ISMN Update 2011

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Membership
2011 was a successful year for the ISMN system as several strategically important new members joined the ISMN, as e.g. The Netherlands, South Africa, the United States of America.
There are now 55 ISMN agencies, the latest member being Kenya.
There is progress in the negotiations with further interested countries: Argentina, Botswana, China and Nigeria will hopefully soon sign the contract. Also Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and United Arab Emirates indicated their intentions to become ISMN members.

AGM
The latest Annual General Assembly of the ISMN community took place in Pretoria, South Africa, on September 13, 2011, hosted by the National Library of South Africa.
For the second time we aligned our meeting with that of the International ISBN Agency. This brought synergies on both sides and we intend to continue with this arrangement.
This time, representatives from many African countries attended the ISMN meeting and several of them expressed their interest or already took the necessary steps to establish ISMN agencies in their respective countries. The meeting started with the official signing of the membership contract between ISMN and the National Library of South Africa which had been a long-time desideratum.
Guest speakers at the ISMN meeting were Stella Griffiths (International ISBN Agency), Paul Jessop (International Standard Recording Code), Prof. Stephanus Muller of the DOMUS Documentation Centre for Music at the University of Stellenbosch (on archiving South African music). Dr. Sello Galane (on Free Kiba Music and its function in South African music).
The chairman gave reports at a training course for ISBN and standard numbering as well as at the ISBN Panel meeting.
When some doubts were expressed in last year's ISO TC report: “There has been some discussion whether it makes sense to travel all the way to South Africa for such a meeting, to a country which cannot compare in music production with Europe and North America. On the other hand, as the standard claims to be international, the impression should be avoided that it was just something for Europeans ... Actually, South Africa is not yet an ISMN member; but the meeting will offer opportunities for African colleagues to familiarise themselves with the standard and perhaps join the community.” one can now say that it was the right decision to go to Africa in order to make the ISMN standard more widely known and used.
The venue for the next AGM was not set yet at the time of this report but it would be Europe.
Publications
The latest ISMN Newsletter (no. 21) – also available on the ISMN Website – provides information on the 2011 AGM. We also published a new ISMN brochure. It informs about the ISMN, its benefits and application. It is more general than the ISMN Users’ Manual and targeted at a wider audience within the music and trade sectors: ISMN International Standard Music Number, International ISMN Agency, Berlin 2012, ISBN 978-92-990051-4-9, 48 pages. Text, design and layout by Siobhán Cahalan.

Applications
ISMN is still aiming for the stage when the whole notated music sector is geared to the ISMN – as the book sector to ISBN. A promising application is IDNV marketed by the German and the British ISMN agencies who cooperate on this venture. It is a Music in Print catalogue with currently about 600,000 titles, and it is growing. While printed music reaches a much smaller audience than books, an advantage is the worldwide market as there is no language barrier. Thus a truly international Music in Print would make the ISMN indispensable ....
In Australia, TROVE is the information system of the National Library of Australia, incorporating Music Australia; it proves the benefits of the ISMN, on the library side. That there are other options was shown by Paul Jessop in his paper given in Pretoria: Why not use the ISMN for apps? But music publishers are only slowly convinced to use the ISMN ...

Meetings
In 2011 the International ISMN Agency was represented at the annual ISO TC46 meeting in Sydney, Australia, the Frankfurt Music Fair and the IAML Conference in Dublin as well as at a Turkish standards conference in Istanbul (by kind invitation of the Turkish Ministry of Culture).
In September 2011 the representative of the Dutch ISMN agency, situated at Music Center Netherlands, visited Berlin. The Netherlands only recently joined the system but soon had to face major problems with government funding cuts as of 2013. The future of the newly established agency is still insecure.

Agency Projects
Thanks to the cooperation of the German ISMN agency the International ISMN Agency now offers an administration program for its agencies.

Board
The next board elections are scheduled for 2012.

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