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"CD-ROM as a reference tool: librarians with hands-on experience"

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"CD-ROM workshop", Carlsbad, California, 16 March 1988

WHILE ASFA IS A SPECIALIZED CD-ROM PRODUCT, THE SCRIPPS LIBRARY'S  
EXPERIENCE WITH CD-ROM IS USEFUL FOR ANY LIBRARY IMPLEMENTING OR  
MANAGING A CD-ROM SYSTEM

SET UP IN AN ACADEMIC BRANCH SCIENCE LIBRARY WITH A FAIRLY  
COMPUTER-LITERATE CLIENTELE OF 190 GRADUATE STUDENTS AND 300 ACADEMICS  
AND ALSO OTHER NON-ACADEMIC RESEARCH PERSONNEL

THE INTENT IN PURCHASING ASFA WAS TO MEET CASUAL INFORMATION NEEDS OF A  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY CLIENTELE

PURCHASE WAS NOT INTENDED TO MEET COMPREHENSIVE INFORMATION NEEDS LIKE  
GRANT PROPOSALS OR DISSERTATIONS

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TWO DISCS COVER 1982 THRU JUNE 1987; VENDOR CURRENTLY PLANS UPDATES  
EVERY SIX MONTHS; VENDOR ORIGINALLY ANNOUNCED QUARTERLY UPDATES. THERE  
IS A DELAY IN SUPPLYING THE CURRENT DISC DUE TO RELOCATION OF VENDOR

CURRENCY SHOULD NOT BE PRIMARY CONCERN IN CONSIDERING A CD-ROM PRODUCT

1982-1986 BACKFILE CURRENTLY COSTS \$2500; ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION COSTING  
\$1250 PER YEAR AND STARTS WITH 1987

YOU ARE LEASING AND NOT PURCHASING THE DISC; PURCHASE RAISES THE PRICE  
A BIT

BEGAN PUBLIC SERVICE ON DECEMBER 1ST 1986

STARTUP OF SERVICE WAS ADVERTISED THROUGH WORD OF MOUTH, LIBRARY  
COMMITTEE, FLYERS TO ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS, NOTICE IN SCRIPPS' WEEKLY  
NEWSLETTER, AND LIBRARY'S NEWSLETTER

SET UP A HARD DISK IBM COMPATIBLE MICROCOMPUTER WITH 640K RAM LINKED TO  
A HEWLETT-PACKARD THINKJET PRINTER AND A PHILLIPS CM-100 DISC PLAYER;

ASFA REQUIRES 512K RAM AND A HARD DISK OR A LARGE CAPACITY FLOPPY DRIVE

IS NECESSARY

CD-ROM SEARCHSTATION IS OPEN TO ALL IN LIBRARY AND IS ALWAYS SWITCHED ON; LOCATED IN REFERENCE AREA BY CARD AND ONLINE CATALOGS AND IS NEXT TO REFERENCE SERVICE AREA;

THE DISCS ARE CHECKED OUT FROM THE CIRCULATION DESK AND PLACED IN THE DISC PLAYER BY THE PUBLIC; NO PROBLEMS WITH THIS; ONLY ONE PERSON PUT A COMPACT DISC INTO A FLOPPY DISC DRIVE

MICROCOMPUTER AND PRINTER ARE SECURED WITH CABLE AND ARE EXTREMELY VISIBLE TO REFERENCE AND CIRCULATION STAFF AND THE PUBLIC

INSTRUCTION IS ORIENTED TO POINT-OF-USE AND THE UNIT IS MONITORED BY STAFF FOR PROBLEMS

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ASFA SEARCH SOFTWARE IS SOPHISTICATED AND HAS BOTH MENU-DRIVEN AND COMMAND-DRIVEN SEARCHING

BOOLEAN AND PROXIMITY SEARCHING; PROXIMITY SEARCHING HAS BOTH IMMEDIATE ADJACENCY AND TEXTUAL PROXIMITY SEARCHING WHEREIN THE SEARCHER CAN SPECIFY THE TEXTUAL DISTANCE BETWEEN WORDS

LEFT AND RIGHT TRUNCATION

SEARCH ALL FIELDS GLOBALLY OR SEARCH SPECIFIC FIELDS LIKE AUTHOR, AUTHOR'S ADDRESS, SOURCE, DESCRIPTORS, ABSTRACT

PRINT AND DOWNLOAD INDIVIDUAL OR ENTIRE SETS OF REFERENCES.

