

# ASIDIC newsletter

No. 37, SPRING 1980

ASSOCIATION OF INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION CENTERS

## JOINT NFAIS/ASIDIC MEETING LOOKS AT NEW TECHNOLOGIES OF DATABASE PRODUCTION, DELIVERY: CHALLENGES ABOUND, ADJUSTMENTS LIKELY, COSTS GOING UP, USERS WILL BECOME CENTER OF FUTURE PLANNING FOR FILES, SYSTEMS

In three tightly packed days, attendees at the joint NFAIS/ASIDIC meeting held at the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, Virginia, heard speakers and participated in discussions covering a wide range of topics and issues facing the database producing and using communities in the new decade.

The first session provided attendees with two differing views and results of computer assisted or aided automatic indexing and editing systems for databases. Ronald Wigington of Chemical Abstracts and William M. Thompson of the Defense Technical Information Center revealed very different results with systems developed and installed in their organizations.

Chem Abstracts used careful methods of design and implementation, involving the "end users" or operators of the system, and is pleased with the contribution the systems is making to CAS' production. Thompson, on the other hand, revealed that despite careful planning, staff cutbacks and user resistance at crucial times have made the experience with the DTIC system less than optimal. The attendees benefitted from the candor of the two speakers during an extensive question session. It was obvious that careful management steps and staff support in all stages are crucial to the success of such a system if its objectives of increased productivity and staff effectiveness are to be realized.

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The second session on Tuesday offered attendees a detailed look at the electronic storage techniques and equipment now in use and that which is on the drawing boards and likely to have application in the 1980's. Robert J. Warner, of the Institute for Computer Sciences and Technology at the National Bureau of Standards, used handouts and detailed slides to effectively show the characteristics, performance levels (speeds, etc.) and costs of the storage media.

The afternoon sessions were informative and fast paced. Dealing with the New Technology for Communication and Distribution of Information services, the attendees first heard from Harold Bamford of NSF describing the organization and early results of the computer conferencing experiments sponsored by NSF. According to Bamford, computer conferencing will become common and will permeate the information exchange habits of a large portion of the sci-tech communities in North America. The trend from computer conferencing to the electronic journal or symposium is not as clearly defined as the use of conferencing for interpersonal message switching and delphi gathering among sets of researchers.

Representatives of Tymnet, Telenet and Xerox's XTEN system presented the present and near future plans for the value added communications networks that will have sharp impact on database delivery and access modes. Increased network accessibility, performance, and the folding in of related technologies out of the "office of the future" to give coherent data gathering and manipulation techniques are near at hand. A rapid increase in hardware speeds and capacities for distributed and shared data communications systems is a fact we will be living with in the next three to five years. Tymnet, Telenet, with its new GTE capital muscle and integration into the GTE communications and satellite systems, and the emergence of Xerox's XTEN, will offer data communications users a wide range of choices, all getting faster and "better for users," throughout the next five years.

Steve Landers, of Viewdata Corporation of America, presented the Florida experiment of viewdata that will use family home television sets to activate a test system of viewdata. Showing how the system works, Landers reviewed

the types of databases and uses foreseen for the system. Not yet highly manipulative, viewdata remains a menu driven paging system that is based on a hierarchical tree structure of files. Continued research into better video resolution and user desired files is underway. Consumer usage and input into future system design and modifications when such services reach the commercial market stage will come out of experiments and studies like that being carried out in Florida.

Library networking is still on the drawing boards according to Mr. Kierszewski, of the Network Development Office at the Library of Congress. Organizing the regions and federal government to design, implement and sustain a national bibliographic network is a formidable task, as the library and information community has witnessed over the last dozen years. With the new technologies making distributed networks and mini-based systems more workable (economical) such systems will be able to evolve if they get the support of the states, regions and federal funding agencies. This will only happen when the user community demands and will support such systems.

The afternoon speakers stayed for a full hour of questions and discussions from the floor. With more questions and attendee participation than thought possible in the short time granted, lively discussions took place about regulations, competition, safety, availability, and the advantages of the future information delivery systems to all sectors, not just to "well-to-do private firms."

### WEDNESDAY SESSIONS HIGHLIGHTED BY MILES CONRAD LECTURE

Dr. Carlos Cuadra presented the annual Miles Conrad Memorial Lecture

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during the first half of the Wednesday morning session. After twenty-one years in information related activities with SDC, where he oversaw the development of the Orbit retrieval system and the initiation of the SDC Search Service, Dr. Cuadra founded Cuadra Associates, Inc., in Santa Monica, California. As a long time editor of the Annual Review of Information Science and Technology for ASIS, and as a member of NCLIS (the National Commission on Library and Information Science), Dr. Cuadra's experience and insight into the information distribution field is highly respected and internationally recognized. (Full versions of Dr. Cuadra's address are available from NFAIS, 112 South 16th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102 - or from Jeanette Webb at the ASIDIC Secretariat).

Interweaving the past, present, and the future of information services from the producer/publisher, the online distributor, and the end user points of view, Dr. Cuadra established a broad scenario of trends and impacts of technology and human factors on the production and distribution of bibliographic information services. He emphasized that the age of information is upon us, with computers being everyday tools to the generation emerging from our educational system and entering the consumer and labor markets. Cuadra feels that we in the information publishing and distribution fields may not be ready for this generation of consumers because we have not accurately understood what's coming from technology or from the consumer markets.

The relationship between paper or printed forms of information services and the electronic or computerized accessible versions of these services must be rationalized better according to Cuadra. In the future, the computerized services must be made to carry more of the cost burdens of capturing and preparing the information products. With costs and prices of print services continuing to exceed the rate of inflation, the printed forms of services are doomed to extinction.

According to Cuadra, abstracting and indexing publishers need to turn to imaginative ways of packaging and reconstituting information services from their databases. This can only be successful through accurate market segmentation and understanding of the user communities for information services.

Online distribution patterns may not change radically but there is a need for changes to the way online pricing is carried out. Continued reliance upon the connect hour form of pricing will damage the online vendors and publishers. Other methods of charging are possible now and need to be explored in the face of newer faster hardware and great changes or pressures from user populations who can apply online services in ways that make connect hour charging sadly out of date.

Microcomputers will soon enter the mainstream of online usage. They now can take off large portions of databases for further processing that does not count toward the revenue of database publishers or online vendors. In the future, some publishers may withdraw from the direct online market and instead send users updates of files on video disks.

Cuadra spoke about the needs of publishers and online vendors to study and respond to the needs of the user communities they serve. Clear communication of product features and benefits is paramount as the number of databases proliferates and as the users become more demanding in their requirements for useful details about files. Users have a difficult time with the multiplicity of systems that now face them. Some common command language is desired by users. This desire is keenly felt by systems management but they are somewhat victims of the historical development of their systems.

Libraries are facing a funding crisis that threatens the services they can provide. Appeals to the federal government may or may not result in substantial

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attention from Washington, In the meantime, librarians are having to market their services more realistically to communicate the benefits they offer. They must learn to offer non-bibliographic materials and services to go along with the bibliographic files they now search for patrons. This will move them toward a research support role in the future. Libraries must change their self concept from that of being a collection point to being a source of information - change from being a getter of what's on hand to becoming a go getter of sources wherever they may be.

As more end users get involved in online searching, marked segmentation of the market and the services will occur. Instead of being trained on many databases, end users will search a few highly pertinent files. This must be encouraged in order to shift the burden of system training and database expertise off of the overburdened information intermediary and professional library staff members who carry the great bulk of the searching load today.

Database publishers/suppliers must begin to reach out and train the end users. They indeed represent a fertile market that can accept and use online systems if the retrieval systems and databases are structured to fill their needs.

## MANAGING CHANGE - RECOGNIZING AND USING OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Oron South, an organizational development consultant to the Internal Revenue Service, spoke to attendees about change, how to live with it and how to manage it for the good of organizations. In less than an hour South revealed new ways of looking at, understanding, dealing with, and moving toward the management of change within people and organizations.

Dr. South gave participants a detailed handout of aspects of change that could be studied after his presentation which was meant to get attendees started thinking

about the complexities and challenges of change.

## CASE STUDIES SHOW CHANGES IN A & I TECHNIQUES

Wednesday afternoon was taken up with a series of informative and engaging case histories of how technological change and computerized advancements have been adapted and adopted for progress by information organizations.

Brett Butler detailed the interesting application of Apple microcomputers to data capturing and basic editing and database preparation functions at Information Access Corporation (IAC). How microcomputers can serve as intelligent terminals as well as editing and data preparation systems was clearly shown by Butler.

The photocomposition system at the American Institute of Physics (AIP) was described by Robert H. Marks. Marks detailed how the ATEX and UNIX systems work at AIP to prepare primary journals and OHI databases. The special problems that AIP faced with scientific notation and special characters in their font requirements was especially noteworthy. The near cliché admonition of planning, and a clear knowledge of how the new typesetting systems fit into an enhanced production scheme are the keys to success in changing to such systems.

Presentations about the evolution of Physics Briefs in Germany, the opportunities and problems involved in indexing museum collections and in operating museum networks, and how Engineering Index has developed an engineering information system at its headquarters in New York, took up the rest of the afternoon.

At the conclusion of the day, one attendee remarked that it was easy to understand how adopting new computerized approaches to information organization and publishing needed careful management and

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presented exciting challenges to the entire field. "However, with so many primary journals now being computer typeset, when will full text systems be a reality?", rhetorically asked the thoughtful attendee.

## BAMFORD, ZURKOWSKI, HENDERSON TAKE FUTURE LOOK, RAISE QUESTIONS

Chaired and moderated by Herb Nobles of IBM, Thursday morning's panel of Harold Bamford, Paul Zurkowski, and Madeline M. Henderson gave a view of implications of new technologies in the future.

Bamford, of NSF, was doing double duty at the conference. He filled in for Howard Resnikoff who had to attend a conference in India. Bamford reiterated many of the high level policy and governmental issues facing the further development of information services in the U.S. and internationally. The computer is central to information flows. These flows will naturally have to cross national boundaries and one great challenge within our time will be the orderly control and not repressive regulation of transborder data flow.

Bamford emphasized that enough new technology exist today to keep the information producing firms busy for a generation. The greatest progress within the bounds of current computer systems will be in the area of mass storage systems and rapid access times for retrieval of data, including numbers, indexed records and full text. The time to prove the promising video disc technology will be in the 1980's.

Paul G. Zurkowski, President of the Information Industry Association (IIA), addressed himself to the history of the control of information and the present and future implications of technologies and government practices on the regulation of information flows. Going back to the guilds and the control the Holy Roman Catholic Church held over the literacy and the information content of documents produced and disseminated, Zurkowski traced how control and

manipulation of printing (books) greatly influenced civilization. He drew parallels between the monastic and guild controls of information in the middle ages and the current practices of governments and the free market system to produce and disseminate information. "Those who control the information switches wield great power," said Zurkowski.

Madeline M. Henderson addressed standards with realism and the insight of many years of work and observations in the field. Standards in production systems - computers, software interfaces, etc., and in distribution systems - mass storage, communications protocols, formats, etc., are important but elusive to establish and to maintain. She pointed out that successful international information exchange and data flow will need greater standards commitments in the future.

## NEW PRODUCTS AND SERVICES SESSION CENTERS ON DOCUMENTS, LASAR MASS STORAGE, AUTOMATIC VOICE TRANSLATION TO PRINT, AND OPTICAL STORAGE MEDIA

Collin Mick of Applied Communication Research in Palo Alto, raised the prospect that traditional definitions of documents, articles, and the information packages that end users want and are looking for might not fit the definitions that the abstracting and indexing communities have been using. Mick likened the challenge facing the A & I services to the popular challenge of engaging the right side of the human brain to spur creativity. "We are traditionally left brain people," said Mick. "Right brainness breeds fresh looks at and creative solutions to the problems before us."

Mick went on to describe index and abstract systems and full text delivery methods in conjunction to user or researcher

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information needs.

General Electric is exploring high density storage through laser recording techniques on highly specialized media so small they have to be worked with under powerful microscopes. After showing examples of the equipment and processes for making the storage devices, Kirby Vosburgh predicted that it will be about five years until devices practical enough for common applications will begin to find the commercial light of day. A later presentation by the Harris Corporation on similar work by their scientists confirmed Vosburgh's forecasts.

"In the next two years we will learn if the video/optical disk is of great promise for mass information storage and retrieval," says Charles Goldstein of the National Library of Medicine. Goldstein, at work with video disks for several years, showed the disks and the playback units, along with densities and examples of programs of data that can be put on them as read only storage sources. With resolution quality problems resolved, the video disk could become very important for information services because it can carry text, still or motion frames, each indexable and addressable through main frame or micro computer search systems.

Robert Mercer of IBM revealed some of the progress that is being made in voice communication with computers, or, how to take human voice input to a computer and get a "first copy quality," printed output from a printer or typewriter. Mercer, in a captivating presentation that combined phoenetics, semantics and computer science, explained how experiments at IBM are progressing toward the realization of this long held ideal of "speak and write."

At the present time, using a large IBM 370 computer, it requires 1,000

seconds of processor time to satisfactorily transpose one second of human voice input into print. He predicted that another decade might be required before serious applications of voice - to - print systems become feasible.

