UNESCO’S WINISIS: A LIGHT BEHIND THE DARKNESS

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Abstract

Digital environment offers unlimited features to the modern Library professionals to admin their library sources and services in an elegant way. The packages, which are available in the market for library administration, are like as mushroom now-a-days. Hence, go for a good one need skills and experience in it. Librarians may have different experiences when they come across various commercial packages. But, WinISIS has a vigorous features and it will give a new experience to librarians. An attempt has been made here to run the circulation section of library using WinISIS application. The routines of circulation section namely Books Issue, Return, Renewal, Reservation and users’ dues have been controlled using WinISIS. As already said, the librarians can design a database for circulation section functions using WinISIS as per their demands. These provisions are available in WinISIS only and not in other commercial applications. Generally, commercial packages have the predefined formats for all the routines of the library and they may or may not satisfy the librarian expectations. But, WinISIS is always different as it has the ability to let the designers to choose their own. Time has arrived for the librarians to make their choice. Will the darkness in circulation section be dispelled using WinISIS? Of course, WinISIS is “a light behind the darkness”.

Keywords: Library, automation, circulation, UNESCO, WinISIS, Database, Bibliography.

Introduction:

Across the world, more than 200 countries are using WinISIS application for bibliographic data storage and retrieval. WinISIS is the Windows version of CDS ISIS, the bibliographic data management programme developed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for creating bibliographic databases in libraries. Package has the ability to fulfil the requirements of any database designer. Package is designed especially for the purpose of creating and managing bibliographical databases. Further, it has the capability to create unlimited number of databases. WinISIS has a powerful FDT, Worksheet, PFT and FST to build a sophisticated
database. However, a little bit of previous experience in WinISIS is a must to go on. This paper centred advanced users of WinISIS only and not helpful for the beginners. Depth knowledge in the said four sections is must to run the circulation section in libraries.

Database view:
Two databases namely books and users have been built to run the circulation section. A few fields that are related to the books have been created in the FDT as shown in the Fig-a.

![Fig-a: FDT for books' details](image)

The structured user database consists of a few fields and the defined FDT is given in the Fig-b.

![Fig-b: FDT for users' details](image)
In the circulation desk, system shows the user screen, where the user id needs to be entered. Of course, I designed the database to run the circulation section through user database. This would be possible through the books database too. But, practically books database is bigger than the user database. Hence, it would be good to edit and modify the data in the database, which has less number of records. The inverted files need to be updated whenever the record changes. So, the big database, which has more records like as books database, should not be disturbed often. Hence, I run the user database here and through which the related and required bibliographic data of the books can be retrieved. The data edit and modifications can be done in the user database only. Don’t forget to take copy of the existing databases. Backup is a must to secure your data.

Fig-1: user profile (ID: 1)

The said two databases are connected together and thus the required data about the circulation process for the specific user is retrieved. The Fig-1 depicts the user profile whose Library ID is 1 (one). For illustration purposes, author has used his picture and his library ID is identified as 1. When the id is entered in the MFN box, the related bibliographic details of the concern user would be displayed. Fig-1 explores the details of the selected user along with a few options namely transactions, profile, reminders, send e-mail and due receipt.
Fig-2: Book Issue-Accno:1

The Fig-2 shows the book issue mode where the document Accno 1 is entered in the field ‘doc1’ and the next option helps to enter the issue date and due date under the subfields a & b. Now, save the record. When select the option transaction from the Fig-1 the bibliographic details of the user and the issued document would be displayed as shown in the Fig-3. Here, the user picture is also captured along with the address. The second half of the screen shows the issued document details such as Accno, subject, title, author(s), issue date and due date, dues. An option, full view helps to access the complete bibliographic details of the issued document. The option full view is highlighted in the Fig-3. When this option is selected, the complete bibliographic information for this document would be displayed as shown in the Fig-4. Advanced formatting language of WinISIS offers this feature to link the book database from the user database here. There is no need to open the book database to retrieve these data. Here, the user database only is currently running on the screen. There are two options available in the Fig-4. They are; User profile and Circulation profile. The user profile takes the librarian to the Fig-1 while Circulation profile opens the Fig-3.
The feature to access the e-book for the selected Accno also is available here. The option show E-Book opens the full text document as shown in the Fig-5.
The powerful PFT of WinISIS offers the features to open the documents in any of the format. The Fig-5 shows the book in document format. Like that it could be viewed through PDF format too.

