The National Library of Jamaica (NLJ) has the responsibility to provide leadership in development of a national computerized library network. Pursuant to the NLJ’s Mission Statement, NLJ “...facilitates access to the nation’s cultural heritage, through the promotion, coordination and development of a network of technologically enhanced libraries and services”. The Jamaica Union Catalogue (JUC) is part of this process.

The National Library of Jamaica provides assistance to special libraries in computerising library operations with the understanding that each library will participate in the National Information System. Specifically, each library is expected to allow NLJ to periodically copy the Jamaican records from its catalogue database. NLJ uses these records to build this master database of Jamaican publications held by all contributing special libraries.

NLJ plans to provide access, by contributing libraries, to the database over the Internet.

The JUC database structure is available for use by CDS/ISIS users to organize their catalogue records. Although the database is designed to accommodate maximum level cataloguing, it can be customized to match the various cataloguing levels employed by libraries. The fields and subfields of each record are consistent with international cataloguing standards. The use of a common database structure facilitates easy exchange of cataloguing data between organizations, a step towards the goal of computerized library networking.

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The Jamaica Libraries and Information Network (JAMLIN) comprises the institutions in the country (libraries, archives, information and documentation units), which collect materials in all formats (print, audiovisual and electronic) and make them available to satisfy the information needs of the nation.
CDS/ISIS (Computerized Documentation Service/Integrated Set of Information Systems) is a menu-driven generalized Information Storage and Retrieval System designed specifically for the computerized management of structured non-numerical databases. It was developed by UNESCO and is distributed throughout the world in eleven languages.

One of the major advantages offered by the generalized design of the system is that CDS/ISIS is able to manipulate an unlimited number of databases, each of which may consist of completely different data elements. The CDS/ISIS user is therefore freed from the expensive task of having to design and write computer programs, each time a new project requires the use of information retrieval techniques.

Although some features of CDS/ISIS require some knowledge of and experience with computerized information systems, once an application has been designed persons having little or no prior computer experience may use the system. For advanced users, having access to computer professionals, CDS/ISIS offers an integrated programming facility allowing the development of specialized applications and/or the functional extension of the software as originally provided.

CDS/ISIS is not a relational database system, although it does provide some relational facilities. CDS/ISIS was written in C++ and Visual Basic.

**SYSTEM FUNCTIONS**

The major functions allow you to:

- Define many databases each of which may have different data elements
- Enter, modify, correct or delete records
- Automatically build and maintain fast access files for each database in order to maximize retrieval speed
- Retrieve records by their contents, through a sophisticated search language
- Display the records or portions thereof according to your requirements
- Sort the records in any sequence desired
- Print partial or full catalogues and/or indexes
- Develop specialized applications using the CDS/ISIS integrated programming facility (Pascal and ISIS_DLL).

**OTHER FUNCTIONS**

- Easy access to multimedia content i.e. web links, e-mails, document and image files,...
- Data Entry control options
  - Pick lists (also by plug-ins)
  - Improved record validations
- Import/Export Options
  - ISO 2709, XML
- Dictionary capabilities
  - Dumping of terms to printer or file
  - Prefix management
- Erase database option
- Plug-in ready
  - External 32-bits plug-ins
- Multilingual

**SYSTEM RESTRICTIONS**

- Max. number of databases: Unlimited
- Max. number of records in a database: 16 Million or 500 MB
- Max. record size: 32000 characters*
- Max. field size: 32000 characters
- Max. number of fields (defined in a FDT): 200
- Max. number of FST lines: 600
- Max. number of stopwords: 799
- Max. size of a display format: 10000 characters
- Max. size of a display buffer: 64000 characters

*Records larger than 8000 characters may not be used with the MSDOS version of CDS/ISIS

**HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS**

- Intel Pentium processor 100 MHz or higher
- At least 16 MB of RAM
- 10MB hard disk (free)
- 3 ½ inch Floppy Disk Drive
- VGA 640x480 (min) or higher
- Windows 3.1x or Windows 95/98/Me or Windows NT/2000/XP/Vista
- Printer (Optional)
- Multimedia (Optional)
- Internet (Optional)