

Marchive, Inc. GPO CAT/PAC in Review

Karen Sendi

MARCIVE, Inc., a vendor of micro-computer-based PACs, has recently released a new optical data disk called GPO CAT/PAC.

GPO CAT/PAC is a CD-ROM version of the *Monthly Catalog* from the U.S. Government Printing Office. It comprises the same data as the print format of GPO's *Monthly Catalog*, including the same access points such as subject, title, series title, and author/agency (see data elements table). Based on enhanced GPO tapes which were part of a "clean-up" project, the database spans the years 1976 to the present. A completely cumulated disk is distributed every other month, incorporating records for the month in which it is received.

The MARCIVE system requires a minimum configuration of an IBM PC/XT (or 100 percent compatible) micro; a monochrome or color monitor; 640 K byte memory; 20 megabyte harddisk drive; a diskette drive; MS/DOS 3.1 (or later version); and a Hitachi CD-ROM drive (1503/2500/3500). The vendor recommends a printer.

Installation

The installation was incredibly easy. The instructions for installing the software are clear and uncomplicated. The PAC software requires Microsoft CD-ROM Extensions and 1.5 megabytes of hard disk space. An "Installation Supplement," a step-by-step instruction sheet, is included in the documentation.

Karen Sendi is Assistant Reference Librarian at the Carlson Library at the University of Toledo, Toledo, Ohio.

The installation procedure has few steps:

1. One inserts the floppy diskette into the A: drive
2. At the A: prompt, one types "install" followed by the monitor type (BW or COLOR) and the hard drive letter (A:install color D:).

The system creates, or modifies, a CONFIG.SYS file, and creates a directory named GPO on the hard disk.

Searching

PAC's software is fairly flexible in its searching capabilities, in that not only simple known item searches are easy to execute but also complex searches, due to the keyword Boolean search capability. The keyword searching is valuable when searching the author/agency fields, for the database uses Library of Congress' (LC's) name authorities files. A keyword search in this case will hit on the requested author or agency in spite of the "correct" form of the name. The same advantage is applicable to a subject search for the LCSH version of subject headings is used, being a natural extension of the enhanced cataloging tapes.

There is no flagrant distinction between an "expert" or a "novice" mode of searching. Boolean operators are only available using the "Combined Search" option on the main menu; in the other search options, the default operator between terms is AND. Function keys are assigned to each operator, e.g. F5 =

DATA ELEMENTS IN THE BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

| | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Monthly Catalog Number | Physical Description Note |
| OCLC Number | Subject |
| Item Number | Other Author |
| SuDocs Number | Other Agency |
| Agency | Call Number |
| Title | |
| Publication Information | |

Table 1.

AND, allowing one to combine terms and fields such as author, agency, or subject and eliminating some unnecessary typing. Proximity searching or relational operators are not available options. Truncation (not embedded) is available using a question mark (?) or an asterisk (*), requiring a minimum length of three characters. There is no capability to expand upon terms, such as DIALOG's expand command or BRS's root command, but this should not effect the way users approach the system. With the menu system, one can make the search as simple or as complex as necessary. A noteworthy feature is the ability to produce bibliographies. Additionally, other software is not necessary for downloading information for the option is available in the "Bibliography production" submenu, which allows one to write a bibliography to a file in ASCII format.

Ease of Use

GPO CAT/PAC is simple to use, given the complexity of the data encapsulated. GPO CAT/PAC accommodates several levels of expertise through its main menu options and keyword Boolean searching. When-

Which Monthly Catalog on CD-ROM should our Library buy?

Librarians have found MARCIVE GPO CAT/PAC the best value:

- **Accurate information**
As a result of the Rice University, Texas A & M University, and Louisiana State University project, the SuDocs numbers, item numbers, series, headings, and other information are accurate and up-to-date.
- **Fast**
GPO CAT/PAC always finishes a search before other products, sometimes several minutes sooner.
- **Easy-to-use**
Keyword searching. Boolean AND, OR, and NOT. Cross references. Uncluttered screens. Fewer keystrokes for common operations. Browse lists of SuDocs numbers, Monthly Catalog numbers, Technical Report numbers, OCLC numbers, and Stock and other ordering numbers.
- **Clear**
Searching for a unique record yields one record in GPO CAT/PAC; sometimes hundreds in other products. Alphabetized title lists. Greater precision in display of search results.
- **Complete**
All resulting titles are immediately retrieved and displayed. Some records are supplemented with important information such as history of a SuDoc number (where several exist).
- **Reliable software**
Tested by librarians for months before release to our customers. Any errors in data or requests for enhancements to software are referred to the Editorial Advisory Group and, once completed, thoroughly tested before release.

