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How to easily identify all digital content contributors?

The answer is ISNI

ISNI International Agency Established in London

Officially incorporated as a London-based not-for-profit organisation in December 2010, the ISNI International Agency is helping media companies prepare for the International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI), a new standard which will streamline the way creative rights holders are referenced on the Internet.

London, January 23, 2011 – The International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI – Draft ISO 27729) is an ISO certified global standard capable of easily identifying the millions of contributors to creative works, including writers, artists, creators, performers, researchers, producers, publishers and more. The ISNI International Agency, which will be responsible for ISNI’s administration and governance, was officially incorporated by its six founding members – **CISAC, IFRRO, IPDA, ProQuest, OCLC and the Conference of European National Librarians** (represented by Bibliothèque nationale de France and the British Library) – as a London-based not-for-profit organisation on December 22nd, 2010. The consortium members represent more than 300 rights management societies and 26,000 libraries worldwide. While the Agency creates the ISNI reference database – assigning ISNI identifiers to over 5 million names – and begins building a network of ISNI Registration Agencies, media and content companies are preparing to integrate ISNI into their operations.

“As digital formats come to dominate the entertainment landscape, a global standard that can identify all contributors to all cultural goods – whether they be artists, creators, producers, publishers – is key to an efficient legal marketplace,” said **François-Xavier Nuttall, Corporate Director of the ISNI International Agency and Senior Technology Consultant for founding member CISAC.**

Responding to this need, ISNI was developed under the auspices of the International Standard Organisation (ISO). The Agency’s six founding members – CISAC, IFRRO, IPDA, ProQuest, OCLC and the Conference of European National Librarians (represented by the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and the British Library) – reflect the groups that will benefit most from the standard’s integration by media companies, including creators, traditional and digital book/serial publishers, performers, libraries and other research/cataloguing specialists.

ISNI: Identifying Rights Holders Across the Digital World

ISNI will make data exchange between all players in the value chain quicker, more accurate and cheaper. This in turn facilitates licensing of online services and legal access by the public to the content they want.

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ISNI is an integral part of an interoperable “smart” metadata system that includes international identifiers of works, products and right holders in all repertoires (e.g. ISWC for musical works, ISTC for texts, ISAN for audiovisual, IPI for creators, ISSN for serials, IPN for performers, etc.); standardised data exchange formats (e.g. DDEX standards); and database networks (e.g. CIS-Net powered by FastTrack, the network of musical works databases established by musical society members of CISAC). ISNI can be assigned to all parties that create, produce, manage, distribute or feature in creative content including human beings, legal entities (such as a company) or fictional characters. In the ISNI database, the party is identified by its “public identity”, the name by which it is publicly known.

ISNI was designed as a bridge between existing proprietary right holder identification systems, such as IPI (the Interested Party Information system used by all CISAC members to identify rights holders), and resource discovery tools, such as VIAF (the Virtual International Authority File used by libraries to identify and disambiguate names across the catalogues of 18 major libraries). ISNI metadata will link the public identity to all of its other manifestations in different systems, making it possible for industry partners to exchange party information without disclosing confidential information. It also provides a single identifying code for a party involved in multiple creative genres (music, cinema, visual arts, literature, etc.).

According to **Andrew Mac Ewan of the British Library**, *“ISNI will enable and enhance the discovery and identification of all content associated with an author within and across multiple databases and domains.”*

Nuttall adds that *“ISNI will serve two key purposes: allowing reliable royalty management services across all repertoires and throughout the value chain and more efficient discovery services spanning all media sectors.”*

Getting ISNI Off the Ground

In order for ISNI to reach its potential, widespread use by the business, research and technology sectors is key. The ISNI International Agency will prepare the standard for industry adoption by first creating the initial ISNI database, which will allocate ISNI numbers to more than 5 million contributors. The database is scheduled for release to ISNI business partners by mid-2011.

