ECHO NEWS

We've moved!

Our visiting address:

AIRPORT CENTRE,
5, RUE HÖHENHOF,
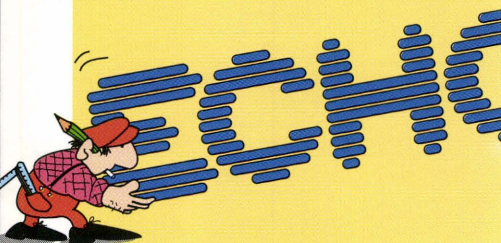LUXEMBOURG-SENNINGERBERG.

Our new telephone number:

+352-349811

Our new fax number:

+352-34981234.

Make sure you note these numbers in your diary without delay!
N.B.The postal address has not changed.

ECHO User Meeting to be held at IOLIM '91

Once again, the International Online Meeting will be held in London (Olympia 2, Kensington) from the 10-12 December. All UK customers will receive complimentary tickets to come and see one of the most important events of online information. Of course, ECHO (and CORDIS) will be present on the European Communities stand together with the OPOCE, EUROBASES and EUROSTAT.

ECHO kindly invites you to a User Meeting which will be held on 12 December from 11.00 hrs. to 13.00 hrs. at the London Olympia Hilton, 380 Kensington High Street, London W14 8NL (next to the exhibition hall). The meeting will focus on latest IMPACT/ECHO/CORDIS developments. Interested parties should call the ECHO help desk without delay, tel.:

+352-349811.

Free-phone services are available.

IMPACT INFORMATION DAY
– 6 November 1991
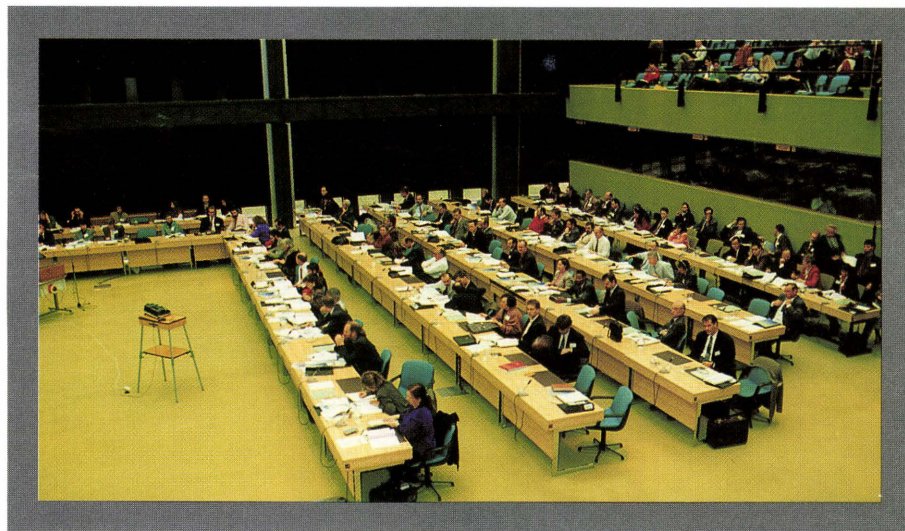
This information day, held in Luxembourg at the Commission of the European Communities, was organised as a direct result of the success of the Knowledge Transfer Meeting of October 1990. The amount of interest stimulated by this information day can be measured not only by the physical presence of some 300 participants, but also by the 1 500 requests for proceedings.

Chairing the day's programme, Mr Frans de Bruïne, Director of DG XIII/B, in his introductory speech outlined the background to the projects which were to be presented. In predictions for the future, he saw integration as the key word – integration of markets, of technologies (the multimedia approach), of information from local and remote sources, and of language products. IMPACT 2 will reflect these trends. In addition, the future should see increased transparency in terms of administration and billing on a pan-European scale. It was emphasised that IMPACT is not a technology development programme, but one geared to stimulating a European-wide information services market.

The morning session of the meeting was devoted to the promotion of European Information Services – a major action line within the IMPACT programme in which ECHO plays a vital role. Described as "DG XIII's window", ECHO puts theory into practice by showing how existing products can be developed and used

to the advantage of a European public. ECHO is therefore far more than a Host Organisation.

The projects currently undertaken by ECHO were presented in great detail which was further enforced by the "hands on" demonstrations which were constantly at the disposal of the participants. The unveiling of I'M Guide (for detailed explanation please see page 6 of this issue) and MIM (Maquette d'interrogation Multilingue, see ECHO News 4/90, 1/91 and page 2 of this issue) was a great success. The presence of ECHO in all operational videotex systems was thoroughly explained (see page 8).

People's Europe now available on ECHO through MIM!

Readers of ECHO News will remember that we featured two articles, written in French and English (4/90, 1/91), detailing the MIM (Multilingual Interrogation Mock-up) project, which shows the feasibility of multilingual interrogation of a full-text database using natural language.

This application is now available to all ECHO users (old and new!) and it enables you to consult the database "People's Europe", a Commission of the European Communities publication in three languages i.e. English, French and Italian. This search method is unique, in that you are able to receive the results of a search in a language which is different from that of the original interrogation language. A total of 6 bilingual pairs are possible!
The publication contains information on the individual and collective rights of the European citizen, as far as legislation is concerned, and describes certain EC actions and programmes. It's certainly a valuable reference tool to have beside you.

How can I connect to MIM?

Connection must first be established with the ECHO host. This database is available via:

☐ The public password (temporary password)
☐ The ECHO password
☐ Your personal password.

The option to access MIM will be listed within the ECHO main menu. Once this has been selected, the system will show the MIM main menu.
The first three options will provide you with detailed information on MIM. To launch a search, select the option number 4.

How can I search for information using MIM?

The search procedure consists of:
(1) The choice of the linguistic environment
(2) The interrogation itself
(3) The presentation of the replies
(4) The consultation of the full-text.

What sort of questions can I ask?

Don't forget you have 3 languages from which to choose. You may ask questions such as:

Equal opportunities between men and women
Mesures prises par l'Europe pour lutter contre le cancer
Che cosa e lo SME

How can I learn more about MIM?

