

I couldn't recommend it over CancerLit, SilverPlatter or Cambridge for their bibliographic files, or over the printed versions of the three texts.

Product Information

Title: OncoDisc
Publisher: Lippincott Information Services

Producer: J.B. Lippincott Company
 Lippincott Information Services
 East Washington Square
 Philadelphia, PA 19105

Telephone: (800) 523-2945

Hardware: IBM-PC/AT/XT or 100% compatible. At least 640K of RAM; A 5.25 inch floppy disk drive. A hard disk

with at least 6M of available space. Most major CD-ROM drives such as Hitachi and Philips. High Sierra device driver for the CD-ROM drive. Microsoft MS-DOS extensions needed.

Search Software: SearchLITE from I.S. Grupe, Inc. (version 2.1).

Update and Pricing: \$1950 per year with bimonthly updates.

Optical Product Review

Karen Sendi

Auto-Graphics' GDCS GPO Index on CD-ROM, version 6.0

Auto-Graphics' Government Documents Catalog Service (GDCS) on CD-ROM is an electronic index to the *Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications*. As indicated on its initial screen, the database covers the time period June 1976 to the present. However, I did not discover any records earlier than July 1976, nor did Gavett. Each update, issued monthly, bimonthly, or quarterly, is fully cumulated.

To use the database, one needs a 100% IBM-compatible XT or AT; 512K RAM; a 20MB hard disk; a floppy disk drive; MS-DOS version 3.2 or higher; Microsoft Extensions, and a CD-ROM drive. A color monitor is not necessary but recommended, for GDCS uses color heavily to emphasize elements on a screen and the stages in a search. The vendor recommends a printer.

Installation

The installation of the search software, called IMPACT, is easy, requiring only brief answers to uncomplicated questions displayed in a menu format. For example, after typing "install" at the A> prompt, one must specify the hard disk drive designation and the CD-ROM drive designation. If Microsoft Extensions (included in a subscription) are not loaded, one must also indicate the CD-ROM device driver and the number of drives. GDCS displays a message upon successfully completing the installation and creating the GDCS directory.

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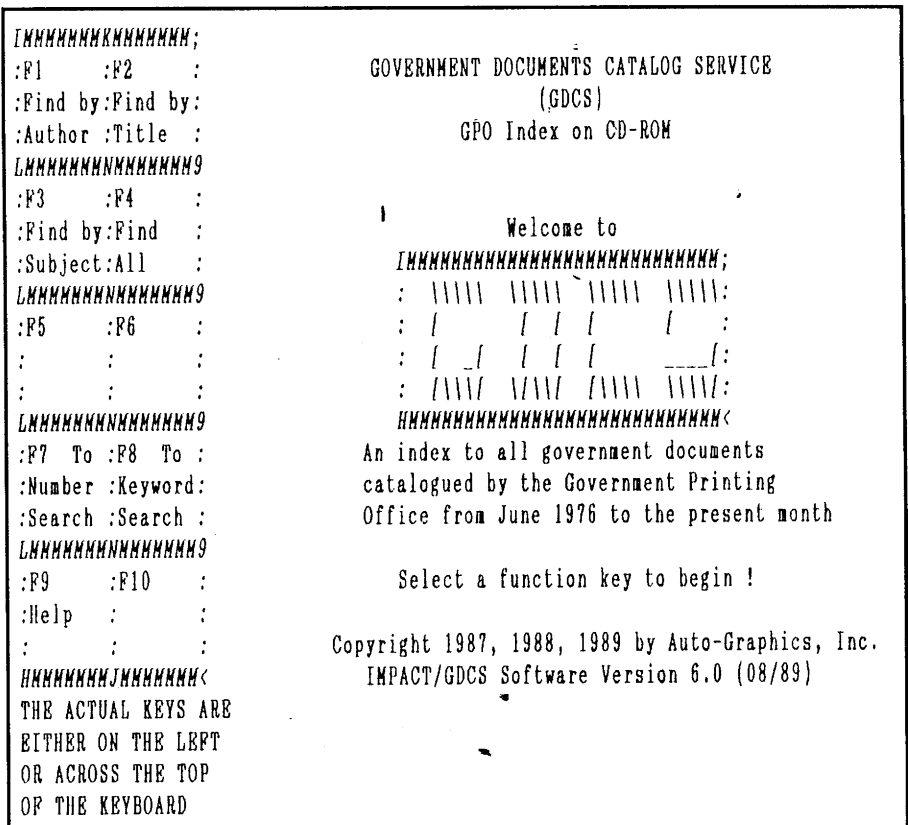