Nuttall notes that many media and content companies are already showing interest in ISNI. *“We already have a nice list of companies or organisations that are getting ISNI-Ready, which means that they are capable of accepting, storing and retrieving ISNI numbers for all their parties,”* he said. *“Our goal is to help all media companies become ISNI-ready.”*

Founding members talk about what ISNI means to their businesses

“The need for such an identifier has been stressed for many decades in the library community. Considering the increasing importance of the Semantic Web this identifier has become a real necessity. Europeana, The European Library and other information networking projects are addressing interoperability issues, of which ISNI is a key component. ISNI is likely to contribute to the evolution of library catalogues and to the diversification of library data use and reuse.” – **Anila Angjeli, Département de l'Information bibliographique et numérique, Bibliothèque nationale de France**

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*“ISNI crosses domains to unite various users across the creative media industries. Not only will it provide the basis for a simple, distributed identifier among the IFRRO membership but it will also facilitate rights clearance in the library sector and is foreseen as a key element of the ARROW project.” – **Olav Stokkmo, CEO, IFRRO (International Federation of Reprographic Rights Organisations)***

*“For over a decade, performers’ organisations have been looking for a simple, universal way to identify recordings made by their members, the performers. The arrival of the Internet has made this task even more urgent. For this reason, we are very excited to contribute to the development of ISNI, which will make this possible.” – **José Luis Sevillano, Chairman, IPDA (International Performer Database Association)***

*“ISNI will help link data within and across databases, thus providing the infrastructure for significantly improved name searching and linking. Moreover, by sharing their data resources, ISNI participants from libraries, rights management and trade organisations are co-operating to achieve high quality data and at the same time realise processing efficiencies. This unprecedented cross-sector alliance is very exciting.” – **Janifer Gatenby, Research Integration and Standards, OCLC (Online Computer Library Center)***

*“This global effort through ISO allows for the identification of contributors in all forms of content that are critical to researchers including: video, recordings, novels, dissertations, journal articles, monographs, datasets, and working papers. Not only will this help the researcher, but will offer clear benefit to stakeholders in the research community, including libraries, publishers, granting agencies and universities. I’m very excited about the ways ISNI can be leveraged to support scholarship.” - **Tim Babbitt, Senior Vice President, ProQuest***

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More information about the Founding members of the ISNI International Agency

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nationale de France

The **Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF)** is one of the largest research and public libraries in the world collecting and conserving the national heritage entrusted to its care, in

whatever form, for the use of all researchers, students and professionals. Today its patrimonial collections encompass all areas of culture and knowledge in a great variety of languages and illustrate the library’s encyclopaedic nature through all kinds of materials.

The BnF offers access to its digital library Gallica <http://gallica.bnf.fr>, which now contains over 1 million digitised documents: manuscripts, sound materials and music score, books, images and over 400,000 newspapers issues, in French and other languages. They cover all domains of knowledge, with a specific focus in literature and history. Together with these collections, all in public domain, Gallica gives access to digitised documents belonging to French partner libraries as well as a set of copyrighted documents in collaboration with the French Publishers Association, some publishers and e-retailers.

The BnF is a founding member of The European Library consortium and is contributing to Europeana. It is involved in multiple European projects, such as ARROW, which aims at facilitating the access to copyrighted items in the respect of author rights.

For more information: www.bnf.fr

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BRITISH LIBRARY

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom and one of the world's greatest research libraries. It provides world-class information services to the academic, business, research and scientific communities and offers unparalleled access to the world's largest and most comprehensive research collection. The Library's collection has developed over 250 years and exceeds 150 million separate items representing every age of written civilisation. It includes: books, journals, manuscripts, maps, stamps, music, patents, photographs, newspapers and sound recordings in all written and spoken languages.

For more information: www.bl.uk

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The Conference of European National Librarians (CENL) is a foundation under Dutch law with the aim of increasing and reinforcing the role of national libraries in Europe, in particular in respect of their responsibilities for maintaining the national cultural heritage and ensuring the accessibility of knowledge in that field.

Members of CENL are the national librarians of the member states of the Council of Europe. The conference currently consists of 49 members from 46 European countries forming the CENL Board. The conference pursues its objectives by means of annual membership meetings as well as initiatives and support of research and development activities and joint projects.

The topics which are discussed at the annual meetings and are worked on in working groups and projects were already identified at the very first meeting and evolved with the development of technology and library organisation: Harmonisation and innovation of national policy concerning libraries; implementation of new information technology in the libraries; standardisation of data structure and communication interfaces within a European network; preservation and conservation of important collections in Europe, including long-term preservation of digital objects.

