E

WIPO

IPC/REF/4/3
ORIGINAL: English
DATE: October 23, 2000

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
GENEVA

SPECIAL UNION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PATENT CLASSIFICATION (IPC UNION)

AD HOC IPC REFORM WORKING GROUP

Fourth Session
Geneva, October 30 to November 3, 2000

INTERNET-BASED IPC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM –
IBIS (IPCISBIS) PROJECT STATUS

Document prepared by the International Bureau

WHAT IS IPCIS

1. IPCIS, the IPC Information System, is a management system supporting the administration of the revision of the International Patent Classification (IPC). IPCIS is a system assisting in the "intelligent editing" of the IPC revision documents (technical annexes) by providing interaction of the revision texts with the text of the last IPC edition or with the text proposed by the IPC Revision Working Group or approved by the IPC Committee of Experts. The system aims at the quality control support of the Classification, for example, by filtering the non-existing cross-references when loading the amendments into the system or identifying missing language pairs of entries when submitting the revision amendments to the sessions of the Committee. IPCIS can create the statistics relating to the IPC revision and, above all, it provides strong support to the publication of the IPC in paper and electronic forms, for example, online, on the Internet, on CD-ROM. Subsystems built around the main modules of IPCIS can efficiently support the editing of the catchword indexes and the generation of the Revision Concordance Lists.

HISTORY OF IPCIS

2. Following the initiative of the International Bureau to set up a computer system for the publication and revision of the IPC, the IPC management system was created in 1994. This system is still in production and supports the everyday work of the International Bureau. IPCIS was developed as a network-based PC system under the assumption that only a few users had to access the system and there was not any need to provide access to any "pending" version of the Classification for the external IPC stakeholders.

3. IPCIS is a proprietary system, and any modification of it requires contribution from its developers. It is a networked application, however, some functions work in a single user environment. IPCIS as a first-generation IT support system provided great assistance in the "structuring" of the IPC revision work and was gradually formed into a workflow driven system creating highly structured electronic outputs.

IPCISBIS OR IBIS?

4. IPCIS is a DOS-based systems, so, in theory, it is not year 2000 compliant by definition. This fact necessitates the replacement of IPCIS in itself. A short internal study prepared in August 1999 recommended the replacement of IPCIS by a client-server based system (originally, this project was considered as IPCISbis).

5. In the meantime, tests and practice showed that IPCIS could be used after the year 2000. In parallel, the progress in respect of the IPC reform made clear that a new system should serve the needs of the reform and should be opened to the Internet-based revision. The need for integration of the IPC e-forum functions into the new system became evident.

6. Internal and unofficial external discussions of the IPCISbis Business Case, prepared in February 2000, made clear that WIPO and the IPC community needs more than IPCIS in a client-server environment. It requires a change in the paradigm for the IPCIS operations. The system (IBIS) should be "Web compliant" and should incorporate new features resulting from the IPC reform.

SIMPLIFIED CONCEPT OF IBIS OPERATIONS

7. IPC will be made available on the WIPO IPC Web site in a searchable and easy to navigate format (imitating most of the standard functions of the IPC:CLASS CD-ROM with some additional improvements). Data will be converted from XML to HTML on the fly.

8. The following "views" of IPC will be available:

- last official edition;
- version approved by the IPC Committee of Experts;
- version(s) proposed by the Working Group;
- current version of the advanced level;
- version(s) proposed by the offices contributing to the revision, displaying proposals in the context.

9. Filtering will support the core level and the advanced level views of IPC displaying, if needed, entries belonging only to the core or advanced level respectively. The core and advanced level views will be linked to the Internet databases through bridges, similar to those built into the IPC:CLASS system.

10. Users (offices) authorized to participate in the revision will be able to submit amendment proposals in structured format (in XML) through interaction with the IPC system or directly by filling in forms, or will be able to send unstructured proposals in free-text format (like today on the e-forum). Unstructured proposals will be structured by the International Bureau. Structured proposals will be "parsed" (checked automatically) using computer programs. Users sending proposals having anomalies will be alerted by e-mail.

11. All the functions of the IPC e-forum will be integrated into the new system.

12. Various outputs of the system (files for paper publishing, for electronic publishing) will be generated in an XML publishing environment.

CURRENT STATUS

13. Having considered the background of the project and SWOT (Strong/Weak Points, Opportunities/Threats) analysis of IPCIS made in the Business Case, the IBIS project board proposed to request the validation of the preferred technical concept which was described in the Business Case as Oracle-based client-server solution in AIX UNIX environment using XML as a data exchange format.

14. An independent consulting company was requested to carry out a project study. In June 2000, the company proposed a major alignment in the approach by recommending, instead of the classical data management solution, the content management solution based on Documentum or Oracle IFS. A detailed and prioritized functional analysis carried out by the company gave an estimate of the 280 man-days workload of the development for a Documentum-based solution.

15. In August 2000, WIPO ordered a mock-up developed under Oracle IFS (Oracle Internet File System) to check the feasibility of an Oracle-based system. The mock-up recently delivered confirmed the feasibility of an Oracle IFS-based content management system.

16. It is envisaged that the development, which will be done in-house, will have two phases:

– Development of the system providing the basic functions of IPCIS (annex editing for the sessions of the IPC Revision Working Group and the IPC Committee of Experts);

– Development of the Internet-based revision system.

17. It is currently planned to start the programming work in January 2001 so as the system, depending on the progress of the IPC reform work, could come in production at the end of 2001. IBIS would be the first XML-based content management system developed in WIPO.

18. The key of the success of the development second phase is the clarification of the rules and the workflow concerning the core and the advanced levels of the reformed IPC. The IPC Committee of Experts and IPC Working Groups will be periodically informed on the progress of the project.

[End of document]