Figure 1. There are several levels of searching GDCS as seen on the left of the screen.

The IMPACT software is Auto-Graphics' CD-ROM public access catalog retrieval system. IMPACT allows author, title, or subject searching and browsing in those indices. Additional indices provide numeric and keyword search capabilities.

Search Levels

GDCS on CD-ROM has several levels of searching available, as indicated by the key labels on the initial screen's simulated function keypad (see figure 1). The FIND mode allows a user to browse a

dictionary of author, title, or subject index and a combination of those three indices. The "number search" option provides access to the SuDocs, report, item, stock, OCLC, and *Monthly Catalog* entry number fields. The keyword search mode allows keyword access to the author, title or subject indices and again, to a combination of those indices (OR is the operator between indices) through the "keyword all" command. The stopword list is small (and, for, in, of the, to), ensuring complete access to the database.

Auto-Graphics recently developed a third mode of searching called "research level" which supports advanced searching techniques, including Boolean operators, truncation, limitation by language, publication date, or media type. This level of searching, entered from the Keyword Search module by selecting F7 from the function key map, allows greater precision for sophisticated users.

When the user selects a search, a "window" appears permitting entry of a one-line search statement. After initiating the search, the system displays a flashing statement: "PLEASE WAIT! SEARCH IS IN PROGRESS."

The IMPACT system has two modules, one being the public access catalog, the other the system administration module. The system administration portion of the software allows staff to modify the database in several ways, and the modification options display in a menu format (see table 1).

TABLE 1	
System Administration	
1.	Modify Full Display Profile
2.	Modify First Screen Banner
3.	Modify First Screen Title
4.	Modify Miscellaneous Options

Ease of Use

The GDCS system is simple to use, as evidenced in the function key pad which always appears on the left side of the screen, outlining the available options at any point in a search. Some function keys have constant values, e.g., F10 for starting over, F9 for help, F4 for a prior search step. This consistency is further evident in the screen displays.

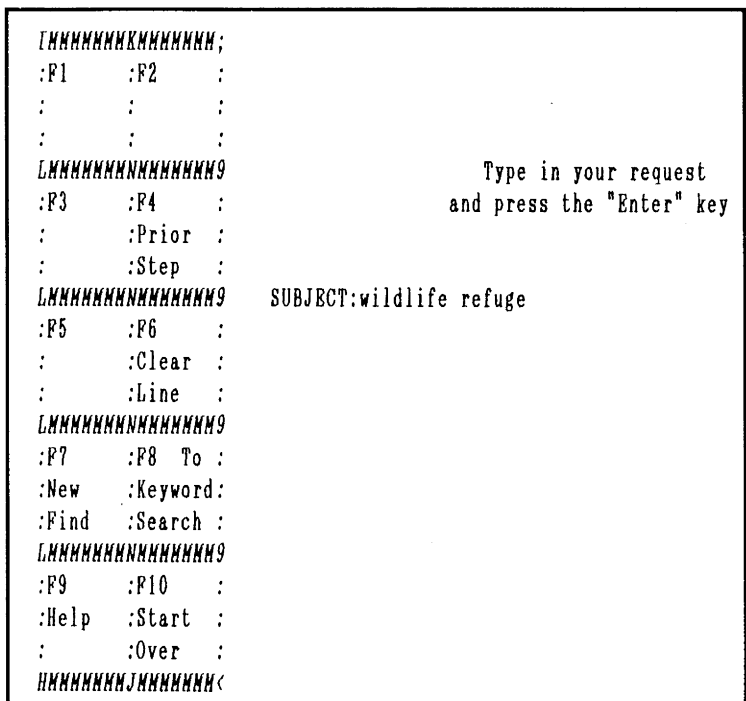


Figure 2. The FIND mode under subject.