ATLANTA MEETING THEME, "RE-USE AND RE-PACKAGING OF INFORMATION," HOLDS GREAT INTEREST, IMPORT FOR DATABASE PRODUCERS, ONLINE SERVICES, USERS: WIDE RANGE OF VIEWS, CHALLENGING DISCUSSION SESSIONS PLANNED FOR SEPTEMBER

Database suppliers fear piracy of their files - unauthorized and royalty-free republication of segments of their products which will rob them of revenue. Online services fear emerging hardware and software techniques that can be used to take off computer readable search results from one or more files that can then be combined, edited and further processed without need for further connect time to the host system. Users fear a thwarting of their move toward new more efficient intelligent terminals, post search editing of online searches ("Why give ugly searches to management?"), and the trend toward electronic files of search results instead of paper copies, when they have no real intent to pirate, steal or cheat anybody.

Clearly, the needs and practices of the database producers, online and batch search services, and online users are entering a phase of conflict of interests and of practices that most likely violate existing usage and user contracts.

These needs, conflicts, and some paths towards methods of resolution will be examined and explored in a solidly

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packed meeting at the Atlanta Marriot Hotel - September 21-23, 1980.

A Sunday evening social mixer will open the meeting on September 21. This will give all attendees and participants a chance to mingle and begin airing their views in an informal setting.

Monday morning, following the ASIDIC business meeting, there will be two hours of formal presentations by a select group of speakers. Following lunch, work sessions (discussion groups) will take up the morning themes and further develop positions, ideas, conflicts, etc. that each group decides need to be explored.

Tuesday morning will be devoted to the work sessions reports and open discussion between all attendees. The meeting is scheduled to adjourn at noon on Tuesday.

The speakers for Monday morning will be directed by session chairman Melvin Day, Director for NTIS. The speakers include:

Arthur W. Elias - Director, Professional Service, BLOSIS

Peter J. Chenery - Director, North Carolina Science and Technology Research Center

Lois Granick - Director of PsycINFO and Executive Editor of Psychological Abstracts

William Koch - Director, American Institute of Physics

Gene Garfield - President, Institute of Scientific Information (ISI)

Kathie Shenton - Manager, Petroleum and Chemical Information Services  
SDC Search Service

The full topics and final program details will be sent out in the July meeting announcement and in the next issue of the newsletter.

Room reservations can be made directly with the Atlanta Marriot (404)659-6500.

To get the preferred ASIDIC rate, it must be clearly noted on your reservations that you are registering to attend the ASIDIC meeting. Reservation cards will be included in the meeting announcement sent out in late July.

Any questions about the fall meeting should be directed to Herb Nobles at IBM (914)686-3340.

## PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ASIDIC BY-LAWS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE FALL BUSINESS MEETING, SEPTEMBER 22

The Executive Committee recommend to the membership that changes be made to the By-Laws as listed on the accompanying pages. In making these recommendations, the Committee believe that there is now a need for two additional Standing Committees - Membership and Publications. The Publications Committee for the ASIDIC Newsletter. Provision is made for a more generalized ASIDIC address and for a recognition of Roberts' Rules of Order as the authority for the conduct of all ASIDIC Business Meetings and Meetings of the Executive Committee. Finally, the Executive Committee recommend a change to By-Law VII to define more explicitly the responsibilities of the Finance Committee and of the Secretary/Treasurer with regard to ASIDIC financial matters.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE ASIDIC BY-LAWS

For Consideration at the Fall Business Meeting, September 22

CURRENT	PROPOSED
<p>BY-LAW II -- Section 7.</p> <p>The Executive Committee shall annually appoint an Editor for the Newsletter who shall be responsible for preparing the content of the Newsletter to be published quarterly. The Secretariat shall be responsible for duplication and distribution.</p>	<p>BY-LAW II -- Section 7.</p> <p>Delete complete Section.</p>
<p>BY-LAW IV -- Section 1.</p> <p>The Standing Committees of ASIDIC shall be:</p>	<p>BY-LAW IV -- Section 1</p> <p>The Standing Committees of ASIDIC shall be:</p>
<p>(a) Education Committee: to plan and conduct ASIDIC's educational activities.</p>	<p>(a) Education Committee: to plan and conduct ASIDIC's educational activities.</p>
<p>(b) Finance Committee: to review the financial affairs of ASIDIC as prescribed in the By-Laws and requested by the Executive Committee.</p>	<p>(b) Finance Committee: to conduct the financial affairs of ASIDIC.</p>
<p>(c) Planning Committee: to conduct planning activities at the request of the Executive Committee.</p>	<p>(c) Membership Committee: to alert potential members about ASIDIC activities.</p>
<p>(d) Program Committee: to plan and conduct programs at the Spring and Fall meetings, or at other times as requested.</p>	<p>(d) Planning Committee: to propose long-range plans, policies and directions.</p>
<p>(e) Standards Committee: To review and propose standards, and to serve as liaison with other standards groups</p>	<p>(e) Program Committee: to plan and conduct programs at the Spring, Fall and other meetings.</p>
	<p>(f) Publications Committee: to assume responsibility for ASIDIC publications.</p> <p>(g) Standards Committee: to review and propose standards, and to serve as liaison with other standards groups.</p>



