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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DICAPS
(DOCUMENT IMAGING AND COMPUTER-ASSISTED PUBLICATIONS SYSTEM)

Memorandum by the International Bureau

INTRODUCTION

1.   The present document contains a progress report on the status and further development of a document imaging and computer-assisted publication system for the processing and publication, by the International Bureau, of international applications under the PCT (the "DICAPS" project). The present progress report is the continuation of a first report submitted to the Assembly of the PCT Union at its seventeenth session, held from September 24 to October 2, 1990 (see document PCT/A/XVII/1, paragraphs 2 to 8).

SUMMARY OF THE PROGRESS REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE PCT UNION AT ITS SEVENTEENTH SESSION

2.   It is recalled that, at the time of the seventeenth session of the Assembly of the PCT Union, the development of the above-mentioned system had already started and had reached a stage where the general requirements for such a system had been defined as follows:

(i)   <u>circulation, storage and retrieval of files</u>: the files of the international applications would no longer exist in paper form. Instead, all papers making up a file would be stored on optical discs, thus constituting "optical disc files";

(ii)   <u>automatic page setting, with the drawings, of the Gazette pages and of the pamphlet front pages</u>: the page setting would be carried out by means of a computer-assisted publication system incorporating an automatic drawing reduction and insertion facility;

(iii)   <u>printing of pamphlets</u>: the automatic printing of pamphlets (i.e., the printing of the pamphlets by laser printers using the images contained in the optical discs) would replace the present printing on photocopiers fed manually by operators;

(iv)   <u>distribution and mailing of pamphlets</u>: the pamphlets would be sent to national Offices and International Authorities which so desire, on optical media, in particular on CD-ROMs, such optical media being generated directly from the optical disc files.

3.   A tendering procedure for the acquisition of a document imaging and computer-assisted publication system had been organized, and implemented up to the stage of requesting nine bids from those firms selected among the 56 firms who had expressed an interest.

4.   It is also recalled that the tender document, prepared with the assistance of a group of expert-advisers, provided that the development of the system would take place in two successive stages; the first (Phase 1) would involve an organizational study and the preparation of a detailed description of the proposed system; the second (Phase 2), which would depend upon the acceptance of the first by WIPO, would be the implementation of the system.

PROGRESS REPORT

5.   Among the nine firms invited to submit bids, two refrained from making an offer. The seven bids received were analyzed by the International Bureau, with the assistance of a consultant from a private firm, and three bids were selected for further study. A comparative study of the seven bids, as well as the three bids selected for further study, was reviewed by a group of expert-advisers which met at the headquarters of WIPO with staff members of the International Bureau. The group of expert-advisers was the same as the group which met for the purpose of reviewing the tender document, i.e., two expert-advisors from Patent Offices (the Australian Patent Office and the United States Patent and Trademark Office) and two consultants from private firms.

6.   The group of expert-advisers reviewed the comparative study and agreed with the selection of the three short-listed bids. The three selected bidders made presentations of their offers to the group, and answered questions raised by the members of the group. The group also established a list of selection criteria taking into account the technical merits of the solutions proposed, as well as the corporate approach and capabilities of the bidding firms. It then scored the bids according to the agreed criteria.

7.   Following the meeting of the group, the International Bureau selected the firm which had received the best score and awarded to it the contract for the execution of Phase 1. The said phase started on March 1, 1991, and is scheduled to end on August 30, 1991.

8.   At the time of drafting the present document, the execution of Phase 1 is on schedule. Phase 1 has resulted in the following collection of documents:

-       Documents concerning the definition of the architecture of the future system

Requirements Report

        -       a statement of the current operation and an analysis of the requirements of the future system;

Feasibility Report

        -       an evaluation of alternative system architectures and a recommendation as to the best;

System Blueprint

        -       a complete description of the recommended system architecture with prototyping requirements;

System Integration Test Plan

        -       a detailed plan for testing that the components of the system work together effectively;

-       Documents covering the analytical aspects

System Specifications

        -       a detailed documentation of the work flow and data requirements of the system, a statement of the system performance and security requirements and a description of the ergonomic considerations in the system design;

Organizational Report

        -       a report on the impact of the new system on the current working environment, defining in particular new manual and automated procedures: a description of the user interface (i.e. VDU screen formats) is provided;

-       Document concerning the execution of Phase 2

Phase 2 Project Plan

        -       a detailed presentation of the steps in the development and installation of Phase 2, with the timing and costs of each stage.

