

INTERNATIONAL INDEX TO FILM/TELEVISION PERIODICALS

7th November 1995

I. Budget notes

1. CD ROM subs.: CD-ROM income is based on 170 subscriptions in 1996, 210 in 1997 and 230 in 1998. (We are on target with 112 subscriptions to date in 1995.)
2. Microfiche subs.: The microfiche service will end with the 1995 subscription in February 1996.
3. Film volume sales: The film volume is late coming out this year so some of the income from it will be received in 1996. A steady decline in sales of the volume is anticipated, as orders are switched to the CD-ROM.
4. M'fiche cumulations: We are proposing to offer an annual microfiche cumulation of the whole PIP database if there is sufficient interest.
5. Office costs: are estimated to remain fairly stable, but it may mean we will have to seek another address at the end of our present lease in July 1996.
6. CD-ROM (Open Univ.): We badly need to add other facilities to the CD-ROM (such as Boolean search, which users have come to expect on this type of CD-ROM). Unfortunately we have to delay the start of such improvements until 1998, when we should be able to afford them.
7. Revelation software: I have included payments here to Richard Begernie whose help is needed in adding the back volume data to our database.
8. Part-time staff: We would hope to be able again to employ some part-time assistance in 1998.
9. Keyboarding 72-82 vols.: this work should be completed in 1996 but we may not be able to incorporate it all onto the database until the following year.

II. Income problems

In 1991 when I first researched the viability of producing a CD-ROM it was not unreasonable to contemplate a price of £750 for our product. After all at that time the subscribers were paying without protest over £700 for a subscription to the film and tv microfiche service. I did not foresee that the BFI would have a different but nevertheless competitive product on the market with all the resources of Chadwyck-Healey behind them. Nor did I anticipate the changed climate of the whole CD-ROM market where the big publishing houses can put out products like Cinemania and Mega Movie Guide and sell them for under \$100. If we wish to sell to the universities, and I do not think we can survive without that, we have to keep our present pricing policy. But I think that we have to bear in mind

the original purposes for which the PIP was set up: as a cooperative scheme to save the FIAF archives from the costs of duplicating their efforts in the field of periodical indexing. Without the PIP any archive with ambition to have a useful documentation service would have to employ at least one full-time indexer to provide themselves with the minimum of periodical indexing. The BFI for instance, who have 'gone it alone' as far as the PIP is concerned, employ five full-time indexers. The fifteen archives who are supporters of the PIP appreciate that and have faithfully subsidised the project since 1981.

The PIP is in a strange predicament. We have adopted what everyone agrees is an infinitely better technology to present the indexing. Inevitably the new technology costs much more to produce than the old. In addition we have added other useful FIAF databases such as Treasures, the directory and bibliographies.

Despite this the nature of the market, and our need to acquire more subscribers, forces us to charge less than half of what we formerly charged for the PIP alone on microfiche. If we cannot persuade more archives to become supporters there may be a case for considering a variable pricing structure, with archives paying a subscription nearer to what must be the true value of the PIP to their documentation activities.