GDCS has four different display levels: a matched list, see or see also references, brief record, or full record. A matched list display includes cross references (indicated by an X) and the number of titles for each entry. A see reference display indicates the authorized heading by highlighting and by the phrase YOUR LIBRARY USES. The see also screen displays a list of alternatives under the phrase RELATED SUBJECTS. When multiple titles appear under the desired heading, the system displays four titles at a time with the corresponding title, SuDocs number, author, and depository status. The full record format includes all information provided from GPO tapes (see table 2). In the full record display, one can change to the MARC format by using the F7 key as a toggle switch.

Documentation

Indicative of the product's simplicity, the Auto-Graphics documentation is usually very clear and concise. The three-ring binder contains a User Guide and a Supplement which covers installation and system enhancements. In addition to providing information on the database and

TABLE 2	
Data Elements in the Bibliographic Record	
SuDocs number	
Report number	
Entry number	
Title	
Publisher	
Date	
Description	
Notes	
Subject	
Co-Author	
Item number	
Format	

search options, the guide briefly explains keyboard terminology, how to set up a workstation, and how to care for CD-ROM discs. One desires brevity when the documentation supplements the information available on screen. But unfortunately, the user must rely on the printed documentation because the help screens provide less than helpful information, especially in the research level search mode. For instance, the "help" for FIND BY AUTHOR is "Press this key to locate

```

I#####;
:F1 :F2 :
:Pointer: :
:Up : : SUBJECT HEADINGS NUMBER OF
L#####9 DDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD DDDDD
:F3 :F4 : Wildlife refuges. 2
:Pointer:Prior : Wildlife refuges--Alabama. 3
:Down :Step : Wildlife refuges--Alabama--Baldwin County. 1
L#####9 Wildlife refuges--Alaska. 47
:F5 :F6 : Wildlife refuges--Alaska--Alaska Peninsula. 1
: : : Wildlife refuges--Alaska--Aleutian Islands. 1
: : : Wildlife refuges--Alaska--North Slope. 1
L#####9 Wildlife refuges--Arizona. 1
:F7 :F8 To : Wildlife refuges--California. 10
:New :Keyword: Wildlife refuges--California--Sacramento River 1
:Find :Search : Valley.
L#####9 Wildlife refuges--Colorado. 7
:F9 :F10 : Wildlife refuges--Connecticut--Norwalk. 1
:Help :Start : Wildlife refuges--Environmental aspects--Hawaii-- 1
: :Over : more
#####J#####<
Move the pointer to an individual heading and press the "Enter" key if you
wish to see additional detail; or select a function key
1

```

Figure 3. The subject heading list.

```

I#####;
:F1 :F2 :
: : :
: : : Title 1 of 1
L#####9 DDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDDD
:F3 :F4 : SUDOCs NBR.: I 1.98:K 19
:Display:Prior : ENTRY NBR.: 82000572
:Forward:Step : TITLE: Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge : final
L#####9 environmental impact statement /
:F5 :F6 : PUBLISHER: [Washington, D.C.] : The Service,
:Print : : DATE: [1978?]
:Record : : DESCRIPTION: 1 v. (various pagings) : ill., maps (some
L#####9 folded) ; 28 cm.
:F7 :F8 : NOTES: Caption title.
:MARC : : NOTES: "Final environmental impact statement (DES 78-
:Display: : 7, filed March 15, 1978)."
L#####9 SUBJECT: Wildlife refuges--Environmental aspects--
:F9 :F10 : Hawaii--Kealia Pond.
:Help :Start : SUBJECT: Bird refuges--Environmental aspects--Hawaii--
: :Over : more
#####J#####<
Select a function key to continue

```

Figure 4. The full record display.

material by author." Presumably, one would not ask for help for an author search if one knew what an author was.