All relevant information can be found in the main menu and at any time during the interrogation of the database.

N.B. Further information is also available when using the CCL version by typing:

☐ INFO MIM (to find out more about the MIM application)
☐ INFO MIMSUMMARY (which will provide you with a summary of the publication. This is of great use in helping you ask questions which specifically relate to the content of the database.)
☐ INFO MIMSEARCH (which explains how the database can be interrogated along with descriptive explanations of the menus which are displayed during the interrogation).

A brochure detailing MIM can be obtained from the ECHO help desk.

Tel.: +352-349811
Fax: +352-34981234.

XIII Magazine online at ECHO Poolkey: DG13

The XIII Magazine, produced by Directorate General XIII of the CEC, is now available online at ECHO. As you may already know, this magazine is compiled from a collection of articles written not only by independent journalists, but also by CEC officials. The magazine (both the online and the printed form) provides a global view of information technology and the telecommunications industry.

Users will be able to "flick through" this magazine online thanks to the user-friendly structure of the database. Some 53 "controlled terms" are present in the online version, meaning that searches may be carried out according to subject area. Such terms include:

☐ Applied sciences
☐ Audiotex
☐ Biology
☐ Calls for tender
☐ EDI (Electronic Data Interchange)
☐ Electronic mail
☐ Gateways
☐ Green Paper
☐ Libraries
☐ Mobile communications
☐ Multimedia
☐ Networks
☐ OSI (Open Systems Interconnection)
☐ R&D
☐ Videotex

(N.B. This list can be obtained by using the command **d ct=$**.)

Articles may be viewed in either long or short format, and INFO files are soon to be introduced in order to assist the user during an online search.

Whilst the controlled terms are a permanent feature of the database, the "header" fields (obtained by using the command **d hd=$**) will change according to the contents of the magazine.

Although the CT and HD fields are of great importance to the structure of the database, searches may also be conducted by:

☐ Author
☐ Title
☐ Page and/or issue number
☐ EEC programme
☐ Working title of author (e.g. Director General, Director or Journalist).

Access to this database may be obtained by using the passwords:

☐ ECHO
☐ The public password (a temporary 8-digit password which is valid for one month only, and is available from the ECHO help desk)
☐ Your own personal password (user code).

Once you are online, you may select this database using the poolkey: **DG13**.

We hope that you will enjoy using the database. Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the ECHO help desk.

Changes to the TRAIN database

The TRAIN database, ECHO's unique "online" training course has been replaced by an "online" training facility, which includes, within its menu screens, simplified and extensive explanations which will assist the user to master the art of online searching. This new facility will mean that the user will no longer require the CCL Training Manual (not to be confused with the ECHO User Manual) which originally accompanied the database.

Online surveys

In the last issue of ECHO News (3/91) we talked of the perils of sending and receiving questionnaires, and of how it would be much easier if surveys could be completed online.

Brainstorm Computer Solutions, based in London, hosted one such online survey (entitled **I'M Survey**) for a period of six months (December 1990 - June 1991). A total of 94 people "filled in" the questionnaire from all corners of the globe, and responses were given to questions such as:

    What network connection are you using?
    What terminal are you using?
    What do you use computers for?
    What foreign services do you use?

This method of conducting surveys has proved the feasibility of online questionnaires, and it is a feature which will be implemented on ECHO in the not too distant future. In this way, we can monitor your opinions on our services, and we look forward to the user

feedback such questionnaires will produce. What better way to gather information for market research?

We would also welcome any suggestions as to the type of questions you feel should be addressed in surveys such as this. Please contact the ECHO help desk if you have any suggestions to make.

For further information on BRAINSTORM, please contact:

BRAINSTORM Computer Solutions, 103A Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QN.

Tel.: +44-71-263-6926
Fax: +44-71-281-4411 (7 lines).

AVIS AUX minitelistes

ECHO, le serveur de la Commission des Communautés européennes, vous permet d'accéder, grâce à votre terminal MINITEL, à une vingtaine de bases de données. Ces bases de données sont gratuites à l'exception de TED. Pour accéder à nos bases de données, deux numéros vous sont proposés:

MINITEL BI-STANDARD (normes ASCII; type minitel 1 B, 10 B ou supérieur);

Taper: **3621**
Code du service   ECHO21 puis "retour chariot" (CR).
Le système vous répondra avec le message:
% THIS IS ECHO, PLEASE ENTER YOUR CODE
Tapez votre mot de passe pour ECHO puis "CR".
Vous entrez directement sur ECHO.
Attention: A ce niveau veuillez utiliser les touches ASCII et le "CR" (au lieu du ENVOI).

MINITEL NON BI-STANDARD:

Taper: **3613 puis ENVOI**
Code du service   ECHOLUX puis SUITE
Tapez votre NUI puis ENVOI
Le système vous répondra avec le message:
% THIS IS ECHO, PLEASE ENTER YOUR CODE
Taper votre mot de passe pour ECHO puis ENVOI.
Vous entrez directement sur ECHO.
Attention: A ce niveau veuillez utiliser la touche ENVOI.
Des pages d'information sur ECHO, la Communauté européenne et le Marché de l'Information sont

disponibles en 3614.
Taper: **3614**
Code du service   ECHO14 puis ENVOI

Si vous ne disposez pas encore d'un mot de passe personnel, veuillez utiliser le mot de passe public ECHO. Ce mot de passe vous permet d'accéder à une partie de nos bases de données. Vous trouverez également une option "MAILBOX" où vous pouvez demander gratuitement une documention plus détaillée ainsi qu'un mot de passe personnel.

IMPACT 2 – Green light received from the Council

With a budget of 64 million ECU, IMPACT 2 constitutes the main phase of the IMPACT (Information Market Policy Actions) initiative, the introductory phase of which was implemented in 1989-1990. The main phase of the programme is likely to run from December 1991 for a total of four years.

