Marchive, Inc. GPO CAT/PAC in Review

Karen Sendi

MARCIVE, Inc., a vendor of microcomputer-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-bystep 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 OCLC Number Item Number SuDocs Number Agency Title Physical Description Note Subject Other Author

Other Author Other Agency Call Number

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 accomodates 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:



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

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.3
             MARCIVE GPO CAT/PAC
                                   SUBJECT SEARCH LIST
                                                              3
J DISPLAY OF 1 THROUGH 10 OF 10 TOTAL INDEX RECORDS
                                                              .3
   1*Animals, Treatment of.
   1 Animals, Treatment of - Bibliography.
   1 Animals, Treatment of - Information services - United States - Handbon
   11 Animals, Treatment of - Law and legislation - United States.
   2 Animals, Treatment of - United States.
   1 Animals, Treatment of - United States - Periodicals.
    1 Commission on Humane Treatment of Animals.
     *Emergency treatment for animals
    *Humane treatment of animals
    *Treatment of animals
- Highlight Movement 3
                        F10-Main Menu
                                           PG UP/DN-Page Movement 3
```

Figure 2.

Figure 1.

ever one starts the GPO CAT/PAC, the main selection menu options are displayed:

- Title or series search
- · Author or agency search
- · Subject search
- · Combined search
- · Bibliography production
- · Numberic searches.

Using the arrow keys, one can highlight the desired search option or one can press the initial letter of a menu item.

New or inexperienced users are encouraged to use the help screens (triggered by the F1 key) to help determine sequential steps or clarity with errors. The onscreen help prompts, positioned along the bottom of the screen, were clear and concise, and better yet, logical. However, due to the necessity of brevity, the help screens lean toward the technical side, using jargon which the knowledgable searcher would understand, but perhaps not the novice. In conjunction with the appropriate pointof-use guides, the system could be called "user-friendly."

When no hits are found, the system does not give one a set of possible reasons for the lack of hits nor any suggestions for continuing/modifying the search. For example, a window appears stating "Request-

ed Data Not Found," but does not indicate what one's options are at that point. Occassionally, a window indicating one cannot use a certain key appears, but not all valid key options appear along the bottom of the screen, so one is bound to encounter this message frequently. For example, the "Pgdn" prompt appears on the screen even when the end of the bibliographic record is displayed and the key is obviously not valid.

The screen displays are neat, clear, consistent, and in most cases. accurate. On the title screen display, there is a small window in the righthand corner which displays the Superintendent of Documents number for the highlighted title. The window is small: one might have a tendency to overlook its information, which would be unfortunate, for this is a wonderful enhanced- browsing feature. One can scroll through a screen of titles, glancing at the SuDoc number, thus alleviating the necessity of calling up the bibliographic record to obtain that number. Cross references are included in this database and are indicated by asterisks to the left of the displayed subject heading or name. A color monitor is not necessary, but certainly preferable, as it emphasizes certain elements and fields.

Documentation

The documentation received with the data disk is adequate for the complexity of the product. There are few typos and it is relatively comprehensive in scope. It does include display screen examples. In addition, a toll-free number is provided for system help or questions. Documentation is not colorful, but presented in a suitable three-ring binder.

Sample Search

I conducted a test search of the database, having in mind the topic animal rights or animal welfare legislation. At the main menu, I selected the subject search option and then typed in the term "animal abuse," which brought up the index phrase "abuse of animals." I selected this phrase and the system referred me to the correct LC form of the subject heading, that is animals, treatment of (Figure 1). I received a list of 10 index records matching my request of animals, treatment of (Figure 2) Noting the subdivision of law and legislation, with 11 associated titles, I highlighted and selected the most appropriate subject heading for my topic. The system then displayed the 11 titles, with the SuDoc number for the first highlight-

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MARCIVE GPO CAT/PAC - TITLE OR SERIES LIST
                                                  7 94-2-
                                                     S.rp.727
                                                   3
3 DISPLAY OF 1 THROUGH 11 OF 11 TOTAL TITLES
                                                   ADDODDDDDDDDDDDDDDD 3
3 Animal welfare act amendments of 1976 : conference report to accompany S.
3 Animal welfare act amendments of 1976 : report to accompany S. 1941.
3 Animal welfare enforcement 1973: report of the Secretary of Agriculture t
3 Animal welfare improvement act of 1975 : hearing before the Subcommittee o
J Business meetings on Animal welfare act amendments of 1976: S. 1491 ... P
J Dingell-Johnson fund--N. Pacific fur seal : hearings before the Subcommitt
J Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals Act; and enforcement of the Anim
3 North Pacific Fur Seal Protection Act : hearing before the Subcommittees o
J Painful trapping devices: hearings before the Subcommittee on Fisheries a
3 Public Law 94-279: 94th Congress, S. 1941, April 22, 1976: an act to ame
