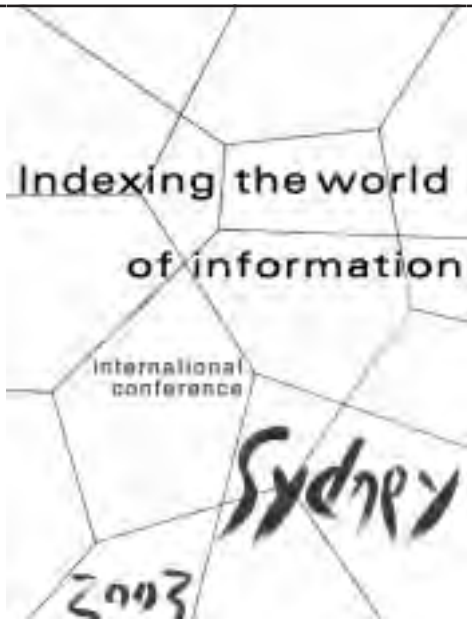

Indexing the World of Information

An international conference hosted by the Australian Society of Indexers

The Australian Society of Indexers will be hosting an international indexing conference in September 2003.

Dates: Friday 12 to Saturday 13 September 2003

Venue: Carlton Crest Hotel, 169–179 Thomas Street, Sydney

Cost: Australian Society of Indexers members AUS$330, non-members AUS$380.
Late registration (after 13 July) members AUS$380, non-members AUS$430

Papers and panels on:
- ❑ Indexing names
- ❑ Indexing standards
- ❑ Teaching of indexing
- ❑ How indexing, thesaurus construction, classification and database management are integrating with the information architecture and content management of the online world.

Software demonstrations and workshops on:
- ❑ Indexing printed resources
- ❑ Metadata development
- ❑ Thesaurus construction.

Who should come? Anyone interested in how the world of information is turning: indexers, editors, information architects, publishers, web publishers, librarians, metadata experts, archivists, web designers, content managers and usability experts.

Contact: Glenda Browne
Email: webindexing@optusnet.com.au
Phone: +61 (0)2 4739 8199

More information: http://www.aussi.org

HTML/Prep

Transforming indexes for the Web

Glenda Browne

Indexes on the Web include Web site indexes and document indexes that link directly to online material, and indexes which provide locators but are not themselves linked to the material they refer to. HTML/Prep is particularly useful for creating online indexes of documents that have already been indexed for print, or are to be indexed simultaneously for print and online presentation, although it can also be used for indexes with links to other parts of the Web. HTML/Prep™ v3.0 from Leverage Technologies[1] is reviewed below, and other systems for creation of Web indexes are discussed at the end of the article.

Overview and cost

HTML/Prep creates HTML documents from tagged indexes that have been produced using a word processor or a dedicated indexing package such as CINDEX.

It automatically creates links from page numbers (or other locators) to Web pages with those locators as names (e.g. page 53 is linked to 53.htm). Within the index it links cross-references with the main headings to which they refer, and can generate an alpha bar and 'Return to Top' links. It can also create 'tags' that show the main heading when the user's mouse is hovering over subdivisions; this offers context in long indexes where the main heading is off the screen.

A site licence for HTML/Prep costs $US125 plus handling and shipping charges, and it can be ordered online via a secure Web site using major credit cards. Delivery is via email or floppy disk.

System features

HTML/Prep is a command-line invoked program running under MS-DOS, although it is 32-bit Windows software. HTML/Prep requires an IBM PC (486 compatible or better) and Windows 95 or later, and can be installed on a network. To run HTML/Prep you need to have Microsoft system DLLs (dynamic link libraries) on your computer. Instructions for obtaining and installing DLLs if needed are given on the Leverage Technologies Web site.[2]

DOS/Command-line invoked programs

Using HTML/Prep means learning or remembering how to use DOS. Key points to note are:

- Open a DOS window by selecting Programs/System Tools/MS-DOS Prompt from the Start menu.
- Move from the Windows directory to the Root directory by typing 'cd\', then move back down to the HTML/Prep directory by typing *cd "Program Files\Leverage Technologies\HTML/Prep"*. You need the double inverted commas around the directory names as DOS doesn't otherwise recognise names longer than 8 characters or with spaces in.
- You will then see the DOS prompt 'C:\Program Files\Leverage Technologies\HTML/Prep>', at which you can type your commands.

