Metasearching Creates New Challenges for Data Providers

Metasearch, parallel search, federated search, broadcast search, cross-database search, search portal—these terms have become commonplace in our professional vocabulary and speak to a common theme of allowing search and retrieval to span multiple databases, sources, platforms, protocols, and vendors at once.

Metasearching Methods

The most common method for cross-database searching in the library community is through the Z39.50 Protocol (ANSI/NISO Z39.50-2003, Information Retrieval—Application service definition and protocol specification) which was originally developed as a common search interface to library bibliographic databases. Over time the use of the Z39.50 protocol and its implementations expanded to provide seamless access to diverse database types, many advanced functions for search and retrieval, and the ability to conduct concurrent broadcast searching of multiple data sources, presenting the results to the user as a single retrieval set. The protocol uses a distributed client/server approach where the source databases are accessed from their direct locations by a Z39.50-compliant client search interface. The data sources for a Z39.50 broadcast search have to be specified for each implementation and the user can often select a sub-set of sources to be searched. Use of the Z39.50 protocol has grown far beyond the library community and Z39.50 broadcast searches can include data sources from commercial database suppliers, museums, government agencies, and scientific organizations, to name a few. The Z39.50 International Next Generation (ZING) group has released a Search/Retrieve Web Service (SRW) which retains the key Z39.50 concepts but utilizes standard web technologies for implementation, effectively combining the best of both worlds.

To many end users, the term metasearching refers to the use of an Internet search engine such as Google™ or AltaVista™, or to a “metacrawler” such as Dogpile® or Ithaki which simultaneously search multiple individual search engines and combine the results. These search engines typically include as data sources only Internet web pages with publicly available information. They work by “harvesting” web page HTML code and then creating searchable indexes from the information. The indexes are stored centrally by the
search engine so the user is not directly searching the data source and only accesses the original data when a hyperlink of a search result is selected. Each search engine has a different proprietary protocol for determining what constitutes a relevant "hit," and for ranking and sorting the results. None of the search engines is comprehensive across the entire Internet and no two index exactly the same pages or update their indexes on the same schedule. The user has no control over or knowledge about which data sources are included in a search. And the data sources have no knowledge that their sites are being harvested unless they utilize and review system monitoring tools.

A relatively new approach to metasearching is the Open Archives Initiative’s Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (PMH). The protocol was originally developed to support federated searching of metadata for distributed electronic archives of scholarly papers but has developed into a standard harvesting protocol for multiple forms of metadata in any type of information repository. With PMH, a "data provider" chooses to expose its metadata to one or more "service providers" who harvest the metadata and then provide value-added search services. It is similar to the search engine approach in that it harvests information from the data sources into a centralized database for searching. It differs from the search engines in that it only harvests standards-compliant metadata, not full-text. And service providers can be more selective in choosing the data sources, creating virtual communities of related information. PMH does not provide some of the advanced search and retrieval functionality of Z39.50, but it is simpler to implement and shifts the operational responsibility and processing load away from the data provider to the service provider. It also effectively builds on the many metadata initiatives underway to improve description and access to electronic resources.

**Metasearching Issues**

The ability to simultaneously search many different data repositories and combine search results has obvious benefits to the end user. There are still a number of areas requiring improvement from the user perspective, e.g. search precision, and there are many projects underway dealing with these.

But metasearching has also created new challenges for the data and content providers. When libraries began offering direct end user access to licensed databases, they did so by purchasing and networking CD-ROMs or locally mounting data tapes, and the data sources were typically searched individually. The trend today is towards the "application service provider" (ASP) approach where the data provider maintains an Internet-accessible resource which is accessed through the library system's interface or a web browser and is frequently accessed as part of a metasearch. While providing many advantages in currency of information and simplified implementation by the library, the ASP approach shifts many operational burdens to the data providers who are now also service providers.

Recognizing the belief that cross database search capabilities and metasearching tools are a growth area in the marketplace, a group of approximately 40 people representing library systems and services providers convened in an open meeting at the American Library Association Midwinter conference in Philadelphia in January 2003. The group discussed the impact of metasearching on system and content providers' delivery of services to libraries and identified several problem areas:

- **Metasearching impacts system resources and performance.**
  
  Metasearching can spawn a large number of individual search and retrieval interactions between the meta engine and search targets, with the potential for multiple simultaneous search requests impacting a single provider's server environment.

  Metasearching in a web environment is "stateless," meaning each search request invokes a separate authentication process. The authentication processes of content providers are resource intensive operations—vastly more intensive than mere search and retrieval operations. Some gains might be realized by establishing conventions between meta engines and content servers in which meta engines established, "held onto," serially reused, and released "sessions" between the engine and search targets.

  In contrast, metasearching via Z39.50 is "stateful" and thus alleviates some of the burden imposed by the stateless type of searching. SRW, (Search and Retrieval on the Web), a new generation of Z39.50 search and retrieval logic encoded as XML, facilitates creation of gateways to Z39.50 systems and could result in lower software entry and maintenance costs.