3 Title 9, animals and animal products: subchapter A, animal welfare.
                                                                    3
- Highlight Movement 3
3 Fi-Help
                 INS/DEL-Mark
                                F10-Main Menu
                                                PG UP/DN-Page Movement 3
Figure 3.
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Figure 4.

corner of the screen (Figure 3). Scrolling down the title list, I selected a likely-sounding title and received the complete bibliographic record (Figure 4) To view the MARCtagged record, the system has assigned the F4 key to act as a toggle switch. Looking at the complete record, one can conduct other searches, using the other subject headings and the agencies listed for a more comprehensive search on a topic. I used that strategy successfully, for I then searched through the subject option "animals, laboratory" which retrieved additionally relevant materials. Using the F8 key to restore my last search term to the screen, I was able to quickly modify and to slightly monitor my search. I say slightly because one loses one's search results by selecting See and See Also References, that is when one selects a highlighted cross reference, another search is begun, dumping the former

ed title displayed in the right-hand

Selecting those items from the respective title lists which appeared relevant, I composed a short bibliography using the bibliography production option from the main menu. The only inconvenience I found was that

search results which led to the cross

reference. (Being familiar with an on-

line environment, I am spoiled with

the option to display my search strate-

gy while conducting a search.)

one cannot select an item for a bibliography from the bibliographic record — one must select that item from a title list screen only. The option is indicated at the bottom of the screen by the prompt "INS/DEL-Mark" appearing only on title list screens. Much shifting back and forth occurred and it was bothersome for me, but this should not be viewed as a problem, for one will not necessarily be printing out reams of bibliographies. When generating a bibliography from the database, one must remember to clear the marked titles using the bibliography production menu before selecting relevant materials, for marked titles remain marked until cleared or until the system is shut down.

Data Presentation

The presentation of the data incorporated in the bibliography was clear, except that, from a patron's point of view, it resembled a catalog card, that is the bibliography is arranged by main entry with the SuDoc number in the left-hand margin (Figure 5). One cannot select certain fields to be printed or saved, but it does have the advantage that the complete bibliographic record is not printed out. Another advantage is that one can download the selective bibliog-

MARCIVE GPO CAT/PAC BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD 3 J MONTHLY CATALOG #: 81004096 3 OCLC #: 7158904 81022 ITEM #: 1017 3 SUDDES #: Y 4.F 76/1:N 81/9 3 3 7 AGENCY: United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign 3 Affairs. Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs. TITLE: North Pacific Fur Seal Protection Act : hearing before .3 the Subcommittees on Asian and Pacific Affairs and on 3 International Organizations of the Committee on Foreign 3 Affairs, House of Representatives, Ninety-sixth 3 Congress, first session, on H.R. 5033, September 27, 3 1979 .3 3 .3 PUBLICATION INFO: Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 1980 [i.e. 1981] PHYSICAL DESC: v, 152 p. : ill. ; 24 cm. 3 NOTE: Bibliography: p. 148. SUBJECT: Northern fur seal. SUBJECT: Animals, Treatment of - Law and legislation - United States. 3 OTHER AGENCY: United States. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign J F1-Helo + Next Rec. F9-Prev. Screen - Prev. Rec. F10-Main Menu PG UP/DN-Page Movement 3

raphy to one's own disk.

There are no exit instructions displayed on any screens, keeping in line with its design as a patron access catalog. The documentation spelled out the exit procedure: an ALT-END sequence closes the files and returns to DOS. I had some difficulty exiting the GPO CAT/PAC when my task was completed, but I believe I was too deliberate in holding down the ALT key while pressing END on the numeric keypad.

Considerations When Making Comparisons

Unable to compare the ease of using this CD-ROM database with others of its sort, I can only present some pertinent information which should be considered. An online counterpart belonging to BRS, called GPOM, costs \$.53 per minute to search the database of roughly 300,000 records which cover July 1976 to the present. The database is updated monthly, and some of the records include abstracts. Some fields which can be searched online are the SuDoc number, the price field, subject, the year of publication, etc.

The print format of the Monthly Catalog is not worth mentioning, other than to state that records take approximately ten weeks to appear in the hard copy.

CD-ROM LIBRARIAN 63 HE 20.3614 Gluckstein, Fritz P. Pain, anesthesia, and analgesia in common /2: laboratory animals : January 1980 through December 1986, 514 86-17 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 N 81/9 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, Minety-sixth Congress, first session, on H.R. 5033, September 27, 1979. Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 1980

file. 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 bimonthly, 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.

Product Information

GPO CAT/PAC Product name: 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

Bi-monthly Update and Pricing: \$995 Annual subscription:

Special options: Downloading capability

Ability to produce bibliographies

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 wellorganized. 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 MAR-CIVE'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.

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