BROWSE THE DICTIONARY OF TERMS IN THE DATABASE  
DISPLAY A HISTORY OF PREVIOUS SEARCH STEPS  
SEARCH STRATEGIES CAN BE SAVED FOR SUBSEQUENT EXECUTION AGAINST A SECOND DISC

MENU-DRIVEN MODE IS LIMITED TO BOOLEAN COMBINING OF TWO TERMS; COMMAND-DRIVEN MODE ALLOWS NESTING OF MULTIPLE SEARCH TERMS WITH PARENTHESES

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THE LIBRARY DEVELOPED A PRINTED CD-ROM MANUAL SINCE THE VENDOR-SUPPLIED MANUAL WAS INADEQUATE

ENTRY MENUS AND INSTRUCTIONAL SCREENS AND TEXT FILES WERE ADDED TO THE HARD DISC TO PROVIDE INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION BEFORE ENTERING AND AFTER EXITING THE CD-ROM SEARCH SOFTWARE

AUTOMENU IS USED TO CONTROL THIS SYSTEM EXTERNAL TO THE CD-ROM SEARCH SOFTWARE

INSTRUCTIONAL INFORMATION:

A SCREEN STATES HOW TO LOAD A DISC INTO THE DISC PLAYER AND THEN

AN INTRODUCTORY MENU OFFERS ENTRY INTO AN INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM FOR LEARNING CD-ROM SEARCHING OR TO BEGIN SEARCHING

IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL SYSTEM, SEARCHERS VIEW TWO SCREENS THAT STATE THE COVERAGE OF ASFA, WHAT YEARS THE DISCS COVER, THE TWO SEARCH MODES (MENU-DRIVEN AND COMMAND-DRIVEN) FOR CD-ROM SEARCHING, AND A SUGGESTION THAT THE SEARCHER CONTACT THE LIBRARIAN IF MORE INFORMATION IS DESIRED;

A SECOND MENU THEN OFFERS THE OPTIONS TO VIEW ONLINE SEARCH MANUALS FOR EITHER SEARCH MODE OF CD-ROM; THE LIBRARY DEVELOPED THESE MANUALS TO PROVIDE MORE COMPLETE INSTRUCTION OF CD-ROM SEARCHING

THE VENDOR SUPPLIES AN ONLINE MANUAL ONLY FOR THE COMMAND-DRIVEN SEARCH MODE FOR EXPERIENCED SEARCHERS AND IT DOES NOT THOROUGHLY COVER SEARCHING; THE VENDOR DOES NOT PROVIDE AN ONLINE MANUAL FOR THE MENU-DRIVEN MODE FOR BEGINNING SEARCHERS WHO NEED HELP THE MOST

THE LIBRARY'S ONLINE MANUAL RECEIVES REGULAR USE AND IS MORE POPULAR THAN THE LIBRARY'S PRINTED MANUAL SINCE AN ONLINE MANUAL IS ONSCREEN

THE LIBRARY'S ONLINE MANUALS ARE SCANNED USING A "README" SOFTWARE FROM SIDEKICK WHICH SIDEKICK USES FOR ITS OWN INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL.

THE LIBRARY IS CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTING A POPUP HELP SYSTEM THAT WILL ENABLE CD-ROM SEARCHERS TO ACCESS HELP SCREENS DURING A SEARCH SESSION; USING POLARIS RESCUE SOFTWARE, THE LIBRARY CAN DESIGN ITS OWN HELP SCREENS THAT CAN OVERLAY THE CD-ROM SEARCH SOFTWARE WHEN INVOKED WITH A SPECIFIC KEYSTROKE, LIKE THE ALTKEY AND THE H KEY. POPUP HELP SCREENS WILL COMPLEMENT THE LIBRARY'S ONLINE MANUALS WHICH CURRENTLY HAVE TO BE VIEWED BEFORE BEGINNING A CD-ROM SEARCH SESSION

IMMEDIATELY BEFORE STARTING A CD-ROM SEARCH SESSION, A THIRD INSTRUCTIONAL SCREEN INFORMS SEARCHERS HOW TO EXIT THE CD-ROM SOFTWARE PROPERLY AT THE CLOSE OF A SEARCH SESSION IN ORDER TO LEAVE IT READY FOR THE NEXT USER;