- **Intellectual property and product branding need protection.**

  Content providers have traditionally assumed that their content, whether bibliographic, citation, abstract, full text, full image, etc. would display within the provider's native interface, which in addition to the content itself conveys important information such as

For more info on PMH, visit the OAI website:  
http://www.openarchives.org
accomplishing this objective. Todd Fegan, Vice President of Product Management, says that widely accepted and used standards allow ProQuest to provide better service to the customer in disseminating content. "Ultimately, it's about the end users—making information more accessible to them by transparently integrating systems and content. And standards allow our customers flexibility in integrating our content with their own systems to provide that transparency."

ProQuest Company, based in Ann Arbor, Michigan, is a leading supplier of value-added information and content.
through two business segments: Business Solutions and Information & Learning. Business Solutions provides electronic technical data and e-commerce applications to the automotive and power sports industries. Information and Learning, the segment that is active in NISO, provides content to the education and library markets.

Libraries have a long history with ProQuest Information and Learning under the former name, UMI (University Microfilms, Inc.), which ProQuest acquired in 1985. ProQuest has maintained the UMI® brand for its microfilm product line and, contrary to what some may think in this digital age, their film business is still a stable market in libraries and the company continues to support and invest in microfilm. ProQuest Information and Learning’s main focus for growth, though, is on electronic content. For the library market, this includes ProQuest® online information services, bibliographic databases like ABI/INFORM®, image-converted electronic archives such as ProQuest Historical Newspapers™, and full-text databases across all subject domains including the Chadwyck-Healey humanities collection. In 1998, ProQuest launched the Digital Vault Initiative, its effort to create the world’s largest searchable online archive by digitizing its extensive UMI® document collection—effectively integrating their microfilm and electronic product lines.

In 1999, ProQuest Information and Learning began providing online content products to the education market through bigchalk, which is directed to K-12 schools. A fast growing area for ProQuest is XanEdu, their customized electronic and print course materials for the higher education market.

Making all this content accessible requires information technology and technology requires standards. Z39.50 (Information Retrieval Application Service Definition & Protocol Specification) was a key standard for ProQuest, since it allowed their customers to use their own search engine to access the company’s content products. Today, ProQuest is actively involved with development and implementation of the forthcoming NISO OpenURL standard (Z39.88). They have a vested interest in providing linking services into their full-text products and out from bibliographic databases to their own or others’ full text. Link resolvers have already been established for many of their content “vaults” and all the databases in the ProQuest online system have OpenURL links embedded in their content. This allows the end user to retrieve, for example, a dissertation record from the CINAHL database and link directly to the corresponding PDF image in the ProQuest Digital Dissertation™ vault. OpenURL embedding is underway for the bigchalk and Chadwyck-Healey collections and by mid-year the company expects to have all products OpenURL accessible.

ProQuest is also involved with the evolving PDF/A (archival) standard. As pioneers in electronic image conversion from microfilm to PDF, ProQuest has both much to offer and to gain with a standard for an electronic archival format based on PDF. They are also a member of the new NISO Metasearch Initiative planning committee, which will consider needed guidelines in the metasearch environment.

Todd Fegan believes that we are just in the beginning of an era of integrating content resources and in the development of the standards that will support such integration. He sees many benefits to ProQuest’s continued involvement in the development of standards. In addition to being able to help shape the standard, active participation allows them to identify the potential of a standard earlier in the cycle and to introduce compliant products more quickly. Their products are, for example, already compliant with version 1.0 of OpenURL. Standards committees also provide a forum where vendors can share and learn from each other's experience and where vendors can work directly with customers and users. "It gives us the opportunity," Fegan states, "to keep in touch with the industry and to listen to customer needs first hand. Because it all circles back to the customer."

More information about ProQuest and its products is available from their website: http://www.il.proquest.com/
The U.S. National Z39.50 Profile for Library Applications, NISO Z39.89-200x, has been completed and issued for ballot approval by NISO voting members. This standard identifies a subset of specifications from the Z39.50 standard that can be used in Z-client and Z-server implementations to improve search and retrieval among library catalogs. In developing the standard, the committee used The Bath Profile: A Z39.50 Specification for Library Applications and Resource Discovery, Release 2, as the foundation, with adjustments to meet national requirements.

The profile defines one functional area—Bibliographic Search and Retrieval in Online Library Catalogs—and three conformance levels. Future releases of the profile will address:

- Access to holdings information
- Character set and language negotiation
- Cross domain searching
- Authority searching
- Abstracting and Indexing databases and full text databases


Z39.89 was developed by NISO Committee AV, chaired by William E. Moen (University of North Texas). Committee members included: Brenda Bailey-Hainer (Colorado State Library), Ira Bray (California State Library), Laurie Davidson (Innovative Interfaces, Inc.), Dana Dietz (OCLC, Inc.), Larry Dixson (Library of Congress), Eric Ferrin (Penn State University), Matthew

For more information about these companies, visit their websites:

- AutoGraphics
  www.auto-graphics.com
- CrossRef
  www.crossref.org
- Helsinki University Library
  www.lib.helsinki.fi/english/index.htm
- John Wiley & Sons
  www.wiley.com

The Helsinki University Library is the National Library of Finland and has responsibility for the long term preservation of national literature; the assignment of national ISBN, ISSN, and ISMN codes; the development and updating of four Finnish thesauri; and for FinELib, the National Electronic Library. The Library chairs the Finnish Standards Association (SFS), Committee for Information and Documentation, which is a member of ISO TC46. Juha Hakala, Director, Information Technology, is the Helsinki University Library's voting representative.