WinCommand

An alternative to working in DOS is to use the program WinCommand, which lets you create an icon to run HTML/Prep from the Windows desktop or a folder. You can then type parameters into the WinCommand dialog box instead of typing them at the DOS prompt.[3]

If you use HTML/Prep under Win 2000 or XP there is no DOS, but the program runs in the command prompt window or via WinCommand.

Input files

Files need to be tagged before they can be converted. Tags indicate which lines are headings and subheadings (so the subheadings can be indented), which ones are cross-references, and where the locator information starts.

Aan example of an index and its tags appears in the bix below.

There are two options when creating linked indexes. You can use the last subheading as the link text and the page field as the link value; or, you can put both the link text and the link value in the page field with the embedded tag <p> separating them.

Options

HTML/Prep options can be used to specify some features of the appear-

Sample index

live files 73
    defined 72, 85
    editing of 70
local links, *see* relative addressing
locators 57–58, 85, *see also* pageless indexing
pageless indexing 10, 66-69
relative addressing 24, 59

Tagged index

<l0>live files <c>73
<l1>defined <c>72, 85
<l1>editing of <c>70
<l0>local links, <x>*see*</I> *relative addressing*
<l0>locators <c>57–58, 85, <x>, *see also*</I> *pageless indexing*
<l0>pageless indexing <c>10, 66-69
<l0>relative addressing <c>24, 59

ance and content of the index. You can type the options in any order, but must separate them with spaces. For example, the option '-C*string*' specifies that the locators should be displayed and not treated as links. The *string* is the characters, if any, that the locator lead-in tag is replaced with. The option 'DT*text*' specifies the text to display as the link text. The default is 'Click here', as seen in the box to the right.

HTML/Prep can apply 'tips' that allow the user to hover over a subheading and see a popup box showing the heading structure above the current position in the index. This is useful when the display window is small, or headings have long displays of subheadings under them. You can see tips in the Yale Undergraduate Regulations Index[4] and the Milan Jacovich detective series index.[5] For example, a tip box shows the heading and subdivision 'academic dishonesty; falsification of documents' when the mouse hovers over the two subdivisions of this heading and subdivision combination. (The use of more than one level of subheading contributes to the problem; ideally indexes would be structured so that all subheadings of one term fit on the screen at the same time. If this was done, the tags wouldn't be needed.)

Other HTML/Prep options which I have not experimented with include the use of frames and the inclusion of tags to specify font, colour and so on. There are also instructions for the use of HTML/Prep with the specialised indexing program CINDEX.

The output files contain the index, main headings, and letter list formatted for web usage. You may need to edit the .htm files if extra tags or data are required. A separate document containing just the index's main headings and cross-references is also produced, enabling browsing of just the main headings in a large index. Links from the main headings take the user back to the full index when more detail is needed. An example of a 'main heading index' can be seen in the BNA Labor Relations Reporter Index.[6]

Documentation

PDF manual is delivered with HTML/Prep, and can be viewed on screen or printed by the user. In general the manual is clearly organised and well-written, but an introductory exercise or example early in the notes would have been useful. I headed first for Appendix A to learn the coding so I could try a mini-index before I got into the other details.

The manual also gives brief, useful information on designing indexes for the web (e.g. breaking the index up by letter to improve navigation time); the creators have obviously thought about usability of indexes as well as the technical conversion of documents to HTML.

The WinCommand documentation is also thorough, although I would have liked samples directly related to HTML/Prep.

Index

live files … Click here
    defined … Click here, … Click here
    editing of … Click here
local links, *see* relative addressing
locators … Click here, … Click here, … Click here, *see also* pageless indexing
pageless indexing … Click here, … Click here
relative addressing … Click here, … Click here

Indexing software

There are two main categories of Web indexes—those that perform the same function as print indexes in that they tell you where a topic is discussed but don't take you there, and those that link from the index to the required information.