AFTER EXITING THE CD-ROM SOFTWARE, A SCREEN STATES TO RETURN THE DISCS TO THE CIRCULATION DESK OR TO PLACE ANOTHER DISC IN THE PLAYER

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SCREEN SAVER SOFTWARE IS USED TO AVOID MONITOR BURN SINCE THE SYSTEM IS LEFT ON ALL THE TIME;

ALMOST ALL OF THE SOFTWARE ON THE HARD DISK HAS READ-ONLY FILE STATUS WHEREBY THEY ARE RENDERED UNERASABLE. THIS IS DONE BY CHANGING THE FILE ATTRIBUTE STATUS OF THE SOFTWARE. CAN BE DONE BY VARIOUS MEANS INCLUDING NORTON UTILITIES.

NO UNNECESSARY DOS SOFTWARE IS ON THE HARD DISK; KEEP ONLY WHAT IS NEEDED ON DISK. DOS SOFTWARE LIKE FORMAT CAN BE DANGEROUS BECAUSE IT CAN WIPE OUT A HARD DISK.

THE HARD DISC DRIVE'S HEADS ARE PARKED AUTOMATICALLY AFTER A SEARCHER EXITS THE CD-ROM SEARCH SOFTWARE; SINCE THE MICROCOMPUTER IS LEFT ON ALL THE TIME, IT IS IMPORTANT TO PARK THE HARD DISC DRIVE'S HEAD TO AVOID DAMAGE FROM BUMPING. IF A LIBRARY SWITCHES ITS MICROCOMPUTER OFF, BE SURE TO PURCHASE A MORE EXPENSIVE HARD-DISC DRIVE THAT AUTOMATICALLY PARKS ITS HEADS WHEN SWITCHED OFF

BEFORE ENTERING THE CD-ROM SOFTWARE, A MENU ASKS THE SEARCHER FOR THEIR STATUS. THE STATUS OF THE SEARCHER, THE TIME AT WHICH THE SEARCHER ENTERS THE CD-ROM SEARCH SOFTWARE, AND THE TIME AT WHICH THE CD-ROM SOFTWARE IS EXITED IS CAPTURED AUTOMATICALLY TO A DISC FILE FOR UPCOMING ANALYSIS ON THE USAGE, FREQUENCY AND LENGTH OF SEARCH SESSIONS

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USERS ARE VERY HAPPY WITH CD-ROM SEARCHING AND APPRECIATE IT FOR THE REFERENCES IT DELIVERS FOR FREE; THEY WILL TAKE ANYTHING FOR FREE;

USERS HAVE STATED THAT THEY OFTENTIMES ONLY NEED A FEW REFERENCES AND CAN TRACE THOSE ITEMS' REFERENCES BACK FURTHER INTO THE LITERATURE

THIS SERVICE HAS CREATED CONSIDERABLE EXPRESSION OF HAPPINESS WITH THE LIBRARY

NO QUEUEING PROBLEMS YET BECAUSE THE SYSTEM IS NOT CONSTANTLY IN USE;

THE LIBRARY'S SMALL CLIENTELE IS A BLESSING FOR THE SINGLE-USER LIMITATION OF A COMPACT DISC; TYPICAL SEARCH SESSIONS LAST 15 TO 30 MINUTES WITH A RANGE OF 10 MINUTES TO SEVERAL HOURS

USERS DO NOT COMPLAIN ABOUT THE LACK OF TIMELINESS

THIS SERVICE PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR LIBRARY USERS REGARDING BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES AND ONLINE SEARCHING

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REFERENCE STAFF USE IT FOR READY REFERENCE; ITS VERY NICE TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND TO PHONE CALLS AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH SOME REFERENCES INSTEAD OF PROVIDING NOTHING

CD-ROM DID NOT LESSEN THE ONLINE USE OF THE ASFA DATABASE IN THE LIBRARY'S SEARCH SERVICE; ASFA WAS SEARCHED INFREQUENTLY AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE DATABASES ARE USUALLY SEARCHED FOR SPECIFIC TOPICS

STAFF TIME HELPING USERS IS OCCASIONALLY A BURDEN AND IS A DRIVING FACTOR BEHIND THE DEVELOPMENT ON ONLINE MANUALS AND POPUP HELP; TRYING TO FACILITATE UNASSISTED SEARCHING; WILL ALWAYS HAVE TO HELP SOME PEOPLE BUT MANY PEOPLE DO LIKE TO FIGURE THINGS OUT FOR THEMSELVES  
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