John Wiley & Sons, Inc., headquartered in Hoboken, NJ, is a global publisher of print and electronic products, specializing in scientific, technical, and medical books and journals; professional and consumer books and subscription services; and textbooks and other educational materials. Approximately 25% of global revenues are currently Web-enabled and that figure is expected to increase to about 40% within the next three years. In 2002, Wiley acquired Hungry Minds, Inc., bringing into the fold such well-known brands as the For Dummies® series, CliffsNotes™ study guides, and Frommer's® travel guides. Eric Swanson, Senior Vice President-Scientific, Technical and Medical Publishing, is Wiley's voting representative for NISO.

New Z39.50 Profile Goes to Ballot

The draft standard is available at: http://www.niso.org/standards/balloting.html
NISO released for public comment on March 12, 2003, Parts 1 and 2 of the proposed standard NISO Z39.88-200X, The OpenURL Framework for Context-Sensitive Services. Part 1 of the standard, ContextObject and Transport Mechanisms, defines the general framework to bundle specific packages of contextual metadata and transport them over the network. Part 2 of the standard, Initial Registry Content, details the core properties that can be used in actual applications of the general framework, specifically context-sensitive linking in the scholarly information community. Other communities may use this part as a guideline for the definition and implementation of other applications.

The public-comment period lasts through April 15, 2003. As soon as possible after the comment period, the committee will issue Z39.88 as a Draft Standard for Trial Use. The actual timeframe for this issuance will depend on the amount of comments that will need to be incorporated and the development of the necessary infrastructure to support the trial use period.

In conjunction with the released draft standard, the committee has also posted the initial OpenURL Registry, as described in Part 2 of the standard. After the OpenURL standard is approved, a Maintenance Agency will be appointed to maintain this Registry. In the meantime, OCLC, Inc. has kindly agreed to build and maintain the Registry during the Public Comment and Trial Use periods.

This release of Z39.88 is the result of more than two years of work by NISO Committee AX. The Committee is chaired by Eric Van de Velde (California Institute of Technology). Members include: Ann Apps (MIMAS-Manchester Computing University of Manchester), Oren Beit-Arie (ExLibris USA), Karim Boughida (Getty Research Institute), Karen Coyle (California Digital Library University of California), Todd Fegan (ProQuest Information and Learning), Tony Hammond (Elsevier Science Ltd.), Eric Hellman (Openly Informatics, Inc.), Lou Knecht (National Library of Medicine), Larry Lannom (Corporation for National Research Initiatives [CNRI]), Justin Littman (netLibrary, Inc.), Clifford Morgan, NISO SDC Liaison (John Wiley & Sons Ltd), Mark H. Needleman (Sirs Corporation), Eamonn Neylon (Manifest Solutions), Philip Norman (OCLC, Inc), Oliver Pesch (EBSCO Information Services), Harry Samuels (Endeavor Information Systems, Inc.), and Herbert Van de Sompel (Los Alamos National Laboratory).

Bibliographic References Standard Revised

A revised and expanded version of NISO Z39.29-200X, Bibliographic References, has been released for ballot and review with a ballot period of March 17 - April 30, 2003. The standard defines a set of easy-to-understand rules for creating bibliographic references for all kinds of materials and information, no matter if it is in print or electronic form, published or unpublished. Using Z39.29 as a guide will result in references that are easy to read and understand, that will uniquely identify a work in a format that can be repurposed to fit a variety of needs and future uses, and make all references—print and digital—easier to find.

This new expanded edition of Bibliographic References was developed by NISO Standards Committee OO chaired by M.E. Brennan (Lucent Technologies). Members of the committee included: Margaret Morrison (Hendrix College), Ellis Mount (Mount Data Services), Karen Patrias (National Library of Medicine), and Victor Rosenberg (University of Michigan).
The recently formed NISO Committee AZ, charged with developing a standard to support networked digital reference, met in February 2003 and issued an aggressive game plan. The committee will focus on:

- the development of a question answer transaction protocol for interchange of messages between digital reference domains (QATP), and
- the development of metadata element sets to identify and describe key components of both question and answer data and institutional and personal data.

Documents in process which will become components of the draft standard are:

- Scope, context, and business case
- Use cases
- Functionality model
- Protocol model and service description
- Bindings document describing the protocol's relation to lower-level protocols
- Networked reference metadata elements, including question and answer elements and agent profile elements
- Recommended practices

It is expected that an initial draft version of the standard will be available for comments in early May 2003. An invitational meeting for vendors will be held June 20, 2003, in conjunction with the ALA Conference in Toronto, to introduce the standard.