Now, another book, which is identified with the Accno 2 is issued to the same user ID 1 as shown in the Fig-6. Data entry provides the options to enter the 2nd book and the issue date & due date. Compare this screen with the Fig-2 for better understanding of the document issue procedure.
Fig-7: Book Issue-Accno: 3, Issue date & Due date

Fig-7 shows the issue date and due date for the document (Accno 3). Save the record and close the screen. By entering the user ID 1 in the MFN, the transaction details of the select users would be displayed as shown in the Fig-8 where the bibliographic details for the documents Accno 1 and Accno 3 are retrieved. The top portion shows the user details along with the picture. As discussed earlier, the complete bibliography for the issued items can be accessed towards the option full view. When this option is selected the Fig-9 would be loaded with the complete bibliographic details for the concern document. Further, the e-book also could be accessed from here as said in the previous screen shots.

Fig-8 highlights the Issue date & Due date where the standard format is rendered to retrieve the date as MDY. This type of date format may confuse the librarians. I opted this format for the purpose of tracing the dues for the select users. The pick list feature may be called here to stay away from the manual date entry. Fig-7.1 offers a better way to solve the complication while entering the due date. However, the librarians need to reschedule the pick list every day before the beginning of circulation section routines.
Fig-7.1: Pick list for Issue date & Due date

Fig-8: Book-Accno 3-Bibliographic view

Fig-9: Book-Accno 3-Full Bibliographic view
Renewal:

Renew the document is shown in the *Fig-10*. User ID 1 needs to be edited first then change due date only for renewing the document. The renewal details should be entered as shown in the data entry *Fig-10* where the *Accno 1* is renewed 1\(^{st}\) time and *Accno 2* is renewed 2\(^{nd}\) time. Save the record and close the screen.

![Renewal Details](image)

**Fig-10:** Book-Renewal data entry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Accno</th>
<th>Title of the Book</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Iss Dt</th>
<th>Due Dt 26 DEC'17</th>
<th>Fine</th>
<th>Bill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The C++11 Std C++ Handbook</td>
<td>Andrew Barton and Alan Birkett</td>
<td>23-02-2016</td>
<td>23-02-2016</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Programming in Turbo Pascal</td>
<td>Texas, R.P. et al.</td>
<td>20-02-2016</td>
<td>20-02-2016</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig-11:** Book-Renewal view
The renewal details could be observed from the Fig-11 where the option Ren. (Renewal) shows the details next to the full view. Go through the Fig-8 again and it could be realized that the Renewal details are not available. After the renewal process only these details would come for vision.

**Reservation:**

Reservation can be done here. Refer the Fig-12 where the last row indicates the option for reservation. Id of the user, who reserved the document, needs to be entered carefully else the users’ bibliographic details may be wrongly displayed. Here, the user ID 2 is applied to reserve the document (Accno 1). Save the data and close the screen. When the user ID 1 comes to the library for renew the document (Accno 1) the reservation details could be captured as shown in the Fig-13. The option Res. is shown next to the Renewal part. If the book is reserved, then the option will show the letter ‘Y’ else ‘N’. Fig-13 shows ‘Y’ for the Accno 1 and ‘N’ for the Accno 2. The reservation details also could be retrieved through the user ID, which is entered in the reservation option.
Fig-13: Book-Reservation view

**Dues:**

The dues for the documents, which returned/renewed after the due date, need to be calculated. Advanced features may be included using the tool ISIS_DLL from BIREME. However, those features have not been included and discussed here. With the existing PFT features of WinISIS only, dues have been traced and displayed.