HTML/Prep

The Leverage Technologies Web site provides links to indexes that were produced using HTML/Prep and CINDEX. The Yale Undergraduate Regulations index[4] is a linked index and takes the user directly to the information required, while the murder mystery fiction index[5] is an unlinked index, referring to a number of print books.

HTML/Prep can create linked and unlinked indexes, but its strength is in the conversion of print indexes to the Web, so many of its implementations are likely to be for the creation of unlinked indexes. For these it enables the indexer to create an index for print (e.g., in CINDEX, MACREX or SKY Index), and convert it for use on the Web. HTML/Prep aids this process by doing the basic conversion to HTML, and also by adding Web-specific features such as 'Return to Top' links and links from cross-references to the part of the index they refer to.

Macrex and SKY Index

Indexes can also be generated directly from specific indexing programs such as SKY Index[7] and Macrex[8]. SKY Index generates indexes that can be viewed with Web browsers, and automatically links cross-references to the headings they refer to, but it does not create links from index locators to other places on the Web.

Macrex creates indexes that link to Web addresses. In a note to the Index-L discussion group on 2 July 2000, Gale Rhoades from the Macrex Support Office, North America wrote: 'One of the many features added with the version 7 release was the ability to write a markup language (not just HTML) coded index, either for posting to the web or for inclusion on disk or CD-ROM. With Macrex you have a choice: the last subentry can be the link (great for indexing websites and single issue documents) or the final index entries can point to multiple targets.'

HTML Indexer

HTML Indexer is well-suited to indexing constantly updated Web sites. This is because it stores the index entries within the Web pages they refer to. When a Web page is deleted or moved, the index entries refering to it are either deleted or moved when the index is regenerated. The downside of this is that the indexer has to have access to the primary copy of these pages, meaning the work is best done onsite, although smaller Web sites can easily be zipped and emailed between indexer and Web manager — this method just requires extra care and record keeping.

HTML Indexer has been described in *Online Currents* ,[9] and is discussed in

Continued on page 33

Noticeboard
Continued from page 25

ways to find more joy in the work. A special highlight is the first ever Software Fair, featuring tools and applications of use to indexers, along with the independent reviews to help you evaluate what you see and hear.

Visit `http://www.asindexing.org/site/conferences/conf2003/index.shtml` and read up on the conference details. Then, you can register online, or download a form to print out and mail or fax.

Michael P. Thompson, Director of Communications
American Society of Indexers
mthompson@resourcenter.com

AusSI joint meeting with Canberra Society of Editors

On 30 April, AusSI will have a joint meeting with Canberra Society of Editors in the Friends' Lounge, National Library, 6.00 for 6.30 pm, with members of each society speaking about its history and training, and time for questions.

SI Conference 2003

27–29 June 2003 at Strathclyde University, Glasgow. The booking form and further details are now available on the SI website `http://www.indexers.org.uk` or from Paul Nash `paulnash@zetnet.co.uk`, Alison Brown `alison.brown10@virgin.net` or Phyllis Van Reenen `pvr@indexology.fsnet.co.uk`

Gather with us in Scotland's friendly city — Glasgow. Make and renew friendships. Learn about the latest indexing techniques. Find out what our customers (authors and editors) think about us as indexers. As well as workshops for beginners and specialists, we will be looking at the ways indexing is changing, and how we could react.

After the conference, which is being held in the heart of the city and runs from late Friday afternoon through to Sunday lunchtime, why not stay on and explore Glasgow and its beautiful surrounding countryside? All rooms are bookable for extra nights (Thursday 26 June, Sunday 29 June, Monday 30 June — no rooms available from Tuesday 1 July onwards).

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though a column on Who's Done What was suggested, to cover the range of projects done by members. Also we need to do an audit of associated societies to whom we are linked and exchange newsletters. For this we need responses from members about known networks.

Awards

Awards are part of publicity and promotion, and should be presented at events which reach a wider audience, for example, the national conference or a book fair, if possible.