The committee is targeting September 2003 for the release of a Draft Standard for Trial Use. In addition, an overview document is being drafted that will present the business case for implementation of the protocol and describe how this new area of library service integrates with other services.

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**NCIP Implementors Group: Progress Report**

The Implementors Group for ANSI/NISO Z39.83-2002, Circulation Interchange Protocol (NCIP) has been conferencing monthly since their inaugural meeting in October 2002 and will hold a face-to-face multi-day meeting April 6-8, 2003. The NCIP-IG was formed to provide a forum for discussion of technical issues involved in implementation of NCIP and to accelerate implementation of the protocol. The group is currently working on a number of activities including:

- Completion of the eight draft Application Profiles.
- Development of guidelines for such areas as patron name queries, treatment of invariant characters, handling a response with item use restrictions, and handling of character encoding.
- A grid of messages / profiles supported by each vendor’s system.
- An XML data set that can be used for interoperability testing.
- Mapping of Z39.50 holdings record structures and data elements to NCIP data elements.

Membership in the NCIP-IG is open to any NCIP developer. To join, contact the chair, Frances McNamara (tel: 773-702-8465; email: f-mcnamara@uchicago.edu).

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**Best Practices Series Debuts with Link Checking Guidelines**

NISO has published *Link Checking*, the first in a new *Best Practices* series. Link checkers are software programs that are used to verify that links embedded in web pages or electronic publications are still accurate. Although link checking is a recommended practice in maintaining websites, the process can potentially have negative performance impacts on the sites being checked. This is especially the case if the links provide dynamic results, since each link check in essence is running a search against the provider’s database. *Link Checking* identifies five best practices that will ensure that the process does not adversely affect checked websites.

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**Networked Reference Services Committee on a Fast Track**

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NISO intends for this publication to be the first in a series of *Best Practices* documents in its areas of interest. Suggestions for Best Practice topics are welcome.
NISO Adopts New Registration Process

The NISO Board of Directors meeting on March 20, 2003 approved a recommendation from the Standards Development Committee to create a NISO Registration process. With this process, NISO would register and make available specifications and guidelines developed outside the formal consensus process.

NISO’s Operating Procedures provide for a full consensus based standards development process that is consistent with ANSI requirements for development and maintenance of American National Standards. This process works well when the problem is relatively well understood and the area of standardization is reasonably mature; but the process can be problematic when new practices and services are being developed. In several areas, organizations interested in solving a common problem have evolved both proprietary and consensual-based specifications that function in many ways like a standard. The new NISO Registration process provides a lighter weight review and accreditation that could help those developing specifications in evolving information services to secure broader acceptance and recognition in a larger community of potential implementors.

A NISO Registration would meet the following criteria:
1. Relevant to the NISO membership.
2. Developers are committed to an open process in further development of the specification.
3. The organizations and individuals who created the specification offer sustained support.
4. The specification must be granted open access, i.e. cannot contain any information with limitations by copyright, patents, trade secret, etc.

The registration process includes completion of a submission form, review by SDC for confirmation that it meets the criteria, a 60 day public comment and review period, and a vote by NISO members, with 15% approval required for registration. The registration will automatically expire after 18 months unless explicitly renewed.

The new registration process was approved by the NISO Board of Directors for a trial period of 18 months.

ONIX Session Featured at ALA Midwinter

ONIX: What’s In It for Libraries? was the theme of the NISO-EDItEUR sponsored program at the ALA Midwinter conference in Philadelphia on January 26, 2003. ONIX, which stands for ONline Information eXchange, is the international book industry’s standard for enhanced book and serial information. EDItEUR, the international group coordinating development of standards for electronic commerce in the book and serials industries, maintains ONIX. NISO and EDItEUR have formed a Joint Working Party for the Exchange of Serials Subscription Information to explore the feasibility of developing a standard format for exchanging information related to serials subscriptions. The JWP’s deliberations and recommendations may influence the ONIX for Serials standard.

Two of the presenters at the January session focused on the ONIX for Books standard: Laura Dawson (Sirsi, Inc.) discussed ONIX in the Library and David Williamson (Library of Congress) presented ONIX: What’s In It for Libraries? The Technical Services Angle. Tim Devenport (EDItEUR) reviewed ONIX for Serials and Priscilla Caplan (Florida Center for Library Automation) reported on the NISO/EDItEUR Joint Working Party for the Exchange of Serials Subscription Information.