**No Dues:**

The due details may be observed from the *Fig-14*. The generated output depicts the required data about the transactions. 6 days are given to the user to return/renew the document. The issue date was 20-02-2016 and the due date was 25-02-2016 (*The due date has been given as per MDY format in the data entry*). The current date is displayed on the top first row of the screen where it shows the current date 25-02-2016 along with the time. Hence, it is clear that the book has been returned to the library on or before the date. So, the users’ due option shows ‘No’ here. Further, *Fig-14* has been generated with one transaction (*Accno 1*) for the user ID 1. *Fig-15* shows the data entry and the browser at the time of return/renew the document. Both the documents need to be returned/renewed on or before 25-02-2016. After saving the record, the user transactions in the top part show ‘No’ under dues for both the documents.
Fig-14: No dues

Data Entry: No Dues

Fig-15: Data Entry & Display: Dues-No
Dues:

Let’s go through the Fig-16 where the same 6 days are given to the user to return/renew the document. The issue date was 19-02-2016 and the due date was 24-02-2016 (The due date has been given as per MDY format in the data entry). The current date is displayed on the top first row of the screen where it shows the current date 25-02-2016 along with the time. Hence, it is clear that the book has been returned to the library after the due date i.e. 24-02-2016. So, the users’ due option shows ‘Yes’.

Data Entry: Dues

Fig-17 shows the data entry and the browser at the time of return/renew the document. The document (Accno 1) needs to be returned/renewed on or before 24-02-2016. (For testing purpose the dates have been changed in the data entry) After saving the record, the user transactions in the top part show the ‘Yes’ under dues for the same document. Hence, when the users’ profile is accessed the dues related details would be captured through this procedure. The librarian should take care at the time of entering the date details in specific the due date. Because, the associated parameter file has the predefined condition for the due date so as the PFT can check and calculate the due status of the select user. This may be an embarrassing one for the librarians, who are not familiar in WinISIS. However, there is no gain, if there is no pain.
Fig-17: Data Entry & Display: Dues-Yes

Previous Dues:

Users’ previous dues could be accessed through the option ‘View previous dues, if any’, which is given in the Fig-18.

Fig-18: Old Dues
Due Receipt:

The Fig-1 has the option to access the users’ due receipts. When the option ‘Generate’ is selected the librarian would be taken to the Fig-19 where the dues receipt is generated for the select user.

![Dues Receipt](image)

**Fig-19: Dues Receipt**

Document Reminder:

The Fig-1 has the option to send the reminders to the select user. When this option is selected the letter from circulation section would be generated as shown in the Fig-20.

![Document Reminder](image)

**Fig-20: Document Reminder**
Output formats:

WinISIS offers various output formats as per the needs of the librarian. Fig-21 & 22 show the reminder output in different formats. Required output setting enables the librarian to take the desired printout with different styles.

Fig-21: Document Reminder-output 1

Fig-22: Document Reminder-output 2
Conclusion:

To sum up, if one looks a few decades back, he/she can realize how the librarians were struggling to organize the bibliographic details of the sources in the libraries with the limited technological infrastructures. Register maintenance system made the librarians get tired for searching and retrieving the data in the stipulated time. They were looking for the sources to drive this darkness. CDS/ISIS invention brought a lamp among the darkness during 1985’s. Until now, the growth of ISIS has gained appreciation from the library professionals across the world. Developing countries may be slow in this race. The complications in designing a database may be a reason behind it. Further, handling WinISIS requires a little bit of experience. The beginners need to work well so as they can gain experience and move to the advanced level. Understanding the database structure of WinISIS is a must to get familiarize in it as it deals with variables length text fields, repeatable fields, subfields, parameters and many more related files. Commercial applications attract the users as they have the predefined features that let the librarians to admin the library without many complications. But, the limitations always there in those packages and it could be realized when they go for ISIS. However, various versions of ISIS make the librarians’ job easier and compact. Modern librarians are enjoying the features of technological development. Different applications from different locations make librarians happy as they could satisfy their library patrons. Though, multiple data processing packages are revolving in the world, WinISIS stands with its own capacity that can’t be compared with any of the application. Everyone has its own strength and weakness. Opinions too differ from person to person. Opinions raised here are all from the authors’ perspectives. But, one can realize the power of WinISIS when look around the package for data extraction. Author is glad to proudly say that WinISIS is “a light behind the darkness”.

References:


