Thinking strategically

The average businessperson searching for information today has to think of the many sources and forms that the information could appear in. In the early 1980s, computer database information began to supplement information sources on paper or microfiche.

In the late 1980s, a wide range of different optical media is on the market, ISDN is being comercialized in a number of countries, and other databases work by sending CD-ROMs, high density diskettes or hard disc packs through the post. Transactional services are also becoming more common. By the late 1990s, the array of information services could be chaotic or anarchistic . . . unless people think strategically.

The professional today needs to act in a more comprehensive way to check all these possibilities of information; he or she also needs an information sieve mechanism to make sure he receives only the information that is vital to him and that he doesn't miss new important sources. Both people and professional sectors need to develop information strategies to deal with the information explosion occurring both in quantity and in the number of systems.

European professional sectors should decide what information infrastructures they would ideally need for optimal efficiency in the late 1990s and a functioning Single European Market. Between then and now, IMPACT 2 should be active to bring people, energies and ideas together and help create pilot/demonstration projects to make them work.

IMPACT pilot/demonstration projects selected

Sixteen proposals have been chosen for implementation, on certain conditions, as pilot/demonstration projects for the European information services market. Specific key information areas such as patents, information on standards, tourism information as well as types of technology like intelligent interfaces or image based information will be covered by the projects. A number of other projects have been retained for consideration to be followed up, if funds remain available after launching the 16 proposals initially selected.

The Commission (DG XIII-B) presented the results of the evaluation procedure following the recent call for proposals at the meeting of 10 May and 21 June of the Senior Officials Advisory Committee (SOAC) for the IMPACT programme.

In all 167 proposals were received by the deadlines, and the total amount of funds requested was 145 million ECU. However only 19 million ECUs is available from the Community for support. Most of the proposals were related to image banks, intelligent interfaces or tourism information. On average four organizations were involved in each proposal, indicating a successful Europe-wide collaboration.

The evaluation by Commission staff and external experts was conducted between 6 March and 28 April 1989. A total of 41 external experts were involved, each devoting up to 15 days for the work. At least two experts were involved in a preliminary examination and three experts in a more extended consideration

of each proposal. Commission staff acted as evaluation team coordinators.

Patent Information

Europat

Digitized patent documents from the major European offices and the USPTO will be placed on CD-ROM covering initially pharmaceuticals. This information will be accessed at specialized PC-based workstations; user-friendly software will give direct access to multiple online hosts to identify patents of interest, with automatic retrieval of such patents in soft or hard copy from CD-ROMs. The CD-ROMs will be held in a juke-box to permit auto-selection. Services will be provided for national patent office use, public access, and for private use by industrial users.

Markush-Darc

The project is engaged in the creation of a user-friendly graphical system for storing and retrieving chemical structures in patent documents specifically patents with "Markush formulae".

Epos

This strategic project will create a dictionary of synonyms covering similar technical concepts, initially in the English language. It could help those searching for patent information to navigate in the international patent classification (IPC) and will thus allow an easier and more effective use of full text databanks in the English language. If the English language version proves successful, Epos could be developed for other European languages.

Image banks

MNAM

A multimedia atlas of the Mediterranean region will be produced on CD-ROM. It covers geographical, agricultural, environmental and industrial information, and combines data, images, digital maps and graphics. Use of CD-ROM would be complemented by a central database, designed to provide remote access through existing and emerging networks. Communications standards for multimedia information will be tested and evaluated.

IMPACT pilot/demonstration

TECDOC

At least four different countries should benefit from this project which places technical document images from the car industry on a CD-ROM. Blue collar workers in repair shops, sales offices and garages will be able to access text, image and data information. TEC-DOC will provide multilingual information via an extremely easy application software and will make use of SGML (ISO 8879) approach to structure full text in standardized formats. The project will cover some 30 test sites initially, and should lead to other innovative applications in the blue and white collar environments.

500 years after

The project is designed to coincide with the quincentenary celebrations of Columbus's discovery of the New World in 1992, the Seville Universal Exposition, the Barcelona Olympics and the Madrid-European Cultural Capital events during the same year. A collection of optical technology based discs will be produced with multimedia information on a broad based view of Europe (mainly Spain, Portugal and Italy) and Latin America. This will cover current economic and social conditions and relations while also offering historical information relating to the celebrations.