The ONIX presentations can be accessed from: http://www.niso.org/presentations/ONIX-pres.html
Activities of the NISO/EDItEUR Joint Working Party can be followed at: http://www.fcla.edu/~pcaplan/jwp/

Become a NISO Member

NISO is the only group that brings together libraries, publishers, and information-related technology organizations in a neutral environment to build consensus on matters that affect them all. NISO offers two types of memberships. Voting members participate on standards committees, comment and vote on all proposed standards, elect Officers and Directors, and vote on matters influencing NISO’s direction. The Library Standards Alliance is a way for libraries to actively support NISO’s standards development work and be kept up-to-date on NISO’s national and international standards activities. Consider becoming a member today and help influence the direction of standards in information delivery services. Visit www.niso.org to learn more.
The PDF/Archival (PDF/A) committee, sponsored by NPES (Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing, and Converting Technologies) and AIIM International has been meeting bi-monthly to work out issues for a consensus standard on the use of PDF for electronic document preservation. They are pursuing formal registration with ISO and the formation of an ISO Joint Working Group, comprising TC130, Graphic technology; TC46/SC11, Information and documentation – Archives/records management; TC42, Photography; and TC171/SC2, Document imaging applications – application issues to take the proposed standard to an international level. Stephen Levenson (Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts) and Dana Stone (Merck & Co., Inc.) are co-chairs of the AIIM/NPES committee. Stephen Levenson and Stephen Abrams (Harvard University) were appointed to be the U.S. project leaders for the ISO effort.

The committee has established the working title of Document management—Long-term electronic preservation—Use of PDF (PDF/A) and agreed on the following working scope statement:

This International Standard specifies the use of Portable Document Format (PDF) for long-term preservation of black and white and color compound documents as electronic data. Compound documents may contain combinations of character, raster, vector, and other data. This International Standard also specifies methods for creation from these data of an exact visual reproduction of the document as it appeared at the time it was submitted for preservation. It also enables the preservation and retrieval of appropriate metadata.

The group is looking closely at the PDF-X standard, ISO 15930—which specifies a restricted subset of PDF for printing and publishing pressprex data exchange—because it meets some of the goals set for PDF/A for document preservation. The electronic document archive is intended to emulate a static paper document, so the handling of electronic annotations and signatures, font embedding, and preservation and visibility of hyperlink URI information are critical issues. Some additional technical issues being worked out include compression algorithms, allowance for tagged and non-tagged PDF, colorspace rendering, and the handling of metadata. Adobe’s Extensible Metadata Platform (XMP), a subset of the W3C’s Resource Description Framework (RDF), is being considered as the metadata schema. An Intellectual Properties sub-group is working with Adobe on needed patent releases and to ensure that only royalty-free technology is used in the standard.

At their March 11, 2003 meeting, the National File Format (NFF) Technical Panel endorsed the use of the "DTBook Element Set" from ANSI/NISO Z39.86-2002 as the source file format for the textual content of the forthcoming National File Format.

The NFF Panel was appointed by the Department of Education to recommend a common electronic format for educational materials that will ensure access to information for disabled persons. Z39.86-2002, Specifications for the Digital Talking Book, includes as a core item an XML-based "DTBook Element Set" for markup of a textual content file. It was endorsed by both ANSI and NISO in 2002 and by the Digital Accessible Information System (DAISY) Consortium. The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a division of the Library of Congress, is the formal maintenance agency for ANSI/NISO Z39.86.

The NFF Panel still has a number of issues to address such as a national repository, handling of graphical descriptions, various distribution issues, and intellectual property constraints. However, the endorsement and incorporation of the "DTBook Element Set" allows the panel to take advantage of technical work that has already been done and move forward more rapidly in completing their mission.
ARMA Forms Two Standards Task Forces

Responding to needs expressed by its members, ARMA International’s Standards Development Committee has formed two new task forces to develop guidelines.

The Off-site Records Storage Customer Contracts and Service Agreements task force will provide guidance regarding the evaluation of potential records storage providers and facilities and the negotiation of service agreement terms.

ISO Dublin Core Standard Approved

ISO/DIS 15836, The Dublin Core metadata element set, received unanimous approval (with two abstentions) from the ISO committee on Information and documentation—Technical interoperability (TC46/SC4). The standard was fast-tracked using a version identical to ANSI/NISO Z39.85-2001. Since it was unanimously approved, the standard will proceed directly to publication. The Dublin Core metadata element set provides a core set of 15 metadata elements for cross-domain information resource description.

The ANSI/NISO version of the standard can be downloaded at: http://www.niso.org/standards/resources/Z39-85.pdf

ISAN International Agency Formed

The ISAN International Agency, the registration authority for ISO 15706, Information and documentation—International Standard Audiovisual Number (ISAN), was officially incorporated as a Swiss association in December 2002 by its three founding members: the Association of International Collective Management of Audiovisual Works (AGICOA); the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF); and the International Confederation of Authors and Composers (CISAC). Each of these three international organizations was integrally involved in the development of the ISAN standard.

The International Standard Audiovisual Number (ISAN) uniquely identifies an audiovisual work throughout its life, just as the ISBN does for monographs and the ISSN for serials. ISO 15706, published in November 2002, establishes and defines the ISAN and defines the responsibilities of the ISAN International Agency and official registration agencies. A network of ISAN registration agencies will be appointed by the International Agency. As soon as the first ISAN registration agencies become operational, later in 2003, the ISAN will be ready for implementation by interested parties within the audiovisual community.

The second, the ISO 15489 Promotion and Implementation task force will develop and implement a plan to promote ISO 15489, Information and documentation—Records management. Initial work will focus on increasing awareness of this standard in the business community. ISO 15489 was developed by NISO’s counterpart in the ISO arena, TC46.

