

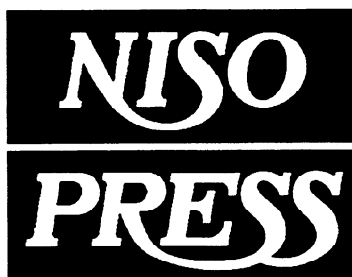
# **International Standard Serial Numbering (ISSN)**

**Abstract:** This standard defines the structure and presentation of a standard code for the unique identification of serial publications: The International Standard Serial Number (ISSN). The code is intended solely for the identification of serials. The standard also designates a central authority for administration of the code.

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**An American National Standard**  
**Developed by the**  
**National Information Standards Organization**  
**Approved January 20, 1992 by the**  
**American National Standards Institute**

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## Foreword

(This Foreword is not a part of American National Standard ANSI/NISO Z39.9-1992, but is included for information only.)

The revision to this standard was approved by the membership of the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) in 1991. The changes made from the 1984 revision to this standard address the concerns of those who provided comments and take into account the 1991 discussions about the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) held by Directors of the International Serials Data System.

The scope statement and its section title have been revised. The word "use" in the first sentence was changed to "presentation" to more accurately represent that the standard applies to the structure and printing and display of the ISSN. Although the ISSN is used widely in a variety of applications for serials, the standard's purpose is to prescribe how the ISSN appears on the item or in displays and to designate the authority for administration.

Section 3.2.2 was added to stress that new ISSN assignments are made for title changes. Although the language about title changes has been in the standard, differentiating it in a separate section provides added emphasis.

Section 4 was restructured and incorporates comments made by those who wished to elaborate on and clarify the relationship of ISSN to other codes. In addition, the section on presentation specifies a priority for printing the ISSN and suggests locations for its display in non-print formats.

The language describing the central authority has been expanded and specific functions have been included in Appendix B. Following NISO Board policy, a statement on a maintenance agency also has been added as Section 6.

Julia Blixrud, Head, National Serials Data Program, Library of Congress, was responsible for developing this revision.

Suggestions for improving this standard are welcome. They should be sent to the National Information Standards Organization, P.O. Box 1056, Bethesda, MD 20827 (301) 975-2814.

This standard was processed and approved for submittal to ANSI by the National Information Standards Organization. NISO approval of this standard does not necessarily imply that all Voting Members voted for its approval. At the time it approved this standard, NISO had the following members:

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## American National Standard for International Standard Serial Numbering (ISSN)

### 1. Scope and Field of Application.

This standard defines the structure and presentation of a standard code for the unique identification of serial publications: the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).<sup>1</sup> The code is intended solely for the identification of a serial publication and is assigned to the registered form of that serial's title. The standard also designates a central authority for administration of the code (see Section 5).

### 2. Definition of Serial.

In this standard a serial is defined as a publication on any medium issued in successive parts, usually having numerical or chronological designations, and intended to be continued indefinitely.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Format and Characteristics of the ISSN

**3.1. Format.** An ISSN is composed of seven digits plus an eighth check digit. The check digit provides for error detection and is calculated as outlined in Appendix A.

A single form of presentation shall be employed when the ISSN is written or printed. The code shall be preceded by the code identifier ("ISSN") and shall appear as two groups of four digits separated by a hyphen as in the following example:

ISSN 0084-9243

The hyphen functions in this format as an aid to visual recognition, thereby facilitating the avoidance of error.

### 3.2. Characteristics of the ISSN.

**3.2.1. Uniqueness.** A one-to-one correspondence exists between each assigned ISSN and the serial title with which it is registered; for each ISSN there is only one serial title and for each serial title there is only one ISSN.

At the time of assignment by the central authority, an ISSN is registered for a standardized form of title called the "key title," which is derived from the title information appearing in the serial.<sup>3</sup>

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1. The abbreviation "ISSN" denotes the singular and plural forms, according to context.

2. The definition of serial is a slightly modified version of the definition in International Standard ISO 3297-1986. (Documentation - International Standard Serial Number), 1986, Geneva, International Organization for Standardization.