On the basis of what has been achieved during the launch phase, the IMPACT 2 programme will concentrate on four action lines in which special attention will be devoted to therequirements of small and medium-sized enterprises and less favoured regions:

(1) Improving the understanding of the market: the European Information Market Observatory will reinforce its strategic analysis of the market, widen the scope of its investigations and foster the development of forecasting tools;

(2) Overcoming legal and administrative barriers: with the advent of the Single Market in 1993, there will be an increased need for developing a Europe-wide legal framework for information services;

(3) increasing the user-friendliness of services and improving information literacy: improving the user-friendliness of information systems will include the promotion of open technical standards and the development of generic interfaces. To promote information literacy amongst professional people, the Commission will rely on the multiplier effect of national awareness partners (educational establishments, professional organisations, etc.);

(4) Support for strategic information initiatives: the Commission will encourage industry to introduce the European dimension into new information systems.

New search option for TED: Awarding authority
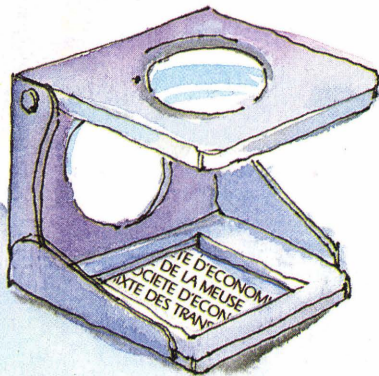
Search possibilities within the TED database are progressively becoming more and more refined. An important strategy has now been developed which enables the user to search for information using the field "Awarding Authority".

By now, users of TED are well aware that the database contains Calls for tender (plus pre-information and contract awards) from public authorities. The name of each awarding authority can be found in the field entitled TEXT.

We have received many requests from TED customers wishing to search for Calls for tender which are issued by specific awarding authorities. Therefore we have decided to create a new field entitled AU (as in Awarding AUthority) which contains the name of the awarding authority only.

Please note the difference between the existing field AA and the new field AU:

The field AA only covers the type of awarding authority, so within this field it may be possible to select only (for example) the Calls for tender issued by central governments. The possible values are as follows:

d aa=$

1.01	2614 1	... CENTRAL GOVERNMENT
1.02	496 2	... ARMED FORCES
1.03	3162 3	... LOCAL AUTHORITIES
1.04	115 4	... OTHERS
1.05	10 9	... NOT SPECIFIED

****END OF DISPLAY****

The field AU contains the names of the authorities themselves, here are some examples:

d au=$

1.01	1 AALBORG HANDELSSKOLE
1.02	2 AALBORG KOMMUNE
1.03	3 AALBORG SYGEHUS
1.04	1 AALBORG UNIVERSITETS BIBLIOTEK
1.05	6 ABFALLBESEITIGUNGSZ WECKVERBAND AUGSBURG
1.06	2 ABFALLWIRTSCHAFTS GESELLSCHAFT MBH WUPPERTAL
1.07	9 ABWASSER VERBAND SAAR
1.08	2 ABWASSERVERBAND AMPERGRUPPE
1.09	1 ABWASSERVERBAND WETZLAR
1.10	1 ABWASSERVERBAND WETZLAR, BAHNHOFSTRASSE 31
1.11	2 ABWASSERWERKE DER VERBANDSGEMEINDEN COCHEM-LAND UND ZELL
1.12	1 ABWASSERZWECKVERBAND ACHENTAL
1.13	1 ABWASSERZWECKVERBAND MITTLERES WIESENTAL

MORE

1.01	3 ABWASSERZWECKVERBAND RISS
1.02	1 ABWASSERZWECKVERBAND SCHWARZACHER BECKEN
1.03	1 ABWASSERZWECKVERBAND ZUR REINHALTUNG
1.04	1 ADMINISTRATION COM MUNALE DE LA VILLE DE LUXEMBOURG
1.05	1 ADMINISTRATION COMMUNALE DE SERAING
1.06	2 ADMINISTRATION DE L'EQUIPEMENT ET DE LA POLITIQUE
1.07	1 ADMINISTRATION DES POSTES ET TELECOMMUNICATIONS
1.08	1 AGENCE DE BASSIN
1.09	4 AGENCE NATIONALE POUR L'EMPLOI
1.10	2 AGENCY OF INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, AIST
1.11	5 AGIT
1.12	3 AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES RESEARCH, COUNCIL
1.13	1 AKASHI NATMORE

The list is endless!

As you can see from the list, the name of the awarding authority is always given in the original language. Users may benefit from this field if they are searching for all Calls for tender from a specific awarding authority, e.g. from the SNCF (French railways). It's important to use the DISPLAY command to ensure that all possible descriptions and divisions of the awarding authority are included. Therefore if you wish to search for the organisation "SNCF", you should type:

d au=sn

1.01	1 SNC D'AMENAGEMENT ANTIBES-LES-PINS
1.02	30 SNCF
1.03	6 SNCF, SERVICE DES ACHATS
1.04	5 SOCIAL INSURANCE AGENCY
1.05	2 SOCIAL- OG SUNDHEDSFORVALTNINGEN I KOBENHAVN
1.06	1 SOCIETA AUTOSTRADA TIRRENICA P.A
1.07	1 SOCIETA FRATELLI DIOGUARDI PA
1.08	1 SOCIETE D'AMENAGEMENT DE LA SAVOIE
1.09	1 SOCIETE D'ECONOMIE MIXTE CHAMPAGNE PARC AUTO (CPA)
1.10	1 SOCIETE D'ECONOMIE MIXTE DE LA MEUSE
1.11	1 SOCIETE D'ECONOMIE MIXTE DES TRANSPORTS PUBLICS DE
1.12	2 SOCIETE D'ECONOMIE MIXTE POUR L'AMENAGEMENT ET
1.13	1 SOCIETE D'EQUIPEMENT DE LA TOURAINE (SET)

MORE

This list shows that "SNCF" and "SNCF – SERVICE DES ACHATS" could be relevant to your subject. These may be selected by typing:

f au=sncf$

1.00 NUMBER OF HITS IS 36

This option may also be used to search for awarding authorities working in a specific field. To find out which awarding authorities work in the transport sector, the following command must be used:

```
f au=$transport$
```