For more information on ARMA standards activities, visit: http://www.arma.org/standards/index.cfm

For updates on implementation of the ISAN system see: http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/iso/tc46sc9/standard/15706e.htm

Libraries Directory Team Recommends Use of IPIG Directory

The TC46/SC4 Working Group 7, led by Judith Pearce (National Library of Australia), that is revising ISO 2146, Information and documentation—Directories of libraries and related organization has proposed that a generalized form of the ILL Protocol Implementors Group (IPIG) Directory Services for Interlibrary Loan would provide a robust core for the full directory. The ISO working group is suggesting a limited number of structural changes to the IPIG directory to provide the core for the full directory. WG7 will meet on May 19 in Rome to discuss the standard and expects to release the revision as a Draft International Standard in late 2003.

More information on the proposal can be obtained at: http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/iso/ill/ipd.htm
Revised ISBN Standard Issued for Comments and Ballot

The first draft of the revision to ISO 2108, International Standard Book Number (ISBN) has been released by the ISO committee on Information and documentation—Identification and Description (TC46/SC9). The deadline for votes and comments on CD 2108 from ISO member bodies and liaison organizations is May 5, 2003.

The ISBN, a unique, international identifier for books and other monographic publications, was first issued as ISO 2108 in 1972 and is currently in its 3rd edition, published in 1992. The main changes in this revision of the standard are:

- increasing the numbering capacity of the ISBN system (from 10 to 13 digits);
- accommodating the assignment of ISBN to electronic books and monographic publications issued as digital files;
- specification of the metadata that should be associated with ISBN assignments; and
- further specifying the authority to assign ISBN, the administration of the ISBN system, and associated fees.

The ISO working group intends to complete the standard by January 1, 2005, however implementation of the 13-digit ISBN, will not be mandatory until January 1, 2007. ISO CD 2108 was developed within TC46/SC9, Working Group 4 under the project leadership of Michael Healy (Whitaker Information Services, U.K.)

ISO Report Responds to MPEG-21

ISO Technical Report 21449, Content Delivery and Rights Management—Functional Requirements for Identifiers and Descriptors for Use in the Music, Film, Video, Sound Recording, and Publishing Industries, is being processed for publication by ISO and will be available shortly. The report is a collective response from TC46/SC9, Identification and description, to the MPEG-21 ISO Technical Report 21000 on the Multimedia Framework. Leaders in the content and rights fields that contributed to the response report are the International Association for the Collective Management of Audiovisual Works (AGICOA), the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF), the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), the ISSN International Centre, the ISO TC46/SC9 project on the International Standard Text Code (ISTC), and the International ISBN Agency.

ISO Technical Report 21449 will be of interest to:

- organizations involved in national administration of information identifier systems and projects (e.g. ISBN, ISSN, ISRC, ISAN, ISWC, and ISTC);
- collecting societies; and,
- other organizations involved in the administration of rights for use of content in the information supply chain.

Questions Posed for ISSN Standard Review

ISO 3297:1998, International standard serial number (ISSN), has been issued for its five year systematic review by TC46/SC9, Identification and description. In soliciting comments on the standard from U.S. users, NISO is posing the following questions:

- Should the scope of ISSN assignment be broadened to refer to "continuing resources" as defined in AACR2? Under this definition, ISSNs could be assigned to databases. Would this be a useful/appropriate use of ISSN?
- Should the ISSN remain an eight-digit string, consisting of the numbers 0 to 9 or X (as the check digit only)?
- Should the ISSN remain a "dumb" number, i.e. contain no meaningful elements to identify language, country, or publisher?
- Should an ISSN continue to be displayed (whether in print form or on a screen) as two four-digit blocks separated by a hyphen?
- Should the ISSN be represented in machine-readable form as a bar code?
- Would it be useful to include the media format associated with the ISSN in display?
• The current standard says that serials "published in different media ... shall have ISSN[s] assigned to the different editions." What would be a better term than "editions" - versions? formats? manifestations?

• Should the current practice of assigning different ISSNs to online, CD-ROM and print versions only be continued?

• How should the ISSN international, national, and regional centers hold metadata related to electronic versions? (Currently, the data elements list only includes "Physical medium" and "Has other physical medium [media].")

• Should the International Standard Text Code (ISTC) be included in the list of data elements, acting as a common identifier underpinning all versions and formats of a continuing resource?

• Should it remain the right of any interested party to apply for an ISSN, or should this be limited to the publisher only?

NISO’s review of the ISSN is being coordinated by Priscilla Caplan (Florida Center for Library Automation). The deadline for comment is April 25, 2003.

For more information on the ISSN revision, go to: http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/isotc46sc9/index.htm

MAKING THE MOST OF STANDARDS

This is the third in a five-part series of articles that examines how you can develop and promote your role as a standards developer and standards professional within your organization. This article discusses how to use a trip report to communicate the benefits of standards development activities. Although the article is written in the context of a corporate environment, its recommendations are equally relevant to those working in academia or non-profits.