For more information: www.cenl.org

Contact: CENL Secretary, Britta Woldering, cenl@dnb.de, phone +49 – (0)69 – 1525 1541



SERVING AUTHORS WORLDWIDE
AU SERVICE DES AUTEURS DANS LE MONDE
AL SERVIZIO DI TUTTI GLI AUTORELLI IN IL MONDO

Presided over by Robin Gibb – legendary singer and songwriter of the Bee Gees – and Hervé Di Rosa – French visual artist and painter, **CISAC – the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers** – aims at increasing both the recognition and protection of creators' rights worldwide. In a globalised and

digital world, CISAC's main missions are to reinforce the international network of copyright societies, to be their spokesperson in all international debates and to reassert authors' inalienable right to live by their creative work.

With 229 authors' societies from 121 countries as its members, CISAC indirectly represents around 3 million creators and publishers of artistic works in all genres including music, drama, literature, audiovisual, photography and the visual arts. In 2009, the royalties collected by CISAC's member societies in their respective national territories topped €7.152bn.

Founded in 1926, CISAC is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organisation with worldwide headquarters in France and regional offices in Chile, Hungary, Singapore and South Africa.

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The **International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations (IFRRO)** is an independent, not-for-profit organisation representing the interests of collective management organisations in the field of text and image based works. These organisations are known as Reproduction Rights Organisations (RROs).

Active in every continent, more than 70 RROs plus about 55 national and international author, publisher and visual creator associations are IFRRO Members and Associate Members. IFRRO's global network of members contributes to the facilitating of the widest possible legal access to published, copyright protected literary, visual and musical works for the public. RROs administer reproduction and other relevant rights, including certain forms of digital uses, in copyright text- and image-based works on behalf of both publishers and authors including visual artists. These rights are normally referred to as reprographic rights.

RROs also play a key role in the development of cultural diversity by helping to set up the legal and administrative frameworks necessary for the growth of local publishing industries. IFRRO partners organisations such as WIPO and UNESCO to undertake copyright awareness, capacity building and training activities.

For more information: www.ifrro.org

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The **IPDA, International Performers' Database Association**, is the organisation that enables an international identification of performers. Performing artists in many countries around the world enjoy an intellectual property right to their performances just as authors do to

their works. Thus, if a recording containing performing artists' performance is broadcast or communicated to the public in any other way, remuneration is due to the participating performers. Such remuneration rights are administrated collectively by performers' rights organisations. These have the task of identifying the performing artists whose recorded performances have been used in order to collect and distribute the remuneration due to performers in their own countries and abroad.

For many years these societies have lacked an international identification number linked to the performing artist to enable them to deal efficiently with performer data. Therefore, in 1997, eighteen performers' rights organisations established the International Performers' Database Association (IPDA) with the goal of setting up an International Performers' Database (IPD) in order to solve the problem of identifying performers participating in played recordings. The IPD assigns a unique ID number (IPN) to each performing artist. At present, 35 performers' rights organisations adhere to the IPDA with approx. 400,000 performing artists registered in the IPD.

For more information: www.ipddb.org

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Founded in 1967, **OCLC** is a non-profit, membership, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world's information and reducing library costs. More than 72,000 libraries in 170 countries have used OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalogue, lend, preserve and manage library materials. Researchers, students, *faculty*, scholars, professional librarians and other information seekers use OCLC services to obtain bibliographic, abstract and full-text information when and where they need it. OCLC and its member libraries cooperatively produce and maintain WorldCat, the world's largest online database for discovery of library resources. Search WorldCat.org on the Web.

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A global leader in serving libraries of all types, **ProQuest** offers the expertise of such respected brands as UMI®, Chadwyck-Healey™, SIRS™, and eLibrary®. With Serials Solutions®, Ulrich's™, RefWorks®, COS™, Dialog® and now Bowker® part of the ProQuest brand family, the company supports the breadth of the information community with innovative discovery solutions that power the business of books and the best in research experience.

More than a content provider or aggregator, ProQuest is an information partner, creating indispensable research solutions that connect people and information. Through innovative, user-centred discovery technology, ProQuest offers billions of pages of global content that includes historical newspapers, dissertations, and uniquely relevant resources for researchers of any level and sophistication—including content not likely to be digitized by others. The company is launching an all-new platform that will transform delivery of several highly regarded individual platforms into a consolidated research experience that will encompass all ProQuest family products over time. Inspired by its customers and their end users, ProQuest is working toward a future that blends information accessibility with community to further enhance learning and encourage lifelong enrichment.

For more information: www.proquest.com

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