3.00 NUMBER OF HITS IS 274

```
s f=au
```

3.00/000001 ECHO: -TED/COPYRIGHT ECHO
AU: REGIE AUTONOME DES
      TRANSPORTS PARISIENS
3.00/000002
AU: REGIE AUTONOME DES
      TRANSPORTS PARISIENS
3.00/000003
AU: MINISTERE DE L'EQUIPEMENT ET
      DU LOGEME TRANSPORTS
3.00/000004
AU: COMPAGNIE DES TRANSPORTS
      STRASBOURGEOIS
3.00/000005
AU: MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
3.00/000006
AU: MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
MORE

(and so on)

Of course this listing can only be a first and draft indication – it is in no way guaranteed that an awarding authority which awards transport contracts will also have the word TRANSPORT in its name. For a complete search you should use the freetext:

```
f transport$
```

A more precise search could obviously be obtained by using the classification codes:

f cc=7$

Therefore, there are two major benefits of using the new field AU:

(1) You may search for all Calls for tender from a specific awarding authority whose Calls for tender are related to your product range.
(2) If you are in close contact with an awarding authority which always sends Calls for tender directly to your organisation, you may exclude them from your search.

Do you remember the article detailing the European Economic Interest Groupings (EEIG) and the EDF exchange rates (ECHO News 2/91, page 4)? The command **s f=all** will now also include the full name of such a grouping. This is yet another new feature for TED.

For further information contact the ECHO help desk:
      Tel.: +352-349811
      Fax: +352-34981234.

Free phone numbers are also available.

MAX update

The IMPACT Information Day (see page 1) provided an excellent opportunity to report upon the improvements made to date with MAX, ECHO's famous "talking robot". Statistics gleaned from the Knowledge Transfer Meeting of October last year, and of course the suggestions left on MAX's "commentary" lines, provided the information needed to meet the requirements of the users.

If you use MAX on a regular basis, or at least have spoken to him from time to time, you will know that he now understands a total of 16 words in each of the languages he speaks. Data implemented on MAX are of a far higher quality, and are far more easily updated, thanks to the ease at which real-time conversion from ASCII-to-voice may be carried out. No matter what kind of accent you have, MAX will now be able to understand your instructions. Of course, this does not mean that he will respond if you speak in muffled tones or if you use slang words. MAX still requires you to speak as concisely as possible.

Maybe its the culmination of all these factors which have prompted users to comment that "MAX is super". He receives, each month, an average of 2 286 calls in German, and an average of 975 calls in English.

In fact, MAX has become so popular that organisers of the world exhibition in Sevilla next year have requested to develop a Spanish version of this application!
Why not pick up your phone and talk to MAX, using the numbers listed below? Please note that payable numbers have changed, due to ECHO's office move. If you want to speak to MAX, but free-phone services are not yet available from your country, please dial the following:

MAX English version: +352-34-94-15
MAX German version: +352-34-94-16
MAX French version: +352-34-94-17
MAX "comments": +352-34-94-56.
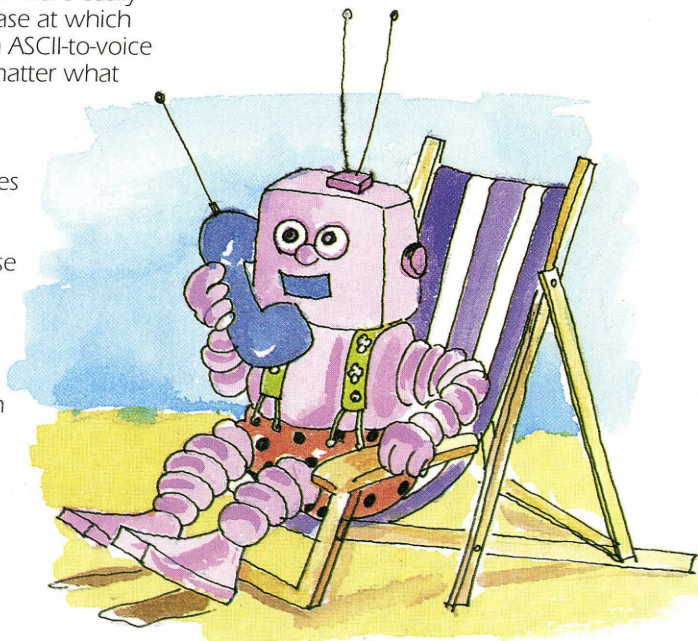
Multilingualism and ECHO's approach to it

Multilingualism plays a vital role in the policy of European integration and ECHO devotes special attention to it, ensuring that this aspect is taken into consideration in the development of databases and pilot projects.

Multilingualism has caused ECHO to study the problem posed by different alphabets during online connection. Until late 1990, ECHO, which offered several databases in eight of the official Community languages, encountered problems with Greek which, because of its special alphabet, could not be catered for by either the database management system or the interface controlling transmission of data via X.25. The exchange of data involved 7-bit transmission and limited the number of characters to 128. This meant that only non-accented Latin characters (English upper and lower case) according to International Alphabet No. 5 could be transmitted for data exchange, accented characters being automatically filtered and transliterated into the corresponding English characters.

The problem of data transmission was addressed by implementing two standards proposed by the ISO (International Standards Organisation).

ISO 8859-1, which offers all unaccented Latin characters (i.e., the English alphabet) and an adequate number of accented characters found in different European languages such as French, Italian, Spanish, Danish, German, Portuguese and Dutch. Greek is not included.

ISO 8859-7, which offers the characters of the English alphabet as well as the complete set of Greek characters as proposed by the Hellenic Standardisation Organisation (ELOT 970).

These two standards were adopted and ECHO now offers three interrogation options:

(1) 7-bit connection (NUA 270448112) for English alphabet (IA5) transmission.

(2) 8-bit connection (NUA 270449384) for transmission of accented Latin characters and English alphabet (ISO 8859-1).

(3) 8-bit connection (NUA 270449383) for transmission of English and rich Greek characters (ISO 8859-7).

The ECHO database user chooses a connection according to the equipment at his disposal and the characters he wishes to receive, while the data content obviously remains the same. The database management system determines the character set to be used for data transmission according to the connection chosen by the user. Character conversion enables dialogue to take place between the user and the GRIPS system.

