"""""current comments"

CC®'s New Computer Composed Author Address Directory

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When I recently returned from a medical library conference in Cali, Colombia the ISI®Production and Computer staff presented me with a wonderful New Year's present. I'm sure that all CC readers who use the Author Index and Address Directory will agree. For those readers who have started to receive CC with the first issue for 1971 let me explain.

For over ten years Current Contents® services have included an Author Index and Address Directory. Having seen the title of an interesting article in CC one turns to the Author Index to obtain the author's address. By use of letters, postcards or ISI's Request-A-Print™ cards it is then possible to write the author for a "free" reprint.¹ Most authors realize the increasing impact of these CC listings on the number of such requests they receive, especially from developing countries.².³

The preparation of these weekly indexes is a formidable task. Consider that in one week we process approximately 8,500 different addresses for papers by about 9,000 authors! These addresses usually must be extracted from the journals themselves unless the publishers or editors provide this information to us separately to avoid delay. A set of punched-cards must be keypunched, proofread and converted to magnetic tapes. An IBM computer is used to sort these tapes in alphabetical order and to edit certain inadequate

addresses which may have zip codes or other information missing. Current Contents address directories must be prepared and ready for the printer within a 24-hour period so you can appreciate the tight scheduling involved.

In previous years the sorted magnetic tapes were programmed to print the directory on an IBM computer which has an incredible electro-mechanical printer which "prints" or types at the rate of about 1,000 lines per minute.

A major shortcoming of most computer printers is the formidable gothic print style that is required. In recent years, however, the use of computer activated photocomposition devices has revolutionized this process, making it possible to simulate printing that one ordinarily associates with "hot" letterpress methods. ISI has pioneered in the use of the Fototronic®. This incredible machine "sets" an entire page of the Science Citation Index® in about 60 seconds. The entire address directory for CC is prepared in about fifteen minutes. However, this is only after our sorted magnetic tapes have been edited by a special ISI program that calculates space requirements, inserts typographical instructions for bold face headings, etc. The edited magnetic tapes then control the electron beam of a special cathode-ray-tube (crt). The index information is displayed on the crt and reproduced on a special photographic paper.

Undoubtedly these details are only of passing interest to most CC readers, but many of you are associated with one of the 4,000 journals we regularly process. You may wish to think about a custom service ISI can provide to journals interested in preparing cumula-

tive indexes. Recently we prepared indexes for the Journal of the Electrochemical Society.

The legibility of our Fototronic typeset indexes will be especially appreciated by hardworking departmental secretaries who must look up addresses and type dozens of reprint request cards.

- 1. Garfield, E., "Is the 'Free Reprint System' Free and/or Obsolete?", Current Contents 8(22) 3-4 (June 1, 1965).
- 2., "Use of Current Contents in Developing Countries", Current Contents 13(38) 4-5 (Sept. 23, 1970).
- Posen, S. & Posen, J.S., "The Geography of Reprint Requests", J. Med. Education 44, 648-654 (1969).