And now we give you new reasons why GPO CAT/PAC is the better product:

- New print capabilities
- Browsing of Authors, Titles, and Subjects
- Browse results of keyword searches
- Backstepping permitted even with See Also references
- New simultaneous search of all Authors, Titles, and Subjects
- Combine search by Date, Format, and Language

Come see for yourself at the 1990 ALA MidWinter Meeting in Chicago at Booth 227 ... or contact us at:

Marcive®

P.O. Box 47508
San Antonio, Texas 78265-7508
1-800-531-7678
(512) 646-6161

HE 20.3614 Gluckstein, Fritz P. Pain, anesthesia, and analgesia in common laboratory animals : January 1980 through December 1986, 514 citations. [Bethesda, Md. : U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health], 1987.

HE 20.3614 Laboratory animal welfare. Bethesda, Md. : Reference Services Division, National Library of Medicine, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, National Institutes of Health, 1985-.

Y 4.F 76/1 United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. North Pacific Fur Seal Protection Act : hearing before the Subcommittees on Asian and Pacific Affairs and on International Organizations of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Ninety-sixth Congress, first session, on H.R. 5033, September 27, 1979. Washington : U.S. G.P.O., 1980 [i.e. 1981].

Figure 5.

Costs

The GPO CAT/PAC costs nothing to search approximately the same number of records as the print format. The records span July of 1976 to the present. The disk is updated bi-monthly, and none of the records contain abstracts. Although the capability of keyword searching is available, the only fields indexed, and hence searched, are the title/series title, author/agency, and subject fields. One may browse the SuDoc, item, technical report, OCLC, and Monthly Catalog numbers. There are no search qualifiers for date or date range, nor for media type, unlike the online databases.

Conclusion

All in all, the GPO CAT/PAC is easy to use and comprehensive in scope. Even though the bibliography production procedure is cumbersome, the option is selling feature. The displays are clear and well-organized. Leaving the database might cause some problems if the work station is not dedicated to GPO CAT/PAC and is required to be flexible for end-user searching. Due to its nature, GPO CAT/PAC would not be suitable for a small public library lacking the government document collections and the resources to dedicate one work station per task/database, but a CD-ROM database of its nature is essential for a depository or university library. Our staff especially enjoyed the database for the purpose of cataloging gift items.

Using CD-ROM technology, MARCIVE has devised an affordable

and a successful method for accessing a complex database. The advantages of searching the Monthly Catalog on CD-ROM are obvious:

1. Quick, comprehensive search of relevant material spanning several years
2. Ability of combining terms/subjects which is not possible in the print format
3. The capability of producing bibliographies of selected materials without online costs.

If I were inclined to rate MARCIVE's GPO CAT/PAC, based on a 1 to 5 scale (5 meaning exceptional), I would assign an overall rating of 4, which would consider such factors as ease of installation and use, and quality.

Product Information

Product name: GPO CAT/PAC

Producer: MARCIVE, Inc.

P.O. Box 47508

San Antonio, TX 78265

(512) 646-6161 or (800) 531-7678

Hardware configuration: IBM-PC/AT/XT/286 or compatible 640K 20 MB hard disk drive floppy disk drive monochrome or color monitor Hitachi CD-ROM drive

Update and Pricing: Bi-monthly

Annual subscription: \$995

Special options: Downloading capability
Ability to produce bibliographies

Index to Advertisers

Aries Systems Corporation, 29
auto-graphics, inc., 25
BIOSIS, 13
Bureau of Electronic Publishing, Inc., 43
Chadwyck-Healey, 5
Compact Disk Products, Inc., 33
Congressional Information Service, 19
DIALOG, 1
Electromap, Inc., 11
Gale Research Inc., 17
Gaylord, 31
General Research Corporation, 57
Hitachi, 2
JA micropublishing, inc., inside back cover
Library Corporation, inside front cover

Magazine Article Summaries, outside front cover
Marcive, 61
Meckler, 34-37
Medical Publishing Group, 49
Missouri Library Network Corporation, 45
OCLC, 59
PDR, 9
Pergamon Compact Solution, 23
Quanta Press, Inc., 39
Slater Hall Information Products, 7
Sociological Abstracts, Inc., 27
Standard and Poor's, 55
Thomas Register, 22
UMI Serials, 15
H.W. Wilson, outside back cover