

Integration of data from different bibliographic data sources at end-user level

Hugo Besemer, Wageningen

Zusammenfassung

Der Aufsatz beschreibt die Anwendung lokaler Datenbanken, in denen Daten aus Online- und portablen Datenbanken (z.B. CD-ROM, Diskette) gespeichert sind im Bereich der niederländischen Agrarwissenschaft. Es werden die Anforderungen beschrieben, welche an die Informationsdienste zu stellen sind, um diese Daten maschinenlesbar zu liefern. Die Benutzerwünsche und deren Berücksichtigung bei der Weiterentwicklung der Informationsdienste werden zum Schluß aufgezeigt.

Electronic information overload

Several data sources on various carriers have become available to users of scientific bibliographic information. To mention the most important for users in the agricultural scientific community in the Netherlands:

- Online searches on DIMDI, DIALOG or STN in databases like CAB ABSTRACTS, Agris, Agricola, Chemabs, Biosis or Toxline and many others.
- The equivalents of these databases on CD-ROM if they are available.
- The output of SDI (= Selective Dissemination of Information) profiles on the major databases produced on the Agralin computer.
- Searches through Agralin in the shared catalogue of the local agricultural libraries.
- Current Contents on diskette.

It depends on the information needs of a user how important these different sources are for that particular user. But for many users it is a problem how to manage data from all these sources. This paper discusses our efforts to help the end-user integrate data from these sources.

The need for machine-readable material

In the mid eighties microcomputers were introduced as a common tool for researchers. In consequence a demand for output in machine-readable form arose. In our service we discussed three options to meet this demand.

- Provide material in any format the user might request. This is only a theoretical option since it would be far beyond our possibilities to do so.
- Provide data in one format and leave the user with the problem how to reformat the data to the requirements of the program that is used to process the data on the microcomputer. This option implies that only those users can take advantage of machine-readable material who have the skills to do the reformatting. Furthermore choosing this option would encourage the use of a wide variety of programs for further processing on the user's microcomputer.
- Select one program and provide data in such a format that this program can import them without further processing. If users decide to process the data with another program it is their responsibility to reformat the data.