Intelligent interfaces

Carte info

This project combines a new marketing approach with a value added dissemination network. It offers access to a broad variety of information services by a "private kiosk" (single contract, single bill). The selection of the most appropriate information service is supported by an expert system. Once connected to the selected service the user could use predefined requests or inquiry in assisted mode.

MITI

The MITI project will merge two existing intelligent interfaces, LAM and TOME Searcher, into a joint interface product combining the most important features of the individual products. A fully automated system for novice users or users not familiar with a certain domain, and a partly automated system for experienced searchers will be the most important functions to private, easy and uniform access to different databases on a variety of hosts.

Disnet

A Domain Independent intelligent information and Services NETwork interface in combination with central facilities will provide a transparent access to online and off-line information and services. Initially, the system will be tested and demonstrated in the area of agriculture, and later on be extended to other areas.

Tourism information

Ulysses

This project will combine developments in three Member States (France, Portugal and Ireland) for the creation of a large scale system for the collection, electronic storage and dissemination of touristic information. It will be structured and delivered in such a manner that it could form a model for other areas. The implementation will be coordinated by an international association of automobile clubs.

AIT – Tourism information service

This project would develop a broadly-based neutral database of tourist information that would reach a mass market of automobile club members. The information will also be offered to other user groups or commercial outlets. It is expected that the project will make a major contribution to the development and implementation of international standards in the field of tourism information.

Teletourismo

The objective of this project is the creation of a multilingual hotel information and reservation system covering several countries in the Mediterranean area. Different low-cost updating and access methods will be provided. Interlinking with existing hotel reservation systems is envisaged.

European fair and congress network

The project will develop a transferable model of a disk based interactive information service for congress events and related touristic facilities. A distributed database including videodisc application will form the core of data storage. The system can be fed with all kinds of information (digital data, images, voice). Data exchange will be based on available public networks, including possible extension to ISDN.

Tourism operating information and distribution system (ISDN)

The project envisages, at least partly, the replacement of printed catalogues and additional information distributed by tour operators through a digitized image database. The service will also include availability, fares and reservation data. Users (travel agents) will have access to the multimedia service via ISDN. Test sites will be in France, Germany and the UK.

Information on standards

Alpha Dido

Development of a multilingual natural language interface using distributed intelligence at three levels with domain knowledge models and cross-file links to significantly improve access to an electronic interactive and transactional information system for the construction industry in Europe. The pilot project for test within participating countries will be based on construction standards and associated databases varying from directories to full text and illustrations. These will be accessible either by procedural guides and expert systems, or via classifications, keywords and indexes. Design and other calculations will be included for application to numerical data extracted from or input to the system.

Harmonized production of standards

This project examines a method common to institutions involved in standardization (especially AFNOR, BSI and DIN) for document structuring (using a SGML-type approach) in order to mix text, mathematical formulae, tables, graphics and images top form full-text databases prototype which should enable homogenous electronic publishing and data retrieval. The project also includes a feasibility study on interfacing this database with computational software, numerical databases and CAD systems. The prototype database will comprise documents concerning EDI standards in the building sector (approx. 39 to 80 documents) and will be in the working languages of the European Standardization Committee (English, French, German). It will be possible to exchange all data between the different production and distribution sites.

Tour of capitals for IMPACT 2

London, 24 May

Commission officials are visiting all the capitals of Member States to exchange views for the preparation of IMPACT 2, the Information Market Policy Action programme for the years 1991-5.

London hosted the first meeting on 24 May. About 100 users and other participants from the UK information industry, and relevant government bodies were present.

DG XIII-B director Cornelis Jansen van Rosendaal gave an overview of the encouraging results of IMPACT 1, and initiated a structured discussion aided by a discussion document.

Participants asked the Commission to use its powers to help develop the Community information market. Specifically, IMPACT 2 should be directed towards helping the user gain easier access to information with facilities such as a Europe-wide pay-as-you-go services, without contracts, based on the "Kiosk" concept. It was important to establish a support environment under IMPACT 2, to allow advanced information services to flourish.

More efforts to encourage IT literacy — or changing people's attitude to the use of IT and further awareness actions were also requested. However, it was recognized that information products have to be better targeted towards specific user needs, special consumer interest groups (including entertainment) and creating services which actively bring information rather than acting passively.

