



**UPDATE**

INFORMATION  
SERVICES  
BUSINESS  
DIVISION

ROCKVILLE,  
MARYLAND

July 7, 1975  
301.38

## New Bus Adapter Goes Commercial — Greater Capability, Increased Flexibility

Everybody in ISBD has been talking about it for months . . . and many have been working very hard on it for still longer. Now it's a reality. After more than a month of successful field testing, the bus adapter is scheduled to go commercial next week.

What is a bus adapter? It's a dynamic device . . . in this case, a mini-computer . . . which serves as an interface between our foreground and background systems. It is replacing what has been called a "bridge" for communication between our interactive and remote batch systems. Until now, the bridge was probably the most efficient method of F/G-B/G communication in the industry.

But the highly complex ISBD-developed bus adapters will relegate the bridge to the Smithsonian, along with steam locomotives and horse-drawn carriages.

The bus adapter is designed to be far more efficient, bringing more reliable service than ever to ISBD customers, as well as a high degree of interface sophistication.

Although not all the capabilities of the bus adapters are yet realized, they should result in a number of improvements in our service. For example, the bridge was only capable of communicating between a particular foreground central processing unit and a particular background processing unit . . . not that this in itself was any small technological accomplishment, of course. But the bus adapter is designed to communicate with a number of foreground systems and a number of background systems, including both Honeywell and IBM equipment, up to a total of 16 at one time.

This interface will initially be limited to selected foreground CPU's and Systems R and S in background; but it will soon interface with our IBM 370

equipment (to be known as Mark III/70 capability) as well. This means that eventually a user will be able to sit at one terminal in his office and

*Continued on page 2*

## Robbie in Rockville — See Story on Page 6



*"HE'S ALIVE!" Kathleen Gregory, Foreground Systems Secretary, discovers quite suddenly that Robbie the Robot moves, talks, whirs, clanks, revolves, grinds and lights up. Bill Ryder (left), Senior Systems Specialist; and Lou Schreiber, Programming Specialist, enjoy Kathleen's reaction at the recent Technology Meeting where Robbie was an honored guest.*

GENERAL  ELECTRIC



## Bus Adapter *Continued from page 1*

interface, through a foreground processor, with any of several background systems, depending upon his needs and his catalog validations. It is also designed to make possible the highly touted "shared files" capability . . . the valuable ability for two or more central processing units to access the same data file simultaneously.

Another limitation of the bridge is that F/G-B/G communication had to always remain within the same "facility," or interconnected group of systems. The bus adapter is designed to be capable of cutting across facility lines to enable any foreground processor to communicate with any background processor, no matter what facility each is in. This will multiply ISBD's load-balancing abilities to obtain still greater efficiencies from our computer resources.

If one system should go down, another can much more easily be brought in to bear the load, without the necessity of hauling bulky equipment or cables from one location to another.

The bus adapter will also make it much simpler to use a certain central processing unit as a foreground system throughout the day; then bring the very same system back up at night as a background system. The reverse, of course, is also true: any background system can be shut down and brought back up as a foreground system whenever additional interactive processing capacity is needed. This virtually optimum use of our computer power should improve the division's competitive edge.

With the cooperation of number of ISBD customers, field tests began in early June. These tests moved a step further June 19 when, for a specified number of hours each day, one or more of our foreground systems have been running with communication exclusively through one of the new bus adapters.

Any customer making use of background on one of those systems has been making use of the bus adapter. Chuck Stevens, Senior Systems Specialist, said that although this is not generally customer visible, the users have been given a listable file called BUSINFO\*\*\* by which they can learn whether or not their interface with background is by way of the bus adapter.

Optional use of the bus adapter has also been available to users. A schedule of bus availability is in file BUSSCHED\*\*\* on each system which accesses background. During periods when the bus adapter is available at the user's option, the user can select either the bridge or the bus adapter.