The web indexing award has been replaced by a seal of approval. What other awards are possible? Thesaurus construction, database indexing by a group, annual report indexing? These are to be considered by the Subcommittee on Awards and Medals, chaired by John Simkin.

Publicity Officer

Do we need to reinstate this position? The duties would cover looking for opportunities for indexers and dealing with marketing, including on the website. This matter was referred back to the national committee for a decision.

Reports of group discussions

The constitution, the role of the national committee and of subcommittees

Group 1 looked at the constitution, the role of the national committee and of subcommittees. The constitution is a twenty-year-old document which has been amended five times. There are several clauses where the wording should be updated, and it was suggested that the national committee appoint a small drafting subcommittee to deal with these. Alan Walker and Shirley Campbell will work on this. The changes need to be passed at a general meeting.

Financial matters, communication and awards

Group 2 looked at financial matters, communication and the issue of awards, the last of which is reported above.

On financial matters: several members receive honoraria as they spend time and effort on work for the society, and Group 2 suggested these should be increased.

The recommended rate for indexing is being dealt with by a NSW subcommittee, which has proposed an increased rate.

On communication: one problem seemed to be that some state branches don't get national minutes in time for discussion at local meetings. The national committee has established and published its meeting dates for 2003 and the national secretary aims to send out draft minutes within one week of meetings. These minutes are circulated to national committee members and are not ratified—and therefore not available for discussion by branches—until the next national committee meeting in two months time. In order to speed up this process it was agreed that in future the draft minutes will be circulated by email for endorsement by a specified date. The national secretary will circulate the ratified minutes; these minutes will then be available for discussion by branches.

Education and training

Group 3 looked at education and training, keeping in mind that the Education Subcommittee was meeting the next day to discuss this in more detail.

Group 3 agreed that short-term goals need to be formulated in terms of long-term goals, though these cannot be solved. The society must have a vision, a process of evolution.

The Group suggested three levels of training for indexers:

- Probationary
- Technical expertise
- Academic/professional qualifications.

Immediate discussion is needed about the probationary level.

All attendees agreed on the importance of mentoring.

Part of the education process should be cooperation with publishers, graphic designers and similar bodies to make them aware of the need for indexers.

At the end of the workshop, the national president, Lynn Farkas, who chaired the meeting, thanked those present for their attendance and suggestions. These will now form the basis for the issues and tasks the National Committee will deal with in this year. The outcomes of the Workshop will be discussed at the next National Committee meeting (16 April 2003). Any Society members who wish to comment on the issues raised are encouraged to contact the secretary Shirley Campbell `secretary@aussi.org`

From INDEX-L

March 2003

Discussion on INDEX-L included some comments on name indexes and beliefs that you can index without reading the text. Searching a PDF for all capital letters takes hours and hours. What about the time the automated indexing program did a book on the Caribbean and found forty-three references to Collins, Tom?

Author indexes (name indexes) and subject indexes may involve the same amount of work and should be charged at the same rate. For example, subheadings may be required for an author who has many locators. If subheadings are created, then there is no difference between the subject and the author index in terms of effort. If all you have is a string of page numbers and that's all they want, then billing slightly less is a reasonable way to go. The writer was once actually told by an academic author that some people get very unhappy if they look at the index and *don't* see a long string of locators, on the theory that longer is more impressive. This sort of thing can lead to frosty encounters in faculty lounges if somebody is overlooked.

From the literature

Glenda Browne

ASAIB Newsletter
No.15, October 2002

David P. Ambrose won the award for best bibliography for the Lesotho Annotated Bibliography which he has worked on for over 20 years (pp. 3–4). I think ASAIB alternates awards, so the next one will be for the best index from the past few years.

www.suite101.com

Suite 101 has many practical articles on indexing, by Dawn Spencer. There are also others on her site at www.indexlady.com.

Key Words (online)
Vol. 8, No. 6, November/December 2000

The article on 'Usability testing at Macmillan USA' from this issue of *Key Words* is one of a number of sample articles available on the ASI website `http://www.asindexing.org`

The report notes:

1 Participants searched for terms the observers would never have thought of including in the index. They conclude that we have to think of as many entry points as possible. People took different approaches to finding information. Some liked to find a general area of the book and narrow down by skimming pages. (I doubt this was a choice — it sounds more like making the best of a bad job. Who would choose to skim ten pages on the off-chance of finding something useful if they knew that by using the index properly they could go to the exact page they needed?) But the observation that people search broadly meshes with the finding of Susan Olasan (reported recently in *The Indexer*) that it was handy to have a very broad 'table of contents style' index entry for the main topic of the book, so that people who searched broadly could be guided to the specific terms relevant to them. My experience is that indexers think specifically, whereas the general public thinks broadly. I have a friend who has written a catalogue for an art exhibition. She added her own CIP-style entry at the front: 'Subject: Art'. An indexer or cataloguer would think at the level of 'Australian art' and 'Abstract expressionism', as well as adding the artist's name as a subject.

2 People understood 'see' references, but some appeared to read 'see also' as 'see under'.

3 Finally, they note that for future tests they will have to improve the test questions. I believe that indexing would benefit from a lot more research, but that to be valuable it has to be done very well. And that is very difficult.

Nicole Manktelow 'Health hazard'
***Sydney Morning Herald, Icon*, p. 3, March 1–2 2003**

Our sedentary workstyle as indexers is not good for our health, and those of us who stay immobile entranced by our current index are at risk of developing deep vein thrombosis—now dubbed e-thrombosis. In October last year the press reported on the deaths of two computer gamers after long gaming sessions. Part of the solution is moving around as much as possible — and no overnighters.

Amanda Morgan 'Equal access'
***Sydney Morning Herald, Icon*, p. 9, March 8–9 2003**

Accessibility of websites is important for people with disabilities using the web. Morgan notes that while most government websites 'generally' meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act, less than ten per cent of private sector websites do. The Australian Internet Industry Association (AIIA) has developed a Web Action Plan giving the legal and business cases for accessible websites.

Blind web users may use screen reader software, which speaks the text, or Braille reader software which outputs Braille onto a small desk pad. Plain text is easy for the software to read, but graphics and PDF files can cause difficulties. Text equivalents of these should be added to the site according to the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines `http://www.w3c. org` If a graphic aims to provide information, enough detail should be given in the text as is needed to convey it. (But if a picture is worth a thousand words this could become a bit impractical).

You can test accessibility of your own website at `http://www.cast.org/bobby`. Sites with a Bobby icon (British police officer) have passed the test. There has recently been a query on Index-L from an indexer who was told her index had to meet Bobby guidelines.

Online Currents
Vol. 18, No. 1, January/February 2003

Paul Bentley (pp. 7–8, 10–11) presents part one of his view of the Information Online conference, held in Sydney in January. He focuses on information roles, and concludes that librarians are more positive about things than they were in 1999 and 2001. Papers are available at `http://www.alia.org.au/conferences/online2003`, many unfortunately only as Powerpoint presentations which are slow to download.

My three-part series on automatic categorisation (pp. 17–19, 22) starts in this issue, and examines the nature of categories and their importance in information retrieval. The next two parts cover automatic categorisation methods and software. Librarians may be feeling more sanguine about their future, but I feel that the information world in twenty years' time will be vastly different from the one we work in now. What a (mixed) blessing it is to live in interesting times.

This issue also contains part three of Jonathan Jermey's series of reviews of IT information sites (pp. 26–27)—this one covering IDG and Forrester.

Kate Llewellyn *The Waterlily: a Blue Mountains Journal*

1987

I remember hearing Kate Llewellyn at a Writers' Week event saying that she didn't think poets had any right to complain about their pay rates. She repeats it here (p. 36; Sunday 1 December) saying 'She told Brigid that I lie about all day reading books, writing poems and calling it work. Well, that's one way of putting it. Not too far off the mark either. I get very fed up with writers who complain they are not well paid. The truth is they chose to do this work and it's a privilege to have an obsession and there's no point grumbling.'

I tend to agree with her — I don't see how you can demand a certain wage for writers (outside the formal workforce), and I feel the same applies to indexers. She later says (p. 46; Saturday 14 December): 'And here, waiting, the Penguin cheque. I have it hung up like a dangling flag of hope over the kitchen bench. No, I won't be buying roses or trees with it; it is owed, dear, owed. And a lot more too.'

And that, of course, is the hazard of being a poorly paid writer (or indexer). And while I don't feel we can *expect* a certain rate, I strongly believe we should work towards better pay. One way to do this is through the AusSI rate, but how to agree on one 'standard' rate with so many different levels of expertise, speeds, lifestyles, commitment to indexing as a profession, media that we work on, and environments that we work in? Another approach is to make our indexing as speedy as possible, so that for a given job we can take fewer hours, and therefore earn more. And finally, we can gradually cull our poor payers and target the better payers (Ahhh, I wish for that luxury). Web indexing for corporations is one of the higher paying options, and I think we, as individuals and as a Society, need to make more connections with web developers.

iTorque

Issue 3, March 2003

This issue of *iTorque* examines the demise (or not) of the paper book and includes a review of *The Columbia Guide to Digital Publishing* `http://www.digitalpublishinggguide.com` which is highly recommended, especially for those wanting to learn about important acronyms in publishing (DTDs, XML, CSS and XSL). It also notes current thinking on the use of 'see also under'. Opinion is divided. Most writers seem to prefer using a full 'see' reference which includes the subdivision, but Nancy Mulvany now favours the use of 'see also under'.

HTML/Prep
Continued frompage 29

detail, along with exercises, in our book *Website Indexing* .[10]

Individualised solutions

Sometimes a home-grown solution might be what's needed. For example, when a document is maintained in specialised software, it might be appropriate to generate the index in that software. In other cases, MS-Word macros might be used to take a list of index entries and URLs and make them into an index of hyperlinked index entries.

Finally, if an index is to be presented on the Web without any links at all, simple HTML coding can be used. An easy approach is to use the 'Save as/ HTML' option in programs such as MS-Word.

Conclusion

There are a number of tools that can be used for creating indexes to be presented on the Web; which one to use depends on the needs of the specific project.

HTML/Prep is a useful program for the situations in which a pre-existing print index and the document it refers to are to be loaded to the Web, or where print and online indexes are being created for the same document. It creates links from locators (if required), and also provides the additional features that are needed on the Web, such as alpha bars and 'Return to Top' links. In addition, it offers special features such as provision of an index just to main headings, and tags that offer context to the user within the index.

A demonstration version of HTML/Prep would be useful for people unsure whether this is the tool they need.

It is unfortunate that it is a command-line program, as this makes it harder to get used to (although not too difficult to use when the user is familiar with the procedures). Although WinCommand is offered as a Windows alternative, it has to be installed, learnt and set up, thus requiring more computer skills and time.

For anyone involved in Web indexing, this is a useful tool to add to the repertoire.

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Notes

1 Leverage Technologies. `http://www.levtechinc.com` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
2 `http://www.levtechinc.com/Support/RFMSDLLs.htm` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
3 `http://www.levtechinc.com/ProdServ/LTUtils/RFWindCmd.htm` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
4 Yale Undergraduate Regulations. `http://www.yale.edu/ycpo/undregs/pages/indexpage.html` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
5 Chulick, Mary Ann, 'Milan Yacovich Index Notes', © 2001. `http://www.levtechinc.com/Milan/MilanHN.htm` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
6 'Labor Relations Reporter Index (covering through 04/29/02)'. `http://www.bna.com/lrr/lrrindx.htm` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
7 `http://www.sky-software.com`, © April 2002. (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
8 `http://www.macrex.com`; `www.macrex.cix.co.uk` (Sighted 12 Jun 2002)
9 Browne, Glenda, 'Web Site indexing', *Online Currents*, Vol. 14, No. 10, December 1999, pp. 16–18.
10 Browne, Glenda and Jermey, Jonathan, *Website Indexing: Enhancing Access to Information within Websites*, Adelaide, Auslib Press, 2001.

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