Data broadcasting (including satellite use) would be enhanced by Europe-wide deregulation. In order to include the whole information chain a "mega stimulation programme" was needed to apply IT advances to information services. This would include multilingual application in the marketplace.

On the publishing industry side, it was stated that a major effort for the more widespread use of CD-ROMs was required and that the new large Japanese programme to encourage electronic publishing should be studied and lessons drawn. Successful European ventures such as Reuters should also be analyzed. The importance of standards (including EDI) was underlined and the need for continuous monitoring of the market for new opportunities was emphasized. There was a need to address the shortage of skilled people for the information industry.

Another proposal was to develop a European information product export promotion scheme. British companies, as the continental opposite numbers had done in the past, were now reducing the provision of information about their companies (e. g. financial situation).

Multilingual vocabularies for professionals needed to be developed and made available to encourage the use of machine or automatic translation facilities that were already in use.

The London visit was followed by visits by Commission staff to Frankfurt on 14 June, Paris on 16 June and Madrid on 29 June.

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Madrid, 29 de Junio

Commission officials including Mr. V. Parajón Collada (fourth from left) talk to Spanish information users and providers in Madrid.

En la serie de visitas que se vienen realizando de las capitales Comunitarias, con motivo de la sensibilización sobre el Programa IMPACT 2, el pasado 29 de Junio se reunieron en Madrid una delegación de la Comisión de las Comunidades Europeas encabezada por el Sr. Parajón Collada, Director General Adjunto de la Dirección General XIII.

En la presencia del Sr. Llorente representante del Ministro español de Transporte, Turismo y Telecomunicaciones, y de un numeroso público asistente el Sr. Parajón Collada presentó una rapida visión de la situación y los resultados del programa IMPACT 1.

Uno de los puntos más interesantes de la reunión fué el énfasis que se hizo sobre la necesidad de tener más conocimiento sobre la información y sus fuentes, mejorar la calidad de las bases de datos actuales, posibilidad de una práctica profesional en el mercado. Asi como las desventajas de algunas regiones en relación con otras y la necesidad del apoyo a las diferentes lenguas de la Comunidad.

En la sesión de la tarde el Sr. Parajón Collada presentó las líneas generales del programa IMPACT 2 e invitó a los participantes a responder a las acciones propuestas. Mencionó que uno de los puntos necesarios para estimular el mercado es tanto la oferta como la demanda, desarrollar normas y una apropiada "infraestructura". Agregó la improtancia de la participación de las diferentes regiones en la Comunidad Económica Europea.

El Sr. Parajón Collada dijo que el IMPACT 2 puede nuevamente tener acciones horizontales y verticales, mencionó que detrás de la cofinanciación de proyectos piloto con mecanismos innovad-ores, está la necesidad de sostener proyectos estratégicos en la sociedad de la información.

Se hicieron comentarios sobre la oportunidad de aumentar la participación española en el programa IMPACT 2, además de la necesidad de establecer alguna clase de asociación nacional sobre la industria de la información y la ne-cesidad de tener una buena coordinación entra la CEC, el gobierno nacional y la industria. Los participantes insistieron sobre la importancia que la Comisión tiene en el desarollo de los servicios de información.

El Sr. Parajón Collada enfatizó en el papel del sector público como catalizador en la promoción del mercado de la información e invitó a los participantes a someter sus impresiones escribiendo a la Comisión.

AWARENESS

ECHO'S 5000th customer

Mr. Alvarez (left of centre) receives a book about Luxembourg from Deputy Director General Vicente Parajón Collada.

Mr. L. Alberto Alvarez, director of the Spanish firm SI-TEL, Servicios de Información Telematicos S.A., became the 5000th customer of ECHO, the European Commission Host Organization in May 1989. ECHO acts as a test bed for advanced European information services and has more than tripled the number of its registered customers in the last three or four years.

SITEL is a young and dynamic company offering consultancy services in the field of telecommunications and the information market in general on a worldwide basis. Conceived with a view of exploiting the possibilities of the European market, SITEL has already forged cooperation agreements with other European partners to participate in the ESPRIT and RACE programmes. The ECHO service, which has a number of files detailing the European information market, will be a powerful tool to help SITEL customers.

Mr. Alvarez accepted and invitation of ECHO to visit the Commission and see the ECHO installations in Luxembourg. During his visit Mr. Alvarez had the opportunity to meet CEC officials and staff of ECHO and to see something of the Grand Duchy.

In congratulating ECHO on its 5000th customer, the Deputy Director General Mr. Vincente Parajón Collada said that ECHO services were answering may needs of the European Information Market through the Community programme, IMPACT. ECHO had an increasing role to play with the introduction of newer more powerful networks such as ISDN and broadband. In formulating policy for the European market, ECHO provided the directorate general with direct experience which might be otherwise difficult to obtain. This enabled the Commission to speak with authority at meetings of host operators and identify policy problems because it runs such a host. In addition it provided feedback on user problems of connection, contact with PTTs and other hosts, training, documentation and multilingual problems.

ECHO user group at Infobase
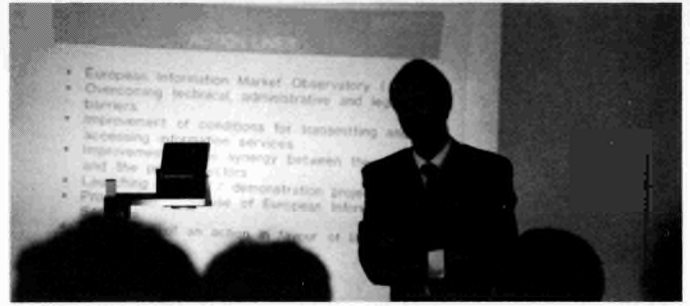
Mr. Axel Szauer of the Commission outlines the IMPACT programme to ECHO users.

New plans for ECHO and details of the European Commission information market programme were announced to more than seventy people who attended a meeting of ECHO users on 9 May 1989. Held during the Infobase exhibition and conference at Frankfurt/Main the user group meeting heard Mr. Axel Szauer of the Commission's DG XIII/B outline the main activities under the Community IMPACT (Information Market Policy ACTion) programme. ECHO now has more than 5000 registered users, Mr. Ro- land Haber, head of ECHO services, told the user group. Some twenty multilingual databases are accessed for 1600 connection-hours per month. More than 9000 logons are performed including those from public passwords. ECHO services are available through all national videotex services. A range of improvements to the services and new facilities were also announced by Mr. Haber.

Other user group meetings in European cities are being planned to coincide with major online exhibitions.

Learn about Echo

ECHO training courses will be given in

The ECHO team is likely to be in a town near you in the next few months. Visit it the ECHO stand at the following venues or contact the ECHO help desk if you want to know how we can help you.

Arhus, Denmark		in August
Mulheim, FRG		in August
Brussels, Belgium		in September
Newcastle, UK		in September
Brussels, Belgium		in September
Porto, Portugal		in October
Thessaloniki, Greece		in October
Lyon, France		in October
Barcelona, Spain		in October
Brussels, Belgium		in October
Strasbourg, France		in November
Brussels, Belgium		in November
Brussels, Belgium		in December
Thessaloniki, Greece	Thessaloniki Fair	1—7 September 1989
Bari, Italy	Fiera di Levante	8—18 September 1989
Paris, France	Infodial	19—22 September 1989
Düsseldorf, FRG	Internal Market '92	19—20 September 1989
London, UK	Datacom	27—29 September 1989
Lisbon, Portugal	Expolingua	27—29 September 1989
Geneva, Switzerland	ITU-Com	3—8 October 1989
Stockholm, Sweden	Stockholm Online	5—6 October 1989
Milan, Italy	SMAU	5—9 October 1989
Munich, FRG	Systems '89	16—20 October 1989
Toulouse, France	SITEF	16—22 October 1989
Hanover, FRG	Info-Europe	17—19 October 1989
Luxembourg	Bureautec	24—27 October 1989
London, UK	Itex	1—3 November 1989
Thessaloniki, Greece	Infosystems	1—5 November 1989
Frankfurt, FRG	Expolingua	8—12 November 1989
Birmingham, UK	Techmart	13—15 November 1989
Brussels, Belgium	Esprit week	27 Nov—1 Dec 1989
London, UK	Online '89	12—14 December 1989
Amsterdam, NL	Eurocom	12—14 December 1989

4

TED survey shows new uses for database

A survey of users of the Tenders Electronic Daily database, undertaken by ECHO, has indicated novel uses of the file. The main use of the tenders file is market observation of prices, firms and countries: 64 marked that their purpose was market observation against 59' who indicated submission of bids; 18 other indicated it was information for other people.