Sample Search

I conducted a sample search, without referring to the documentation, behaving in a manner befitting the average user. Known item searches posed no problem. For example, I searched for the title *Atlas of Hairs* in the FIND mode which retrieved a matched list of titles, all starting with the word *atlas*. However, the software did not directly retrieve the requested item record even though it had an exact match.

I again entered the FIND mode under subject, this time looking for materials on wildlife refuges (see figure 2). The system assumes when one enters multiple words. My request retrieved a subject heading list with the corresponding number of titles per heading (see figure 3). I pressed the F3 key until I reached the highlighted subject heading which interested me and then pressed ENTER. The full record display spanned two screens - and the F3 function key changed (see figure 4). The complete record prints in a labeled format when one selects F5-PRINT RECORD (see figure 5). I started another search using the combined option (see figure 6) which looked at the author, title, and subject indices for the phrase "wildlife refuge." This search option is helpful when one does not know what part of the record to search or when one is unsure of the search term category.

The keyword search looked for the words "wildlife" and "refuge" anywhere in the record. This search retrieved a brief record display with an indication of the number of records (see figure 7). The research level search is quite complicated. I was unable to successfully perform the search without reading the documentation because the help screens were awful. Even the research level search entry screen is confusing with its many "windows" (see figure 8).

Interesting Features

I encountered some interesting features with this database. For example, accord-

ing to the documentation, if the workstation sits idle in the middle of a search and is inactive for a few minutes, a warning statement appears and the system returns to the initial banner screen. The feature is something to note, for many users are confronted with the remains of a previous search. Not only do they have to construct their search; but they must also determine how to get to the correct point to perform it!

Another attractive feature is the prompts along the bottom of the screens. For instance, when a keyword or subject search is unsuccessful. GDCS preserves the original search statement and displays NO MATCHES FOUND at the bottom of the screen. In addition, it presents helpful prompts along the bottom, e.g., "The system cannot locate any information for what you've entered. Please verify your spelling or use a 'Heading Search' as an aid to locating valid terms." Such prompts effectively assist users through a search session.

Problems

I also encountered some minor problems with GDCS. For example, IMPACT has a built-in screen saver function when positioned at the banner screen, the timing of which one can modify. However, I changed the number of minutes after which the screen would blank to two; but the system did not recognize the change.

Another problem I stumbled upon was a system error which froze the keyboard and prevented further searching. I selected a highlighted cross-reference when searching in the FIND mode. I received the error message, "SYSERR - key (accession #) not found in master file." At that point, I could do nothing but perform a warm boot.

Summary

In summary, Auto-Graphics' GDCS GPO Index on CD-ROM has rigid retrieval software which will be acceptable to most novice users with known item searches. The research level mode is confusing without suitable documentation and is difficult to use, even for the sophisticated user. However, once mastered, the research level is precise, allow-

```

SUDOCs NBR.: I 1.98:K 19
ENTRY NBR.: 82000572
TITLE: Kealia Pond National Wildlife Refuge : final
        environmental impact statement /
PUBLISHER: [Washington, D.C.] : The Service,
DATE: [1978?]
DESCRIPTION: 1 v. (various pagings) : ill., maps (some
            folded) ; 28 cm.
NOTES: Caption title.
NOTES: "Final environmental impact statement (DBS 78-
        7, filed March 15, 1978)."
```

SUBJECT: Wildlife refuges--Environmental aspects--
Hawaii--Kealia Pond.

SUBJECT: Bird refuges--Environmental aspects--Hawaii--
Kealia Pond.