The differences in the alphabets that can be used are neutralised at the lexicon level. Lexicons, which are indexed files containing terms on which searches are based, contain only terms in unaccented upper case characters. This deficiency prior to setting up the lexicon applies to terms in rich Latin characters as well as Greek.

Search terms can thus be introduced by the user in any alphabet supported by his terminal (IA5, ISO 8859-1 or ISO 8859-7). They are treated as synonyms and the search results are identical. In addition, Greek characters are dynamically transliterated according to the ELOT 743 standard into unaccented Latin characters for the user who does not have Greek available on his terminal.

The system therefore diffuses data in different ways depending on the terminal used and ensures correct procedural operation.

For instance, after giving the **display s$**" lexical consultation command, the user with access to rich Latin characters (ISO 8859-1) will see the term SÄURE (German word for acid) displayed, while the user equipped with non-rich Latin characters (IA5) will see SAEURE. To locate the required document, both can use the selection command "FIND SAEURE". The first user can also key in "FIND SAURE".

The same applies to Greek, where the selection commands "FIND logos" (where logos' is written in Greek) and "FIND logos" give the same result. Users with access to Greek characters can read the text in Greek characters, while the others receive it in non-rich transliterated Latin characters.

To have access to multilingual facilities, the user requires a terminal which supports Greek characters or rich Latin characters by preference according to the specifications defined in the ISO 8859-7 and ISO 8859-1 standards. The user to whom these character sets are not available can call on the various telecommunications programs that exist using "conversion tables". These programs redirect ISO 8859-7 or ISO 8859-1 characters towards the internal codes of the user's terminal. ECHO has had the opportunity to observe a good demonstration of two of these programs (see references below):

(1) PC VIEW
SDC
YMHTOY 99 KAI AKRONOS 1
11633 ATHENS
GREECE
Tel: +30 (0) 1 7521166
Tlx: 216965

(2) IRIS220
IRISoft Research
Avenue Louise 207, Box 10
B-1050 Brussels
Belgium
Tel: +32 (0) 2 6450908
Fax: +32 (0) 2 6464266

The communication parameters should be defined as follows:
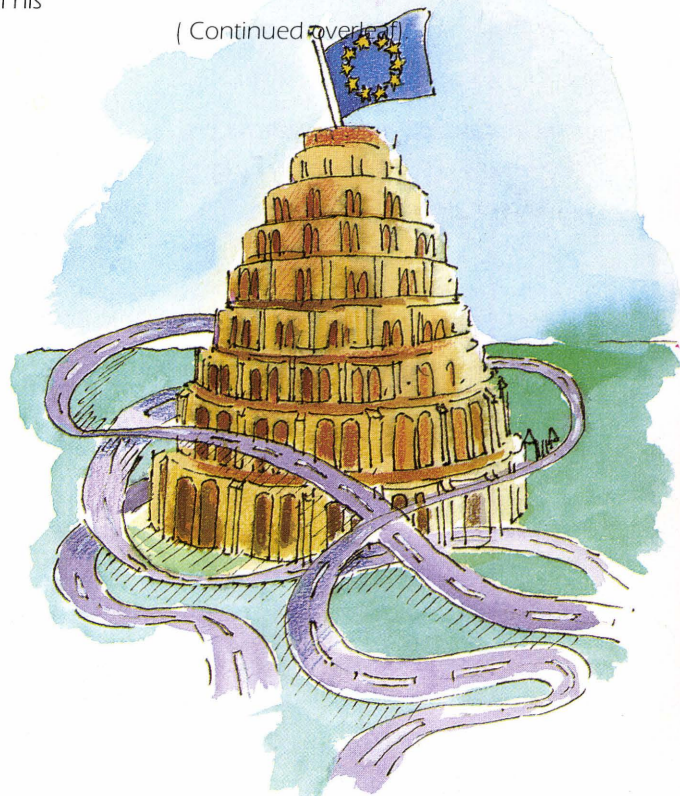
(1)   8 data bits
(2)   no parity
(3)   1 stop bit
(4)   full duplex
(5)   The speed depends on the
      connection used by the user.

The Network User Address (NUA)
needed to access ECHO is:

(1)   270449383 for access in
      Greek and non-rich Latin
(2)   270449384 for access in rich
      Latin.

The user who accesses ECHO by the
numbers given will have access to all
the databases offered by ECHO, inclu-
ding those in Greek or rich Latin cha-
racters. For these, the dialogue can
take place in Greek or rich Latin charac-
ters. For databases not yet available in
rich characters, the exchange of data
will continue to be made in unaccen-
ted characters as before.

Databases currently available using rich
characters include:

(1)   I'M Guide
(2)   Dianeguide
(3)   Eurodicautom

The TED database will soon be added
to this list.

A complete definition of the alphabet
used may be obtained online by
typing:

INFO ALPHABET
If you have further queries, please
contact Christos Krokos at ECHO

Tel.: +352-349811
Fax: +352-34981234.

Linguistic barriers tumble down!

We are now pleased to inform you
that the online info files are now
available in French. These are soon to
be followed by Spanish versions.

Added to this, the TED info files have
been restructured and are now
available when using the info file
"INFO TDFORM"

Have a look at the info files – they are
full of helpful information!

The "Yellow Pages" of electronic information

Introduction

For over 10 years, ECHO has been
producing and hosting the
DIANEGUIDE database on behalf of
the Commission of the European
Communities (CEC). This database was
specifically aimed at assisting users of
electronic information in finding
products and services which are rele-
vant to them, and which stimulate
their own business performance.

As regular readers of ECHO News, you
have been kept up-to-date with the
developments of this database over the
years. You will remember that we have
mentioned the recent changes the
DIANEGUIDE has undergone, and you
will no doubt be aware that a newer,
more comprehensive database has
emerged from the DIANEGUIDE
entitled **I'M GUIDE**.

Changes in the electronic information
market have necessitated the revision
of the contents of the old DIANE-
GUIDE. Previous methods of data
collection, coupled with the limited
contents of the database were slowly
becoming outdated, and the DIANE-
GUIDE was no longer a true reflection
of the current market.