The use of TED for market observation or surveys is enhanced now that there is information about who gained a successful bid in a call for tenders. With this information, firms can find out who is in the market at any particular moment, what is being bought and at what price. Having the information in database form facilitates further analysis, say on a geographical or company basis.

Most of the users of TED came from small firms employing nine or less employees. Only a quarter of the sample represented firms of more than 500 employees. When asked if they were searching the database for themselves, their boss, colleagues or other companies, most of the sample said it was for other companies, indicating a high number of information brokers. After that "myself" was the next highest end user category, followed by colleagues then the boss.

Purpose of using TED
What do you use TED for?

Size of company
How many company employees?

End user of TED
For whom do you search TED?

Most user were happy with the number of countries available on TED (nearly ninety) but a number would like to see tenders from the USA and Canada and some other countries included. (Tenders from the USA have since been added to the coverage.)

After finding a suitable tender, most users (70) go ahead with a direct submission of a bid. A smaller number consult their CEC press and information centre (11), a Euro-info centre (9), a chamber of commerce (6) or an embassy (3).

Most users prefer to access TED online, as against tele-fax, videotex or teletex. A menu driven system would be preferred by about a third of TED users, especially those who used the database only rarely. (By the end of the year a menu driven service will be offered by ECHO.)

Is TED successful? From the small sample it is impossible to say but a number of users indicated that they had gained a number of successful contracts using the database.

For more information on how TED could help your business, fill out the coupon below.

TED promotion campaigns

In Autumn some 300,000 European businesspeople will receive an invitation from **Eurodisc** to try out the TED database. Sent out in the form of diskette but made of card, **Eurodisc** offers a month's free trial to the Tenders Electronic Daily database and also access to other ECHO databases.
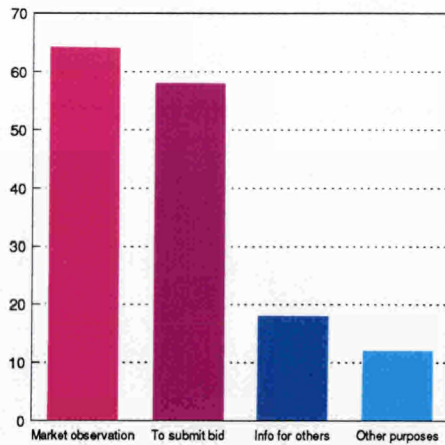
If they return the coupon, subscribers will receive a real computer diskette which gives samples of the information they can receive daily from TED. The diskette will also show them how to go about searching the database. With the free trial password, they can access the real database on ECHO and have four weeks to come up with a real business scoop.

A separate promotional operation was carried out by the **Euroletter** newsletter of the Bayrische Vereinsbank. Reaching some 20 000 readers, mainly in small and medium sized companies, the newsletter offered them access to TED for a trial period as well as free of charge access to ECHO databases.
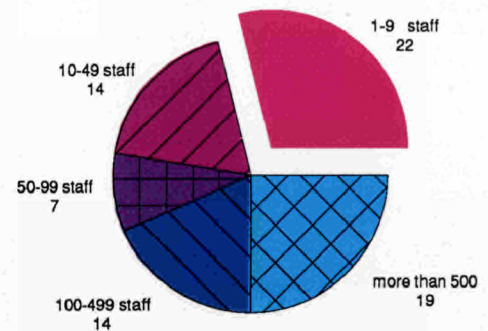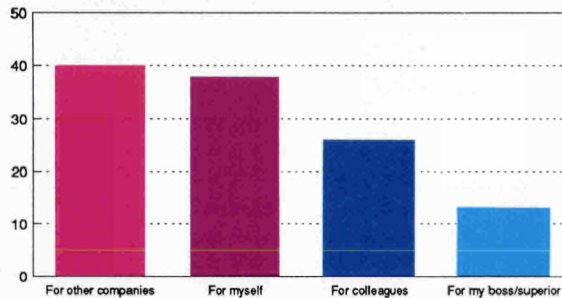
The subscriptions to other ECHO databases and to **Information Market** are valid beyond the period of the TED trial.