9.   It is worth mentioning that, following the advice of the above-mentioned group, the International Bureau invited the contractor to propose, as part of Phase 1, two alternative architectures for the system, based on different software and hardware environments. The contractor accepted this invitation and described the two alternative architectures in the Feasibility Report mentioned in paragraph 8, above. Although only one of the alternative architectures has been recommended by the contractor, the final selection will be made by the International Bureau.

10.   The International Bureau intends to convene once again, the same group of expert-advisers referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6, above, for the purposes of obtaining its advice on the two following basic topics:

(i)   whether the results of Phase 1 justify the awarding of the contract for the execution of Phase 2 to the same contractor, and

(ii)   which of the two alternative architectures should be selected.

11.   It is planned to organize the meeting of the group of expert-advisers in early October 1991. Following its recommendation, the execution of Phase 2 of the project would begin immediately after a positive decision by the International Bureau.

COST ESTIMATES

12.   At the time of writing the present progress report, the definitive costing of the system (for both Phase 1 and Phase 2) cannot yet be made. Such costing will depend upon the final selection of the system architecture, as well as on the price conditions obtained from the vendors after negotiations.

13.   For the above-mentioned reasons, the costs indicated hereunder should be considered as estimates. They are given in Swiss francs by categories of hardware, software and services as follows:

	SFR
Phase 1 ……………………………………………………………………	372'000

Phase 2

Computers

Main system computer (dual host configuration) ……………………	210'000
Scanning sub-system computer ……………………………………	50'000
ICC gateway computer ……………………………………………	35'000
Print sub-system computer …………………………………………	100'000
Work station server ………………………………………………	80'000

Work Stations

Consultation and image processing work stations (42) ………………	1'130'000
Scanning work stations (2) …………………………………………	130'000
Scanning quality control work stations (3) …………………………	70'000
Other work stations (PCs) (2) ………………………………………	20'000

Laser Printers

High-volume production printers (6) ………………………………..	2'220'000
Local laser printers (4) ……………………………………………	75'000
Desk-top printers (20) …………………………………………….	60'000

Optical Storage

Jukebox, optical discs and stand-alone disc units ………………………	380'000

Network

Network management hardware and software …………………………	32'000
Communications hardware and software ………………………………	198'000

Software and Operating Systems

Data base and server software ………………………………………	220'000
Development and environment software ……………………………	178'000
Publication software ………………………………………………	172'000
Applications software (including integration services) ………………...	1'500'000

Project Management …………………………………………………….	268'000

Total Phase 2 …………………………………………………………….	7'128'000
TOTAL COST ESTIMATE ………………………………………………..	7'500'000

14.   This cost is higher than the cost estimate submitted to the Assembly of the PCT union at its sixteenth session in September-October 1989 for the budget of the 1990-1991 biennium (which cost estimate amounted to 3,700,000 Swiss francs). The main reason for this cost increase is the considerable development of the PCT, both in terms of the number of record copies received and of the number of demands for international preliminary examination filed, which have a significant impact on the storage capacity required, on the number of work stations as well as on the printing capacity of the system.

15.   It was also considered that certain highly desirable features, in particular in terms of access time to the image data base, quality of the display and high-speed volume printing, which were the results of recent developments, should be incorporated in the system. They also increase the cost.

16.   It is to be noted that the funds required to cover the total cost of 7,500,000 Swiss francs are included in the budget for the 1990-91 biennium (3,700,000 Swiss francs), and in the draft budget for the 1992-93 biennium (3,800,000 Swiss francs).

17.   The Assembly of the PCT Union is invited to note the information contained in this document.

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