The new database

ECHO has joined forces with the EIIA
(European Information Industry
Association) to create this new
directory. Information is now collected
by a network of EIIA representatives all
over Europe, which is coordinated by
its secretariat in Luxembourg. This form
of information collection not only
means that a wider sphere of subjects
can be covered, but also that the
information is current, or "hot off the
press." After conversion, the data
(usually received in different formats),
are loaded in a production base where
they are validated, translated into
8 Community languages, indexed,
loaded and prepared for print.

This directory will now also cover the
data which were previously to be
found in the BROKERSGUIDE database.
This is supplemented by information
pertaining to databases and data-

banks, CD-ROM, CD-I products,
diskette bases, image banks, along
with lists of information distributors
(mainly hosts and gateways).

Printed version

The printed version of the old
DIANEGUIDE will be replaced by a
directory of databases which will offer
details on the type of database along
with the medium and host(s) concer-
ned. This brochure is to be looked
upon as more of a reference which will
list online databases and directories
which are published in Europe.

Accessibility

Continuing ECHO's aims, the service is
already far advanced with regard to
user access. Menus are continually
upgraded, and natural language can
be used to interrogate the database.
I'M GUIDE is available through all
operational European videotex
services.

Future developments

The structure of any database may be
improved if specific standards are used
enabling each entry to be recognised
by a serial number. This theory will be
tested for the I'M GUIDE as soon as
possible, where each database listed
will be catalogued according to its
producer. Codes will be based upon
existing systems for numbering
monographs (ISBN) and periodicals
(ISSN).

Conclusion

In view of the new, upgraded
information which is contained in the
I'M GUIDE today, along with the net-
work of information collection, this
directory is an indispensable reference
tool for all those requiring electronic
information services. The I'M GUIDE is
set to become as well known and as
well used as a telephone directory or
the "yellow pages".

Videotex and ECHO

Although it was intended to become "the" information system for every European household, videotex has fallen far short of the expectations of its inventors.

Since its original development in the late 70s, each country has taken the videotex service and made it their own, developing this information medium on a national, rather than an international basis. Member States have adopted their own approach to terminal distribution, policies, user tariffs and invoicing methods. It's a well-known fact that videotex has not one but three common standards!

ECHO realised the potential of videotex as early as 1985, but during this early stage tended to emphasise the fact that videotex users should reach ECHO's computer rather than concentrating on the exploitation of the concept of a European Information Services Market within each national videotex market. This mistake was quickly rectified and much was learnt through this period of "telecommunication presence". Despite the major disparities still existing within the market today, ECHO has managed to break successful ground within this medium.

ECHO's presence in the videotex market has allowed important remarks and results to be attained. With assistance from national partners spread all over Europe (whose job it is to implement ECHO's pages or "frames" on each videotex system) ECHO is able to monitor the likes and dislikes of videotex users.

Users prefer to use simple menus rather than a command language like the CCL. Most national videotex systems still work with pages of 40 columns and 20 lines, meaning that the screen size differs from that of a normal TTY (PC) terminal which usually has 80 columns and 20 lines. As ECHO menus are only available for 80 column screens, it will be necessary to adapt the menus available to 40 columns. This is foreseen for 1992.

This project has proved the necessity for changes, and shows that much still has to be done to harmonise the market situation. However, results obtained from ECHO are encouraging. Requests for documentation on the ECHO services and messages left on the system are pouring in via this medium, with the highest amount coming from Germany. Interestingly enough, ECHO has only been available on the Dutch videotex system for

Where to find the ECHO frames after connection to the national videotex service

COUNTRY	TEL. NO.	CODE	ACCESS PAGE NO.
Belgium		ECHO	
Denmark		ECHOINFO	
France	3614	ECHO14	
Germany		*ECHO #	*33255 #
Ireland	+Cognotec	ECHO	
Italy			*8272 #
Luxembourg		*ECHOx#	*1370 #
		x=F(French)	
		x=D(German)	
		x=E(English)	
Netherlands	067100	ECHO #	
Spain	031		
			*2160234014 #

+ Users of Cognotec (an independant Irish Company) may access ECHO as a menu option with this subscription-based service.

just over one month, yet still has managed to receive a staggering 96 requests for further information!

Videotex is an essential tool to promote professional services. It can only be hoped that the fragmented implementation to which the service is currently subjected will change so that its full potential within the market can be realised.

Further details of ECHO's presence within the videotex market can be obtained from the proceedings of the IMPACT Information Day, see order coupon opposite.

✂

I would like to receive the proceedings of the IMPACT Information Day:

Name: ....

Organisation: ....

Address: ....

Postcode: ....

Country: ....

Please return to: ECHO Customer Service
                    B.P. 2373
                    L-1023 Luxembourg

4/91
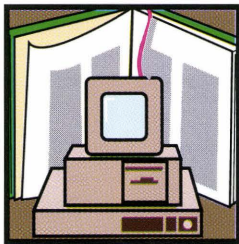
ECHO: a service for libraries

IXI NUA: 2043703004

Introduction

The amount of recorded knowledge within the world doubles approximately every seven years*. Frightening but true, so what can we do to keep abreast of this onslaught of information? More importantly, how do we find it? What can we do with it? Over the last two decades, the evolution of the information market in the form of telecommunication channels and availability of advanced information services has revolutionised the information world*. Yet how can the old merge with the new? How can a computer replace row upon row of reference books? How can a personal computer ever hold the same intrigue as musty archives? And, last but not least, how can information ever be handled in the same efficient manner as when it is written on paper? Libraries, those indispensable reference services, are not yet fulfilling their role as an information provider. They are the weak link in the information chain of today. Such a situation can be, and is being, quickly overcome, and this is where ECHO steps in.

With over ten years of market experience, ECHO is the ideal tool for all libraries ready to take up the challenge the electronic world presents. The use of ECHO and the services offered by this organisation will allow libraries to achieve two major aims: their "identity" will remain unchanged, whilst the possibility of keeping abreast of this ever changing domain will be higher than ever before. Through the series of actions and services dealt with in this article, ECHO is willing to divulge its wealth of experience so that libraries can gain high quality results from electronic information.