Chuck added that we are still only scratching the surface in terms of utilizing the bus adapter's full capabilities. "There are still a whole lot of uses and benefits down the road that we'll eventually realize," he said.

To obtain additional information or answers to specific questions on this

subject, call Mike Yourtee, Senior Systems Specialist, at 8\*273-4571.



*Christine Intihar, Background Computer Operator, Brook Park, examines a new ISBD bus adapter. Although only about a third the physical size of the bridge it replaces, its capabilities are far greater.*

## Wrong Number Again?

If you frequently reach wrong numbers after consulting the ISBD Telephone Directory, in some cases it could be because the person you're trying to reach has changed locations or jobs since the last directory was published. But in many cases it has been because those who compile the directory were not informed of a change, perpetuating an old erroneous number.

Sam Wenck and his people are in the midst of getting everything together for a new directory. Make sure your information . . . name, title, location and phone number . . . are right. Also, do you know of any other

individuals who have moved or left ISBD whose names continue to appear in the directory? Please let Sam know. For any changes, use the forms on the last page of your current directory. Changes may be submitted until July 18, just 11 days away.

Update is published bi-weekly by the Information Services Division for the benefit and information of employees. Articles and photographs may be submitted to update, Information Services, 401 N. Washington Street, Rockville, Maryland 20850; or call 8\*273-4387.



## ISBD's New Currency Exchange Data Base Program Now Commercially Available on Mark III Service

General Electric's much-touted Currency Exchange Data Base became fully commercial last Monday after a period of comprehensive field testing and debugging. It is expected to gain many Mark III Service customers because it provides a solution to numerous international money management problems which have become so vitally important in recent years to firms with overseas holdings.

Rates of exchange among the world's major currencies shift from hour to hour. Widely fluctuating free-floating currencies and worldwide double-digit inflation further complicate the fast-moving international monetary scene. If a company, for example, decided to divest itself of a multi-million dollar asset in Pounds Sterling, for example, it could lose . . . or gain . . . many thousands of dollars in the exchange, depending upon when the exchange was made, and into what currency it was changed. Such decisions can be very important in the profit/loss picture of any company whose business crosses national borders.

Brian Garnichaud, Product Programs Manager, who is deeply involved in the marketing of the new data base, believes this program is the best solution available to help provide the information decision-makers' need to take a wide variety of currency actions.

"We think this is the most comprehensive, flexible, easy-to-use currency exchange program ever created for money management," Brian said. "With the expected advent of price-level accounting requirements the indexes . . . specifically the Gross National Product Index . . . will be more valuable as they will provide necessary data for accomplishing this complex auditing function."

The program covers 44 currencies of 36 countries throughout the free world. These include 36 official currency rates and eight commercial (free) rates.

The data base itself was created primarily from International Monetary Fund information using International Financial Statistics tapes. It is updated every morning after opening flurries settle, from information provided by the International Treasury Division of Marine Midland Bank.

Once users have accessed the data base, they can obtain the very latest data on 19 high-demand currencies of 17 countries. These include bid and offer rates (New York openings), futures for one, three, six and 12 months, over the past 90 trading days.

Monthly data on 44 currencies for 36 countries is available, including monthly average and close rates, wholesale price index and the central bank discount rate, over the previous 120 months. The quarterly GNP deflators for the U.S. are also presented.

Yearly data on these 44 currencies is available which includes the annual average and close rates, wholesale price index, central bank discount rate and the GNP deflator, over the previous 28 years.

Prime sales targets for the Currency Exchange Data Base include multinational firms who need to evaluate foreign capital assets, import/export transactions or any other operations involving foreign money transfer.

The data can be used to measure and express currency values in relation to each other, to manage the exposure of business to currency fluctuations, to reflect the current position of a com-

pany's outstanding foreign contracts, to maximize gains in money transfers, to minimize losses by refinancing in more advantageous currencies, to make judgments for "futures" transactions, to reduce unnecessary money exchanges between international subsidiaries and affiliates, to track the historical measurement of transfer/purchase, and loss/gain transactions, and to conform to Federal Accounting Standards Board recommendations.