Contact: Mr. David Bach-Price
Eurodisc
Chilton, Clare
GB-Suffolk CO10 8QS
Tel: +44 787 277860
Fax: +44 787 277862

To ECHO, PO Box 2373, L-1023 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 488041   Fax: +352 488040   Telex: 2181

Yes please send me details about the tenders database, TED

Name . . . .
Position in company . . . .
Company . . . .
Address . . . .
. . . .
. . . .

Getting to 1992

If you want to know how Europe is progressing to 1992, one of the best ways is to check the **INFO 92** database on Eurobases and other hosts.

Specially conceived by Commission services to help the European public understand what is involved in relation to 1992, **INFO 92** summarizes the relevant legislation and Community programmes that will help make 1 January 1993, a Single European Market. Thus the IMPACT programme is mentioned under a single information services market.

How do you interrogate the base?

The Network User Address (NUA) is 270429212

When you get the connect message COM, type O (for Open) carriage return and then type EUROPE 92

The database is in menu driven mode and may need a few adjustments on your PC. If control characters appear on your screen, you should make sure that your PC or terminal is emulating VT100. (For example with CrossTalk, type at the command level EM VT100).

You then choose the language and follow the menu system.

Until September **INFO 92** is offered FREE. But hurry! The database is so popular, users are allowed only a limited amount of time to interrogate the base. Best download the information you need, which includes references to the main Commission documents.

Contact: Eurobases
C C E
200 rue de la Loi
B-1049 Brussels
Tel: +322 235 0001

Forward to 1992

"The countdown to 1992 is well under way and many other sectors of European industry are struggling to agree on standards," says Helen Derbishire in the new magazine for the business sector, **Open market 1992**. "But in the area of article numbering the frontiers have already come down." Barcoding allows retailers to assess what is being sold and when and the rapid collection of this data permits retailer and manufacturer alike to respond to the demands of the market place. Article numbering is a key element in EDI, electronic document delivery, and in implementing Just-in-Time manufacturing techniques.

Contact: Open Market 1992
Westminster Publishing
157 Marlborough Road
GB-London N19 4NF
Tel: +44 1 263 7750

Eurotra agreement

On 20 June the Council of Research Ministers adopted a number of decisions on Community research and development programmes including:

EUROTRA, the completion of a machine translation system of advanced design;

VALUE, dissemination and utilization of results from scientific and technological research 1989—92;

MONITOR — strategic analysis, forecasting and evaluation in matters of research and technology 1988—92;

DOSES — statistical expert systems 1989—92.

Library pilot demo projects

Inter Library Lending

The proposal calls for an Open Systems Interconnection pilot/demonstration project for interlending between library networks in Europe. The aim is to test and prepare communications-based user services which operate between computer systems and application software located in different countries.

In order to trace a book, for example, it is necessary to search the amalgamated or union catalogues which identify the item and its location/s. Although automation and network developments have improved the efficiency of interlending services in terms of item identification, holdings availability and supply within different countries, this has not been achieved internationally. The project will address the differing requirements of interlending services based on different national organizations and in terms of network and service functionality. It should demonstrate the capablities of OSI, improve efficiency of interlending services and help develop a strong Community service market for interlending services. Both a loan message service and an identification service can be foreseen.

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Library consortium CD-ROM

Coopération entre bibliothèques dans le domaine de l'informatique

Lors de la réunion du Conseil du 18 mai 1989, les ministres des affaires culturelles ont marqué leur intérêt pour les aspects culturels qui ressortent de la Communication de la Commission du 26 avril 1989. Celle-ci porte sur la coopération entre bibliothèques sur la base de l'application des nouvelles technologies de l'information. Ils ont pris acte avec satisfaction des progrès accomplis à l'égard de leur résolution du 27 septembre 1985 sur ce même sujet et des objectifs qui y ont été exposés. Les ministres ont invité la Commission à présenter au Conseil, le plus rapidement possible, des propositions concrètes qui devront être étudiées par les instances appropriées, y compris le Comité des affaires culturelles.

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Six national libraries have formed a consortium to improve the interchange of bibliographic records between them. CD-ROM technology was chosen as a cost-effective delivery medium both for bibliographic records and as a means to ensure widespread distribution of cataloguing data between European countries. Greater efficiency and economy as a result of access to major research collections should accrue. The project is divided into nine subprojects covering for example, common guidelines for the inversion of key data elements, common user interface including the definition of a basic European character set and multilingual aspects, online links to CD-ROM and prototypes of "tools" to facilitate access and manipulation of the data.