Succeeding as a Standards Professional

Part 3: The Art of the Trip Report*

by Laura Hitchcock

Laura Hitchcock is Senior Standards Specialist, External Standards Management, with The Boeing Company, Seattle, Wash. She has over 20 years of diversified experience in standards, standards administration, and management. Hitchcock is a member of the ASTM Board of Directors.

"Where Did You Go?" "Out."
"What Did You Do?" "Nothing."
book title, by Robert Paul Smith

The business of developing standards invariably involves some travel, whether it’s to committee meetings, technical symposia, or conferences. You go off to "do good work" on behalf of your company. You work hard at the meeting; you come back home, and then what? If you’re like many, you jump right back into the hectic business world and your trip becomes a hazy memory. Or, if your organization requires a trip report, you quickly dash something off, check that square, and it’s back to work.

Either way you’ve just missed one of the best opportunities for you, as a standards professional, to have your work and your contributions recognized. Trip reports are an invaluable vehicle for communicating the benefits of standards and standards developing activities. In today’s business environment, with increasing emphasis on the bottom line, it’s imperative that you communicate the value of your standards activities. This article covers some of the essential elements of a trip report, as well as ways you can use your trip report to the best advantage.

What a trip report isn’t:

• A trip report is not a courtroom transcript of a meeting. Recounting the blow-by-blow details of "he said/she said" will quickly lose your audience.

• A trip report is not a distribution list tacked on to the agenda for a meeting or the resulting official minutes. The first contains little information, and the second lacks the translation into specifics relative to your company and your role.

• A trip report is not a vague, high-level description of an activity, which is simply regurgitated each time a trip is taken. There is no currency or sense of immediate impact or results in that.

What a trip report is:

• The best marketing tool you could have. This is your opportunity to communicate the value of a standards activity and the importance of your work.

* Reprinted with permission from ASTM Standardization News, October 2002. © ASTM, 100 Barr Harbor Drive, West Conshohocken, PA 19428.
• A mechanism for ensuring that all interested and impacted parties in your organization understand what has transpired and how it affects the company.

• A catalyst for engaging others from your company in the standards development process.

**Elements of a Good Trip Report**

It may be helpful to review last month's article on building a business case for participation. A trip report, in many respects, is just the flip side of the business case—one says why you need to be there, the other tells what you accomplished. A well-written trip report contains the following elements.

1. Your name and contact information (organization, phone, e-mail address). Make it easy for people to know whom to contact for further information.

2. Committee meeting name, date and location.

3. A brief description of the organization/committee. Summarize the scope of the standards developed by this organization/committee—especially the ones used by your company. Describe how and where these standards are (or could be) used in your company's projects or products. As a communications and marketing vehicle, a good trip report should begin by level-setting the audience and reminding them "why they should care." Remember, in this age of instant forwarding of e-mail, your report can take on a life of its own, being passed on beyond your original intended audience.

4. An overview of the purpose of the meeting. A brief sentence or paragraph stating the scope of the meeting and relating it to the benefits your company receives from your attendance.

5. List of other attendees (both from your company and from other organizations, including your competition). Depending on how big the meeting was, you may just want to highlight some of the more relevant companies present. This helps lend scope to the activity. And let's face it—a lot of companies determine the importance of an activity by whether or not the competition thinks it's important.

6. Highlights of the standards/topics of specific concern to your company addressed at this event. List the products or processes these support. Make it clear that these are the highlights from this meeting, and for greater detail, readers should contact you.

7. List any company positions that you supported at this meeting.

8. List any votes taken that may impact your company.

9. Highlight other actions/info that occurred and are of concern to your company. Note interesting sidebar meetings or conversations with customers, suppliers, or your competition.

10. Identify any on-going responsibility or action items you have in this activity.

11. Outline your recommendations for further corporate actions and support.

12. Include a brief statement of how the results of this meeting or any follow-on activities will be coordinated throughout your company to gain the greatest possible leverage for your involvement.

13. Note the date/location of any future meetings.

**Trip Report Format**

The idea of the trip report is to give anyone who reads it an immediate sense of what transpired, why it was important or how it relates to the company, and what follow-up actions are planned. A trip report is really an executive summary with provisions for anyone who wants more in-depth information to contact you. The opening part should contain, as briefly and succinctly as possible, the first five elements. No more than a paragraph or two. The meat of the most successful reports I've seen consists of short paragraphs or bulleted items (no more than two to three sentences each) that highlight the most important topics, activities, or issues from the meeting. Each highlighted item should incorporate the applicable portions of elements six to 12 above and should answer the following questions:

• What was the topic (subject or gist of the discussion)?

• Why is it important to your company and, if there is a company position, what is it?

• If applicable, what do you plan to do about it (monitor, disseminate this information, work with a particular organization on a resolution, contact someone for more information, pursue a particular opportunity, attempt to get something started or stopped)?