SUBJECT: Kealia Pond (Hawaii)

CO-AUTHOR: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

ITEM NBR.: 603-G

FORMAT: book

Figure 5. The complete record prints in a labeled format.

```

I#####;
:F1 :F2 :
: : :
: : :
L#####9
:F3 :F4 :
: :Prior :
: :Step :
L#####9 COMBINED:wildlife refuge
:F5 :F6 :
: :Clear :
: :Line :
L#####9
:F7 To :F8 New :
:Heading:Keyword:
:Search :Search :
L#####9
:F9 :F10 :
:Help :Start :
: :Over :
H#####<
```

Type in the key word(s) on which
to base this search and press
the "Enter" key

Figure 6. Combined option looks at author, title, and subject indices for each phrase.

ing qualifiers such as media type, publication date, and language.

The supposed "context-sensitive" help screens are terrible. One cannot browse back through the help modules if they are available, e.g., it has no numeric

search help screen. The screen saver function does not work properly. The database tries to be eye-catching and glitzy. Some staff members did not like the unpleasant colors which tend to annoy more often than not. I give GDCS GPO Index

```

I#####;
:F1 :F2 :
: : : YOU TYPED:wildlife refuge
: : :
L#####9 TOTAL TITLES: 350
:F3 :F4 : D#####
:Pointer:Prior : 1. TTL:1982 hunting regulations, Tule Lake & Lower ...
:Down :Step : SUDocs NO.:I 49.9:T 82 DEP ITEM
L#####9 AUTHOR:
:F5 :F6 : 2. TTL:An Act Relating to the Authorization of ...
: :Next : SUDocs NO.:AE 2.110:99-191 DEP ITEM
: :Screen : AUTHOR:United States.
L#####9 3. TTL:An Act to Authorize Additional Appropriations ...
:F7 :F8 New : SUDocs NO.:AE 2.110:100-226 DEP ITEM
: :Keyword: AUTHOR:United States.
: :Search : 4. TTL:An act to authorize appropriations for the ...
L#####9 SUDocs NO.:GS 4.110:96-290 DEP ITEM
:F9 :F10 : AUTHOR:United States.
:Help :Start : more
: :Over :
H#####<
Move the pointer to an individual title and press the "Enter" key if you
wish to see full detail; or select a function key

```

Figure 7. A brief record display with an indication of the number of records.

```

I#####;
:F1 :F2 :
: : : Please type in your search requirements
: : : using one or more lines. Press the
L#####9 Enter key to start the search.
:F3 :F4 :
:Select :Prior : AUTHOR:
:Heading:Step : < AND >
L#####9 ? :
:F5 :F6 : < AND >
: :Clear : ? :
: :Screen : < AND >
L#####9 ? :
:F7 :F8 :
:Change : :
:Qual. : :
L#####9
:F9 :F10 :
:Help :Start : Z##### Qualifiers #####?
: :Over : 3 TYPE: {Books LANG: {Group 1 DATE: - 3
H#####< 3 {Serials {Group 2 3
3 {Others {Others 3
@#####
* Press F3 to search author, title, subject or combination of headings. *

```

Figure 8. A complicated research level search entry screen.

on CD-ROM the following ratings (the rating of 5 being exceptional and 1 meaning awful):

Ease of use:
 (computer knowledge required to install and to use this product) 5

Quality:
 (documentation, graphics, error handling, and value for the price) 3

Overall rating: 3/4

Product Information

Product: Government Documents Catalog Service (GDSCS) GPO Index on CD-ROM, version 6.0

Producer: Auto-Graphics, Inc. 3201 Temple Avenue Pomona, CA 91768

Telephone: (714) 595-7004

FAX: (714) 595-5190

Hardware: IBM-PC/XT/AT or 100% compatible; 512k RAM; 20MB hard disk drive; floppy disk drive; monochrome or color monitor; CD-ROM drive.

Update and Pricing:
 (Annual subscription):
 Monthly \$1600
 Bi-monthly - \$750
 Quarterly - \$ 650

Special Options: Three levels of searching.

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