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Commission launches initiative to improve synergy between public and private sectors of information market
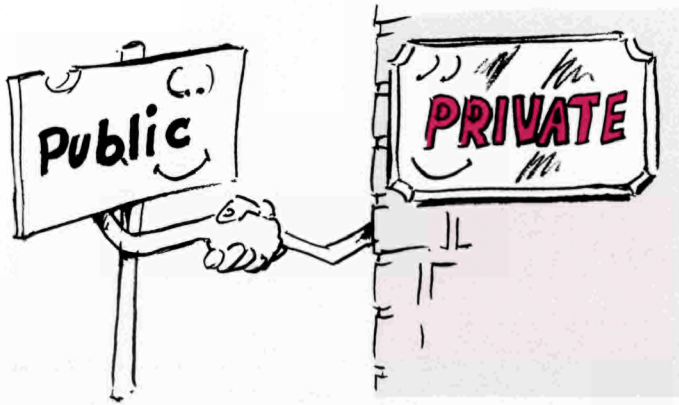
"Information is considered . . . a motor for industrial development . . . in a highly competitive world," writes Cornelis Jansen van Rosendaal in a new brochure, published by the Commission. The public sector, as a major producer of data and information, as a provider of information goods and services and as a consumer, should encourage initiatives leading to the development of a strong European information industry.

In order to encourage the synergy between public and private sectors, the Commission has made available a series of guidelines to help public and private bodies to work together. **The guidelines for improving the synergy between public and private sectors in the information market** are the result of a series of consultation and discussions between representatives of all participants of the market. The guidelines have been endorsed by representatives of Member States meeting within the Senior Officials Advisory Committee (SOAC).

The guidelines are considered essential in order to help the public sector in decision-making related to making information available for external use and supporting the development of the information market; and to establish certain ground rules for avoiding possible unfair competition.

The guidelines are considered advisory only and are aimed at providing a basic set of generally agreed principles and recommendations which can be used in the development of national guidelines in individual Member States. They are not directives but it is hoped that by virtue of their production at Community level, they will support national initiatives designed to promote the growth of the European information market.

The brochure is available in all Community languages on request.

What the guidelines cover

The brochure gives a general definition of what is meant by the public sector. Guidelines deal with the following issues:

- Under what conditions public information should be made available to the private sector.
- Should Member States compile their own guidelines
- Reviewing public sector policy: who should be involved.
- Negotiations and pricing policies
- Should restrictions be made on types of private sector customer or the territories to which it should be made available?
- Should exclusive contracts be given?
- Should the public sector rely on its own services or buy from the private sector?
- Should the public sector withdraw its own services from the market?
- How should the public sector charge royalties on databases it has produced and offered to a commercial company?
- Under what conditions should the public sector encourage new information service markets and innovation?
- Should national officials have access to databases in other countries and how should they pay for them?
- How should the public sector use its rights under the Berne convention on copyright?
- Will citizens still have the same rights of access to information if it passes from public to private sectors?

These and other issues are dealt with and explained in the brochure. Your copy can be secured by filling out the coupon and sending it or faxing it to the Commission.

Please send me a copy of the **Guidelines for improving the synergy between the public and private sectors in the information market.**

Language version: French ☐; English ☐; German ☐; Italian ☐; Spanish ☐; Greek ☐; Portuguese ☐; Dutch ☐; Danish ☐.

Name . . . .
Address . . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
. . . .
Telephone: . . . .

To Mr. David Buckley, CEC, DG XIII/B, L-2920 Luxembourg
Fax: +352 4301 2168 or 2847

Legal Advisory Board

The eighth meeting of the Legal Advisory Board for the information services market (LAB) took place in Luxembourg on 16–17 May and discussed the issue of liability of information services providers (database producers, hosts, PTTs).

Following a review of the current situation in all twelve Member States, the Commission was advised to draft relevant guidelines to be discussed with the LAB and information service providers and users in approximately 18 months time.

**Contact: Mr. G. Papapavlou
CEC, DG XIII-B
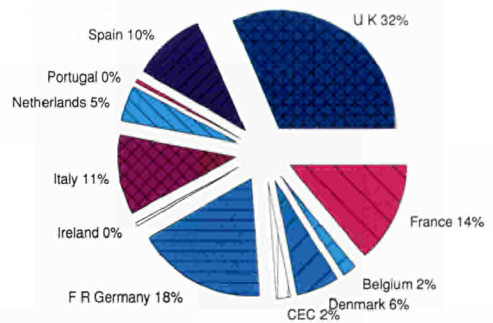JMO B4/018
L-2920 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 4301 4318**

7

European not-for-profit databases predominate over commercial

E C database production
According to type of producer

Not for profit ▮ For profit ▮
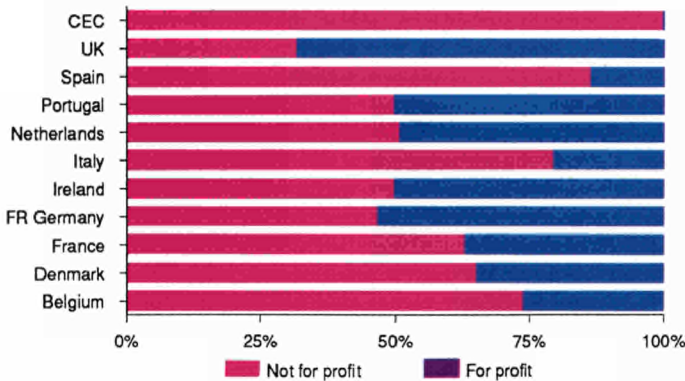
E C database production
Geographic distribution

IMO: Figures to nearest percentage

The United States dominates the worldwide production of online databases, according to the latest figures produced by the Commission's Information Market Observatory (IMO). Analyzing some 3288 unique databases (excluding subfiles) produced in 1987 and commercially available on 597 hosts, more than half (56 %) were produced in the USA and just over a quarter (27 %) were produced in the EC. However the growth rate is 3 % stronger in the EC (16 %) than the USA (13 %). (Videotex services were not included in the analysis).

One third of EC databases originate from the United Kingdom (32 %). Germany (18 %), France (14 %), Italy (11 %) and Spain (10 %) are the other major producers.

American databases seem aimed more at the end user while European databases have more bibliographical (giving titles and abstracts) or referral databases of more use to information professionals such as librarians or information brokers. The EC leads in the worldwide production of bibliographic databases

(39 %) but produces only half the number of factual databases compared to the USA, a quarter of the number of full text databases and one sixth the number of statistical databases compared to the USA.

The American market has encouraged the production of more for-profit databases than the EC, where the public sector and not for profit organizations predominate. In the US, for-profit database have risen from 80 % in 1986 to 83 % in 1987. In Europe the non-profit sector represents 55 %, though the commercial sector has increased slightly

from 44 % in 1986 to 45 % in 1987.

The United Kingdom (68 %) and German (53 %) databases are more likely to originate in the commercial sector than Spain, Italy or Belgium where three quarters or more of the supply comes from the not-for-profit sector.

Hosts increase faster than databases

The average user would probably prefer a larger number of databases on a single host; that would avoid the necessity of multiple contracts and access procedures. In the EC, however, there has been a sharp increase in the number of hosts (+27 %) without a corresponding increase in databases (+4 %). In the USA the number of hosts has increased by 4.5 % and the number of databases by just under a tenth.

On both sides of the Atlantic, databases are mainly domestically made (90 % in the USA and 82 % in the EC). However imports of databases have increased (+6 % in the USA and +9 % in the EC).

The EC exports more databases (235) than the USA (225) and it exports more databases (132) than it imports from there (105). The major database exporting country is the UK which accounts for three quarters of the databases entering the USA from the EC.

Where are US databases installed? Germany, Italy (where the European Space Agency Information Retrieval Service is located) and the UK are the main sites. On the other hand the intra-Community trade in databases remains limited: only 81 databases were exchanged among EC countries. The major intra EC exporter is UK with a

third of the databases; the major importers are Italy (28), UK (26) and Germany (16).

Information Market Observatory conclusions

● USA dominates the world production of online information

● The non-profit sector still predominates EC database production, despite growing commercial share

● The Community is strong in reference databases but weak in source database production

● The Community exports a greater number of databases to the US than it imports from the US.

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