3. Specific rules on the determination of a key title and assignment of ISSN appear in ISDS Manual, Paris, 1983.

**3.2.2. Title changes.** When the key title of a serial changes, a new ISSN is registered for the new key title.<sup>4</sup>

**3.2.3. Permanency of Assignment.** The relationship between an ISSN and a serial title, once established through registration, is permanent. Once registered, an ISSN is not reassigned. If it is necessary to cancel an ISSN assignment, that ISSN is permanently retired.

## **4. Location and Presentation of the ISSN.**

**4.1. Presentation on publication.** See Section 3.1 for format of presentation.

Inclusion of an ISSN in advertising matter for serials in all formats is strongly encouraged. Serials issued with accompanying parts should display the ISSN on each component part.

**4.1.1. Print publications.** The ISSN shall be printed in a prominent position on or in each serial issue (in this order of preference): front cover, title page, caption, masthead, back cover, other pages.

**4.1.2. Non-print publications.** The ISSN shall be displayed on accessible, eye-readable portions of non-print formats (container, label, fiche header, title screen, etc.).

**4.2. Presentation of two ISSN.** When a publication carries both a main series and subseries title, the ISSN for both should appear on the serial. The ISSN should be distinguished either by adding the key title or abbreviated key title after the relevant number, or by printing the ISSN as closely as possible to the relevant titles.

When a serial contains or distributes another serial as an insert, the ISSN for the insert should be printed on its title page or other page of the insert as appropriate.

**4.3. Presentation with ISBN.**<sup>5</sup> If a serial issue carries an ISBN as well as an ISSN (a volume of a monographic series, a directory, a yearbook, etc.) the two numbers shall appear together, each with its own code identifier.

Example:        ISBN 0-8371-9540-3  
                  ISSN 0084-9243

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4. Specific rules on the changes affecting key titles are found in *ISDS Manual*, Paris, 1983.

5. American National Standard for Book Numbering, ANSI/NISO Z39.21-1988.

**4.4. Presentation within other codes.** If the ISSN is incorporated into other codes (bibliographic strips, bar codes, etc.) that are printed or displayed on the publication, the ISSN and its code identifier should be presented also in eye-readable form within or accompanying the other code.

## **5. Administration of the ISSN.**

**5.1. Designated authority.** The International Serials Data System (ISDS) is the designated central authority for administering the assignment of ISSN. A more detailed statement of the structure and function of ISDS is given in Appendix B.

**5.2. Assignment.** The central authority for the assignment of an ISSN and the registration of the associated key title are responsible for (1) interpreting bibliographic conventions and definitions as required; (2) establishing working definitions of serials; and, (3) making the distinction between serial entities involved in splits, mergers, title changes and the like.

The central authority also has responsibility for the decision to cancel ISSN.

**5.3. Dissemination.** The central authority maintains a record of ISSN and key titles assigned, fosters the broad availability of lists of ISSN, and promotes the use of the ISSN.

## **6. Maintenance Agency.**

The Maintenance Agency designated in Appendix C shall be responsible for responding to queries on the interpretation of this standard, reviewing suggestions for the improvement of the standard, and maintaining a current list of inquiries and responses that may be used for potential future enhancements of this standard. Questions and comments about this standard should be sent to the Maintenance Agency.

## **7. References.**

Other standards related to this standard include:

ANSI/NISO Z39.21-1988, American National Standard for Book Numbering

ISO 3297-1986, Documentation -- International Standard Serial Numbering

## APPENDIX A

### Appendix A

(This appendix is not part of American National Standard ANSI/NISO Z39.9-1992, but is included for information only.)

#### Procedure for Calculation of the Check Digit

The use of a check digit helps guard against errors resulting from improper data transcription. The check digit is particularly effective in detecting transposition errors. The check digit used is calculated on a Modulus 11 basis as indicated in Table A1.