The new system was developed by Lou Schreiber, Programming Specialist; with assistance from Jim Wylie, Senior Systems Specialist, and Al Diamant, Senior Systems Analyst. Documentation was by Roy Gamer, Technical Writer. Updating routines were created by Al Diamant. Daily updating is done by Gerri Jackson of MAP Services; and design specs were the responsibility of Dana Lowry, Systems Analyst.

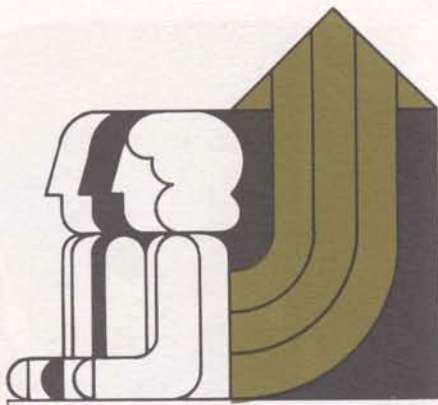
An attractive sales brochure has been prepared by Joanne Thyken, Sales Promotion Specialist.



It is now available and its publication number is 5103.21. Field personnel should note that before a customer can access the Currency Exchange Data Base, he must

sign a disclaimer (800.20) which absolves GE of any responsibility from liability for any effect caused by decision making based on the information provided in the data base.

Questions related to the Currency Exchange Data Base should be directed to Brian Garnichaud (8\*273-4659).



## People On the Move

Carl Anderson, from Senior Account Rep, Los Angeles; to Zone Support Manager, Torrence.

Larry Beverly, from Systems Technology Achievement Program; to Programmer, Rockville.

Lois Brown, From TAP Intern, to Programmer, Rockville.

Pamela Burck, from Analyst, Computer Systems, Rockville; to Technical Services Specialist, Houston.

Ronald Lewis, from Account Rep; to Account Manager, Los Angeles.

Joseph Malinak, from Computer Operator; to Senior Computer Operator, Brook Park.

Steve Mudrick, from Programmer; to Quality Integration Specialist, Rockville.

Thad Webster, from Account Rep; to Senior Account Rep, Tulsa.



Carl Anderson



Larry Beverly



Lois Brown



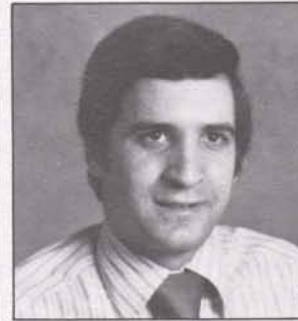
Pamela Burck



Ronald Lewis



Joseph Malinak



Steve Mudrick



Thad Webster

## 4417 May *Not* Be the Number to Call!

Probably the most commonly used "wrong number" in the Rockville office is 4417, which, we're told, everybody seems to want to use for everything pertaining to payroll and employee financing.

Actually, 4417, which belongs to Art Cleary, Personnel Accounting Manager, should *only* be used for matters pertaining to pensions. For other employee money matters, try these numbers:

For cash advances, cashier matters,

insurance claims, medical claims and petty cash, call 4220. That's Gwen DeLacy, Insurance Benefits Administrator.

Relative to payroll preparation and time cards, Sales Department personnel should call Bonny Galbraith, Records and Reports Administrator, at 4429; Systems Department personnel should call Cheryl Hicks, Salary Payment Plans Administrator, at 4496; and all others should call Lily Tan, Salary Payment Plans Administrator, at 4144.

For questions on Savings and Security, call Madeline Davis, Compensation Accounting Specialist, at 4418. Employment verifications should be checked with Nancy Rizzi, Payroll Processing Manager, at 4434.

It isn't really necessary for you to keep this copy of Update in your pocket forevermore; all this information is contained in the "yellow pages" of your own ISBD telephone directory!































































































































