CURRENT

BY-LAW IV -- Section 2

These committees shall be chaired by a Member appointed by the Executive Committee and composed of Members selected by the committee chairman and approved by the Executive Committee. Each committee will report to the Executive Committee. The Planning Committee shall not be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee.

PROPOSED

BY-LAW IV -- Section 2

These committees shall be chaired by a member nominated by the President and approved by the Executive Committee and composed of members selected by the committee chairman and approved by the Executive Committee. Standing committees report to the Executive Committee. The chairman and committee members of all committees shall serve at the pleasure of the Executive Committee. The President will be an ex officio member of all committees.

BY-LAW IV -- Section 3

The Planning Committee shall not be chaired by a member of the Executive Committee.

BY-LAW V -- Section 1

The postal address of the Secretariat is P. O. Box 8105, Athens, Georgia 30601.

BY-LAW V -- Section 1

The location of the Secretariat will be Athens, Georgia.

BY-LAW VI -- Section 3

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for insuring that all meetings of ASIDIC and meetings of the Executive Committee are conducted in accordance with recognized rules of order and that decisions are in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws.

BY-LAW VI -- Section 3

The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for insuring that all meetings of ASIDIC and meetings of the Executive Committee are conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Roberts' Rules of Order and that decisions are in accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws.

CURRENT

BY-LAW VII -- FINANCES -

Section 1.

The Secretary/Treasurer shall propose an annual budget and procedures for financial management for the following year for review by the Executive Committee prior to the business session of the Fall Meeting. The budget shall include projected income from all sources as well as projected expenses.

Section 2.

The Executive Committee will review, revise if necessary, and approve the annual budget for the following year prior to the business session of the Fall Meeting.

Section 3.

The Executive Committee shall determine the schedule of dues, as well as charges for any items sold by ASIDIC.

Section 4.

The Executive Committee will review, revise if necessary, and approve the procedures for financial management. These procedures will include the specification of the manner in which disbursements are made from ASIDIC, and the frequency and nature of financial reports to be made to the Executive Committee.

Section 5.

Dues shall be payable at the beginning of each calendar year or immediately after acceptance as a Member. Notices of dues payable will be sent to Members not later than October 31 preceding the calendar year to which they apply

PROPOSED

BY-LAW VII -- FINANCES -

Section 1.

The Finance Committee will consist of the Secretary/Treasurer and three members who are not members of the Executive Committee. The Finance Committee shall not be chaired by the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 2.

The Finance Committee shall propose an annual budget and procedures for financial management for the following year for review by the Executive Committee prior to the business session of the Fall Meeting. The budget shall include projected income from all sources as well as projected expenses.

Section 3.

The Secretary/Treasurer shall dispense the funds of ASIDIC as authorized by the Executive Committee. The President is authorized to do so in the absence of the Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 4.

The Finance Committee will annually conduct a financial review of the previous fiscal year and report their findings in writing at the business session of the Spring Meeting. At their option, they may authorize an external financial audit. Expense of an external audit will be met by ASIDIC.

Section 5.

The Executive Committee will review, revise if necessary, and approve the annual budget for the following year and report on the Budget to the Membership at business session of the Fall Meeting.

CURRENT

BY-LAW VII -- (Continued)

Section 6. A Finance Committee consisting of two members who are not members of the Executive Committee will be appointed by the President for two-year terms. The Finance Committee will annually conduct a financial audit of the previous fiscal year and report their findings in writing to the Members at the Spring Meeting.

PROPOSED

BY-LAW VII -- (Continued)

Section 6. The Executive Committee shall approve the schedule of dues, as well as charges for any items sold by ASIDIC.

Section 7. The Executive Committee will review, revise if necessary, and approve the procedures for financial management. These procedures will include the specification of the manner in which disbursements are made from ASIDIC, and the frequency and nature of financial reports to be made to the Executive Committee.

Section 8. Dues shall be payable at the beginning of each calendar year or immediately after acceptance as a Member. Notices of dues payable will be sent to Members not later than October 31 preceding the calendar year to which they apply.