This is where the real "art" part of the trip report comes in. How to distill one or more days of meetings into a set of short, pertinent highlights (no more than 10 to 15 or you will lose people's attention) is a skill. You can't detail everything that happened. Therefore, pick the key items that reinforce your business case for participation. Highlight those activities with the greatest impact on your company (either financially or with regard to
processes). Include those items that will require other people or organizations within your company to become involved. Indicate how you will work with others in your company on actions or resolutions arising from the meeting (this underscores the fact that you are not working in isolation, but rather representing the needs of your company).

Keep in mind that today's trip report becomes tomorrow's business case. Actions you indicate as needing to be worked following one meeting, become your reason for attending the next time. Business case feeds trip report which feeds business case—the circle of life for the standards professional. Your goal, when all is said and done, is to make anyone who reads your report (and most particularly the folks with the purse strings) feel like it was a darn good thing you were at the table for this meeting, that important things are happening with this activity, and that the company needs to stay engaged.

The Life of your Trip Report

So now that you've put all this time into a great trip report, what do you do with it?

- **Distribute** – Make sure your trip report gets out there. Distribute it beyond your immediate management chain to any group that may be interested or impacted. Be sure you include any person or organization you cited as one with whom you wanted to coordinate regarding a particular highlighted item.

- **Post** – The Web is a great tool for marketing your activities. If your group or organization has a Web site, consider adding a page to cover your standards activities. Post your business case and then any trip reports, organized in such a way that people can easily find them. It's amazing how many people with standards-related questions will find you as a result of having your trip reports on the Web. What better way to become known as a resource?

- **Archive** – Make sure you, and others, can find all your past trip reports. This is an excellent way to track items, maintain continuity from meeting to meeting, and monitor progress on items of interest.

- **Excerpt** – Use your trip report as a great source of information to feed other communications vehicles. Activity reports, newsletters, executive briefings, organizational metrics, end-of-the-year reports can all be enriched by items from a good trip report.

- **Succession Planning** – Trip reports are a key training tool for passing the torch. When you first started attending standards committee meetings, did you receive a chronological collection of agendas and trip reports from past meetings so you were up to speed on the committee's activities, their importance to the company, and the organizations and people you need to keep in the loop? No? Well here's your chance not to perpetuate this oversight in succession planning. Make sure your company doesn't miss a beat when you win the lottery and someone else takes your place on a committee.

- **Review** – And lastly, use your trip report to prepare for the next meeting. When you get your meeting announcement, take out your trip report from the last meeting and read it over. Make sure you've completed any actions you noted. Research the status of on-going activities. Note any follow-on discussions or sidebar meetings you might want to hold based on ones you had at the last meeting.

    "Where did you go?"
    "To a standards meeting."
    "What did you do?"
    "Just take a look at my report!"

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This is a capsule report on each active NISO standard in development. This list does not include current, approved standards that are not in revision. To learn more about each activity, go to: http://www.niso.org/standard.html

Note: DSFTU stands for Draft Standard for Trial Use

### Standards Status: April 1, 2003

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### Calendar

#### April 2003
- **April 28-29**: Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) Spring 2003 Task Force Meeting
  Washington, D.C.
  Includes standards briefings on PDF-Archival and the Networked Reference Services Protocol.
- **May 2003**
  - **May 7-8**: NISO Members Metasearch Strategy Workshop
    Denver, CO
  - **May 13**: OpenURL Day
    New York, NY
    Introduction to OpenURL for the library and publishing communities. For info see: http://palmer.cwpost.liu.edu/csc/OpenURL_meeting.html
  - **May 19-23**: ISO TC46 Meeting Week
    Rome, Italy
  - **May 28**: ISBN Update at BookExpo
    Los Angeles, CA

#### June 2003
- **June 10**: Standards Update at the SLA Annual Conference
  New York, NY

  Standards related sessions at the ALA Conference in Toronto:
  - **June 20**: 2:00pm-4:00pm NetRef Implementors Briefing
    4:30pm-5:30pm AVIAC
  - **June 22**: 4:00pm-6:00pm NISO Annual meeting and program

- **June 23-25**: Open Publish 2003 Conference
  Philadelphia, PA

#### September 2003
- **September 18**: NISO Board of Directors
  Washington, D.C.
FOR YOUR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Link Checking: A NISO Best Practice  [NEW]
Provides best practice recommendations for doing link checking without adversely affecting checked websites.
http://www.niso.org/linkcheck/NISOLinkCheck.html

ONIX: What's In It for Libraries?, presentation slides from ALA Midwinter 2003  [NEW]
by Laura Dawson (Sirsi), David Williamson (Library of Congress), Tim Devenport (EDItEUR), and Priscilla Caplan (Florida Center for Library Automation)
Slides from four presentations at the ALA Midwinter Conference in Philadelphia on January 26, 2003 about the ONIX standard for books and serials.
http://www.niso.org/presentations/ONIX-pres.html

Z39.7 Library Statistics, presentation slides from ALA Midwinter 2003  [NEW]
by Denise M. Davis, Oregon State Library
Reviews the work of NISO Committee AY in revising Z39.7 and discusses key elements of the 2002 revision.
http://www.niso.org/committees/ay/ALA_ALCTS_1-25-03.ppt

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