**Table A1**  
**Procedure for Calculation of the Check Digit**

Procedure		Example						
(1)	Write the digits of the basic number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(2)	Write the constant weighting factors associated with each position of the basic number.	8	7	6	5	4	3	2
(3)	Multiply each digit by its associated weighting factor	8	14	18	20	20	18	14
(4)	Sum the products of the multiplications	$8 + 14 + 18 + 20 + 20 + 18 + 14 = 112$						
(5)	Divide the sum by 11 to find the remainder	$112 \div 11 = 10$ plus a remainder of 2						
(6)	Subtract the remainder from 11 to generate the required check digit. If the check digit is 10, generate a check digit of X.* If there is no remainder, generate a check digit of zero.	$11 - 2 = 9$						
(7)	Append the check digit to create the eight-digit International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).	1234-5679						

\*Use of Modulus 11 can sometimes result in a check digit of 10. If this were used, the ISSN would not always be the required eight digits in length. Therefore, the X is used to represent the check digit 10, thus maintaining the uniform length of eight digits.

### Appendix B

(This appendix is not part of American National Standard ANSI/NISO Z39.9-1992, but is included for information only.)

#### Structure and Function of the International Serials Data System

##### 1. Background.

An international organization was considered essential for comprehensive implementation of ISSN. It was necessary to centralize work at the international level to coordinate the worldwide implementation of ISSN, and to work with publishers at national or regional levels where the serial publications are actually collected and maintained. Thus, in order to promote the use of ISSN at both international and national (or regional) levels, a two-level system is required.

The International Serials Data System (ISDS), designed and implemented within the framework of UNESCO's UNISIST program, functions in two levels and meets this requirement. Established through statutory agreement between UNESCO as the parent organization and the Government of France as the host country, the International Serials Data System is responsible for the introduction and operation of a worldwide automated system for the registration of serials in all branches of knowledge. As part of this function, ISDS was designated the central authority for assignment of ISSN by the International Standard ISO 3297 -- International Standard Serial Numbering.

##### 2. Structure.

The ISDS network includes an International Centre for the Registration of Serial Publications (Paris, France) and national centers located in member countries. Some countries may elect to join together to form regional centers based on a common language, or on geographical or other considerations. Where no national or regional center has been designated, or until such arrangements can be made, the International Centre performs the necessary functions of ISSN assignment and title registration. The ISDS International Centre is also responsible for the allocation of blocks of ISSN to national or regional centers, for the overall design and coordination of the system, and for the provision of an international register of ISSN.

The United States' representative in this international system is the National Serials Data Program (NSDP) at the Library of Congress (Washington, DC 20540), which has been delegated the authority for administering the assignment of ISSN to serials published in the U.S., for requesting ISSN for non-U.S. serials as necessary from other ISDS centers, and for promoting the use of ISSN within the United States.

##### 3. Functions.

The functions performed by the National Serials Data Program as the U.S. Center for the International Serials Data System include, but are not limited by, the following:

## APPENDIX B

- To manage and administer the assignment of ISSN to U.S. serial publications,
- To handle relations with the International Serials Data System (ISDS) on behalf of all the publishers or producers of serials in the U.S.,
- To introduce new publishers and producers of serials to the ISDS network,
- To maintain a register of U.S. ISSN assignments and their key titles,
- To provide technical advice and assistance to ensure that this standard is appropriately applied and that approved procedures are followed,
- To make available information on the ISSN and the ISDS network to users of serials,
- To inform publishers and producers of serials of the printing of any invalid or duplicate ISSN,
- To inform publishers and producers of serials of the ISSN assigned to their publications at the request of other ISSN clients,
- To work towards achieving comprehensiveness in U.S. ISSN assignments,
- To maintain liaison with all elements of the serial information publishing trade to ensure efficient use of the ISSN,
- To encourage the incorporation of ISSN into other appropriate information standards.

### **Appendix C**

(This appendix is not part of American National Standard ANSI/NISO Z39.9-1992, but is included for information only.)

#### **Designation of the Maintenance Agency**

The functions assigned to the Maintenance Agency, as specified in Section 6, are performed by the Library of Congress through the National Serials Data Program. Questions about ISSN and this standard should be sent to the National Serials Data Program, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540 (Tel. 202-707-6452).