Introduction to electronic information services

Within the framework of the IMPACT (Information Market Policy ACTions) programme, ECHO participates in many jointly organised seminars, exhibitions and conferences. Exchanges of information and advice on various important factors are offered ranging from:

- [ ] New information services in the form of databases and databanks, different means of user support, etc.
- [ ] Accessibility: networks, hosts, gateways, interrogation languages, interfaces etc.
- [ ] Sources: advice on collection of information, database producers etc.

Awareness and presentation days

Such information days are organised for specific key people within the information market (e.g. librarians, documentalists, brokers). The aim of such days is to teach the student what can be obtained by using electronic information, and the general principles of online research by showing a concrete demonstration of the databases offered by ECHO.

Basic training in online research

This training course is designed for library assistants who must interrogate databases as a regular part of their job. The course normally lasts for two days and the practical exercises carried out by the "students" (under the supervision of a trained "expert") play a highly important role. This explains the considerable interest these courses stimulate within small groups. Wherever possible, they are held "on site" (i.e. in libraries, in universities etc.). The course consists of teaching the elementary rules of the CCL (Common Command Language) which provides an excellent grounding for the principles and strategies of any database interrogation. The latter is important to stress, as one of ECHO's major aims is actively to promote the use of all other European hosts – it is vital to keep the information wheel turning, and to this end ECHO conducts the training courses free of charge.

Teaching material

A series of introductory brochures and teaching material is distributed in all 9 Community languages. This type of documentation allows librarians to update their knowledge within the sphere of new information services. Numerous types of material are distributed by ECHO, which are in turn supported by:

- [ ] Information and technical sheets, newsletters and manuals
- [ ] A series of explanatory leaflets dealing with: databases, interrogation languages, videotex etc.
- [ ] A diskette which simulates "real" online searches (CCL Training diskette)
- [ ] Video cassettes – a vital tool for schools, research institutions and libraries – which portray the major advantages of online interrogation using "real-life" examples.

Database access

In order to illustrate the advantages of electronic information, as well as to teach of the many different activities of the European Community, ECHO provides the user with FREE access to some twenty databases, each having its part to play within the bibliographic reference service.

One such database is I'M GUIDE, the only complete directory (at a European level) of electronic services including information on databases, databanks, CD-ROMs, hosts, database producers etc. I'M GUIDE is an indispensable reference which identifies new services and/or allows contact to be made with the producer of such services. For further information, please see page 6.

Permanent user assistance – help desk

In order to reply to a multitude of questions, ranging from connection possibilities to new databases, to the Libraries programme (undertaken by DG XIII/B), ECHO provides a multilingual help desk. Experts are capable of providing the enquirer with direct answers to questions, or are able to "point users in the right direction" by finding out where the information required can be found.

Transfer of results and perfection of databases – updates

Information days and seminars are organised by specialists in this area with the aim of keeping the main players in the information market informed of the evolution of products, services and access possibilities. Such days also provide the opportunity to evaluate results of various pilot projects undertaken by ECHO.

Gateway to other information services

As market awareness is created, ECHO maintains privileged contacts with the main actors in the information market. The final sum of information accumulated is invaluable and is constantly at the disposal of librarians and documentalists:

☐ All questions relating to different types of information access, prerequisites, material, standards etc.
☐ Continuous information on the market evolution , through ECHO News, direct contacts at seminars, exhibitions, from telephone calls etc.
☐ ECHO acts as a link between existing and potential users.

Assistance

Assistance is given to those libraries and documentation centres which have no access to online databases. To this end, specialists within the different aspects of this area of study are here to help you, so that you can obtain a better understanding of the electronic information market. ECHO will provide assistance regarding existing and future services.

Conclusion

ECHO can be accessed free-of-charge. In order to obtain your personal password, simply complete a user agreement form, which can be obtained from the ECHO help desk (see address below). This will automatically entitle you to receive all our user manuals. The ECHO help desk team may also advise you as to how training courses may be arranged, thus librarians can obtain their first grounding for using not only ECHO, but online in general.

* CEC, Libraries programme, General information, Rationale and background to the Community action. Directorate General XIII.

ECHO Customer Service
5 Rue Höhenhoff
Airport Centre Luxembourg-Senningerberg.

Tel.: +352-349811
Fax: +352-34981234.

C O R D I S

"One of the new generation of European electronic information services, CORDIS RTD-News is the result of Community action, via the VALUE programme, to provide faster and better access to the universe of Community research and technological development."

A new link in the dissemination network, RTD-News is a specialised news service bringing fast, up-to-date information on all aspects of the Community's Third Framework Programme. After success under test conditions, its public availability has coincided with the ESPRIT week of 25-29 November 1991. Continuing our series on the CORDIS databases, we present a guide to this useful and cost-effective online information source.

■ The overview ■

The aim of RTD-News is to offer an easily accessible first view of current Community RTD activity and to direct users to the more detailed information they require. Short texts in English set out the vital information, and include addresses, contact numbers or document references. The user quickly decides on the relevance of the particular news item, and immediately has the facts needed to go further.
RTD-News is a cheap and highly efficient source covering all topics of RTD interest. Subject areas include legislation, preparatory acts, general policy, publications, events, tenders and calls for proposals, RTD results, programme implementation, plus other news.

■ Extended coverage ■

The service assimilates and extends that which is already offered by RTD-Announcements, which, in the initial six months of operation, attracted close to 2 000 users throughout Europe and the EFTA countries. Material for RTD-News is drawn from Official Journal announcements on Community RTD, reports taken from the minutes of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission, and news directly from the RTD programmes themselves.

■ Content ■

Each item is composed of a database record containing the following fields, structured to be of maximum utility to the widest range of users:

■ TTL (Title): A short, descriptive title.

■ RCN (Record Control Number): A number identifies the item, so that it can be quickly recalled.

■ ETD (Entry Date): Date of entry of the information into the NEWS database.

■ EXD (Expiry Date): The date at which the item is no longer considered "current" – one month after the closing date or event date in the case of tenders or events – six months after the entry date in the case of legislative and related long term actions.

■ CAT (Category): The subject's category (legislation, tenders, etc, as indicated above).

■ GEN (General Information): A short text forms the body of the news item and clearly sets out the main points of interest.

■ CPA (Contact Person and Affiliation): The full addresses plus telephone/fax/telex numbers of any contact persons.

■ CLD (Closing Date): The final date for receipt of tenders or proposals, or other termination dates.

■ EVD (Event Date): The date of forthcoming open days, conferences or similar events described in the GEN field.

■ RMK (Remarks): An additional explanation, if required, of information con-

tained in the CPA, CLD and EVD fields.

■ DSP (Data Source Provider): The specific source of the RTD-News item.

■ DRF (Document Reference): Full publication/reference details permitting the source document to be ordered or traced.

■ SIC (Subject Index Classification): The CORDIS subject coding system, facilitating search by RTD sector or field of study.

■ SIP (Other Subject Index Provided): Any other subject indexing provided with the source material.

■ PGA (Programme Acronym): The acronym of the programme to which the item relates, as listed in the CORDIS RTD-Programmes and the RTD-Acronyms databases.

■ NWR (News Relationships): Record Numbers of earlier RTD-News records dealing with the same topic.

■ UPD (Update): Normally empty. In cases of correction or alteration, the date when the record was revised.

■ TXT (Text): In the future development of RTD-News, this field will contain the full text of the source document (Calls for tender, minutes, project report, etc.) whenever this is available in electronic form.

■ Efficient retrieval ■

Users may select one of two search methods. The first makes use of a straightforward menu interface for those who demand ease of access. Menu searches may be made for any free-text string, or by Category, Entry Date (the date itself or entries prior, or subsequent to, the given date), the RCN number of the item, the Closing Date or Event Date, the Subject Index Classification, or the Programme Acronym.

At the same time, the Common Command Language (CCL), as described in the ECHO User Manual, is ideal for those who require a more powerful and flexible information retrieval facility.

■ Stop press ■

News items may be viewed starting with the most recent entry. In this way, frequent users can rapidly scan the latest information. Database input is at least twice weekly – more often as volume or urgency requires – so that, for example, Calls for tender or

expressions of interest (sometimes open for only a short period after official publication) are available in good time. This is of particular importance for SMEs and other organisations requiring immediate, cost-effective access to information on Community RTD projects, events and key dates.

■ Current news ■

Items whose expiry date (EXD) has not yet been reached are designated as "current". When this area of the database is selected, the information available corresponds in many respects to that obtained from a classical (printed) monthly or quarterly journal.

■ News archive ■

Records which are no longer of current interest are retained, and the flexible menu system enables searches to be made either among current items or throughout the whole database. This valuable facility ensures that Commission documents, addresses, details of previous tenders, edition numbers, references to parliamentary minutes, ESC opinions, etc., can be traced when needed. In the field of Community RTD, this may often prove to be the most accessible documentation of RTD activity available.

■ Programme input ■

For those involved in Community RTD programmes, a preliminary information package should have already reached your press/dissemination service, detailing how to have your information featured on RTD-News. If this is not the case, the ECHO/CORDIS help

desk will be pleased to provide you with full guidelines.

■ Help desk ■

Contact the ECHO/CORDIS team for further information on the RTD-News database plus documentation on the CORDIS service.

ECHO/CORDIS
5 Rue Höhenhof
Luxembourg-Senningerberg

Tel.: +352-349811
Fax: +352-34981234.

Have you completed your CORDIS User Survey?

We would appreciate all replies to be returned by 12 December at the latest to:

GRS Company (UK) Ltd.,
140, Quickley Lane
Chorleywood
Herts. WD3 5PB
United Kingdom.

(Continued from page 1)

The final section of the morning session was devoted to two projects which had been presented during the meeting of October 1990. Participants were given an update on the immense progress made with MAX and Natural Language Access.

The afternoon presentations dealt with two priority areas of the so-called pilot/demonstration projects: tourist information and image banks. EUROTOP, the integrated tour-operating digital network service was presented to the participants. This project aims to assist tour operators to use electronic catalogues disseminated throughout Europe by ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network). The ULYSSEES and ATIS projects were presented, which aim to integrate differing national tourist information projects and to encourage the exchange of tourist data information between interested organisations

respectively. The last two presentations continued to address the immediate and future needs of consumer requirements, and participants were given details of the TECDOC project, through which portable information devices for technical documentation are being developed. AREMM, a project devoted to the creation of a multimedia networking atlas of the Mediterranean region concluded the meeting.

All the presentations were of an extremely high quality and stimulated enormous interest. Such information days are certain to become important events which must be noted in everyone's diary!

Should you wish to receive the proceedings of the information day, please fill out the coupon which can be found on page 8.
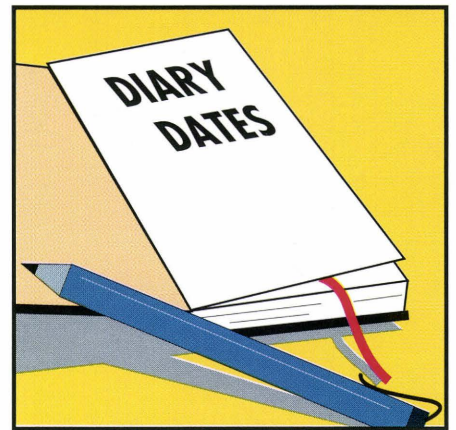
ECHO will be represented at the following exhibitions during the coming month:

Paris   EDUCATEC'91
               11-14/12/91

London   IOLIM'91
               10-12/12/91

Season's greetings

I would like to order the following videos:

☐ ECHO short (without CCL)   ☐ TED
☐ ECHO long (with CCL)   each 15 Ecu
Language: ☐ English   format:
                ☐ French   ☐ VHS
                ☐ German
                ☐ Italian   System:
                ☐ Spanish   ☐ Pal
                                     ☐ Secam

I would also like to receive the new ECHO Manual:
(cost price 10 Ecu)

            ☐ Yes   ☐ No

I would in addition like to order the CCL training diskette
(cost price 15 Ecu)

            ☐ ....(Lang.)

Name..

Organisation...

Street...

City...

Country..

Payment must be made on receipt of an invoice from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
ECHO Customer Service P.O. Box 2373 L-1023 Luxembourg