



newsletter

The management
Newsletter for all
industries involved
with bar-code
scanning and
related
technologies.

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The continuing expansion....

....of the EAN system to more and more countries has led to some restructuring of the International Article Numbering Association. We have already reported on the background to this and given the outline changes (SCAN/IE Mar 84).

The International EAN Association spans 23 nations (21 as fully affiliated organisations). In addition, during the last year alone, informal discussions have been held with the Argentine, Cyprus, Greece, Iceland, India, Jamaica, Korea, Malaya, Mexico, Pakistan, the Philippines, Portugal, Singapore, Taiwan and Venezuela. Thus the problems of sheer size, language diversity and national differences are ever-increasing. Compound that with the broadening scope of the EAN system -- outer cases, general merchandise, communication systems, sales data -- and the need for a stronger central body becomes more apparent.

For these reasons the Secretariat has been strengthened by the establishment of a Co-ordination Committee with the specific responsibility to assist the Secretary General (Etienne Boonet) to co-ordinate the actions of the different EAN organisations. The Co-ordinating Committee consists of five people with immense experience in the EAN community: Albert Heijn, Etienne Boonet, Alfred Husi, Gregoire Mercier and Andrew Osborne.

To recognise and meet the particular needs of one region where there has been a significant increase in interest and activity, a new working party has been established: EAN Developments in Asia and in the Pacific. Its task is to examine specific regional problems and to promote the EAN system in that part of the world.

EPoS 84,....

....the annual European Congress on Automation in Retailing (now in its fifth year), is anticipated to be the biggest yet. This year, attendance is expected to be larger than last year's 1,100 people who participated in the conference sessions. The event takes place 18-21 September; venue Novotel, London, a much larger facility than the one used in previous years. Over 60 exhibitors will be taking part, mainly from three sectors: EPoS systems and terminals; portable and fixed head data capture; and merchandise marking. There are indications that there will be an even greater emphasis on bar coding this year.

The conference runs for all four days with 19 sessions scheduled:

Day 1: Plenary Session: Points of Concern -- a panel of speakers will explore current problems, opportunities and controversies; the session is an opportunity to exchange views. Also on Day 1: Introducing EPoS Projects, which looks at sources of finance and government aid.

Days 2 & 3: Various "Retail Sector Briefings" which examine the EPoS issues in a particular sector: Clothing and Footwear*; Retail Chemists*; Independent Grocers*; DIY (Do It Yourself); Public Utilities; Fuel Retailing. Other sessions: EPoS Update -- Food and Scanning Systems*; EPoS Update -- General Merchandise Systems*; Scanning Experience*; DP Strategy for Retailers; Micros in Practice; Purchase Order Management.

Day 4: Retailers and Bankers; Project Management; Software.

Those sessions about scanning, merchandise marking and data capture have been marked above with an asterisk (*). The subject, of course, might crop up during other sessions.

Details on fees and reservations from: RMDP Ltd., 61-63 Ship Street, Brighton, Sussex, England BN1 1AE; UK 'phone (0273) 203581; Telex 877159 ref RMDP.

AUTOMACOM '85 is another name....

....to add to the list of important international exhibitions. Planned for Spring 1985 in Montreux, Switzerland, AUTOMACOM '85 claims to be the first international exhibition for automation in wholesale and retail trades. It looks as if there will be a strong emphasis on EAN bar coding, and other retail/wholesale automation, from weighing systems to invoicing.

The exhibition is planned to coincide with the Symposium of the International Association for the Distribution of Food Products and General Consumer Goods (AIDA), which has 22,000 members in 32 countries. The International EAN Association and the Association Suisse Code des Articles -- the Swiss EAN affiliate -- have both co-operated and lent their support in setting up the exhibition and the symposium.

A special "pilot exhibition" will be set up which reconstructs several types of automated retail systems: food-shop, drug store/pharmacy, specialised outlets. In addition there will be a commercial exhibition, with up to 8,000 square metres of space available. Booking for this space is now open, at a discount before 30 September, and ends 30 November. The exhibitors are likely to include manufacturers and suppliers of automation systems for wholesalers and retailers plus consultants and other organisations related to the symposium theme: "How to Integrate Electronics in Wholesale and Retail Trade?"

Date: 19-23 March 1985. Venue: Montreux, Switzerland. For more details contact: Secretariat General, AUTOMACOM '85, Case postale 122, CH-1820 Montreux, Switzerland; Swiss 'phone: 021/63 48 48; Telex 453254/MTX CH.

As we go to press....

here are the details for the technical session topics and speakers at SCAN-TECH Europe 84, scheduled for 6-8 November in Amsterdam:

- Keynote address -- Professor Karlheinz Roschmann, from The Technical College, Konstanz, West Germany.
- Bar code symbologies -- Rich Bravman, Symbol Technologies, Inc., USA; Roger Palmer, Intermec Corp., USA.
- On-demand printing of bar codes -- Hans Laaser, Soabar GmbH, West Germany.
- Pre-printed labels and film masters -- Alan Bateman, Compu (Inc) UK Ltd., Hull, England.
- Bar code verification -- Jan Brems, Stork Screen Graphics, Boxmeer, The Netherlands.
- Bar code reading and scanning -- David Czaplicki, Intermec Corp., USA; Ed Andersson, Computer Identics Corp., USA.

We shall list the application topics in next month's issue.

Comment

Although we had heard that the conference organisers were hoping to field an all-European set of speakers, or at least use Americans based in Europe, this has not been done for the more technical subjects. So far, however, all the user speakers are based in Europe.

Hard on the heels....

....of the formation of AIM (UK), we hear that a similar -- yet different -- organisation is being formed in France: similar because its membership criteria and objectives appear to be the same; different because there are no affiliation links with Automatic Identification Manufacturers, Inc. (AIM/US).

The new organisation is called "le Centre National des Technologies du Code a Barre" (Cobatech) and which translates into English as the National Centre of Bar Code Technology. Cobatech's stated objectives are: the promotion of the technology and the applications of bar coding; establishing relationships with the administrations concerned with this technique.

At present, 15 companies have requested membership, among whom are manufacturers and suppliers of reading equipment, printers, film masters and EPoS terminals. The officers of Cobatech are: Alain Macaigne, President (Intermec Systemes); Patrice Chene, Vice-President (Hugin, France); Michel Grolee, General Secretary (Master Code International). More about points of contact and organisation plans as we learn them.

A new research report....

...."Electronics in Large Stores" has just been published in the United Kingdom by POST-NEWS. The report covers the expected growth of various types of checkout equipment, from electro-mechanical cash registers to EPoS terminals.

Three retail sectors are analysed: department stores; variety stores; superstores and hypermarkets. The report is based on replies to a questionnaire which was

sent to all major UK retailers, and a sampling of other European retailers. Responses were received from UK retailers controlling nearly half the checkouts in large stores.

Of particular interest to our readers is the response to the questions on type of data capture: laser scanners, bar code wands, OCR wands and magnetic tag readers. On the basis of the response, less than 20% of department stores will use any form of machine-readable data capture at the point-of-sale in five year's time. The split was fairly equal between bar code wands, OCR wands and magnetic tag readers; little interest exists for laser scanners. Almost half of the variety stores plan to use bar code wands (44%) or laser scanners (2%) within five years. Of the superstores and hypermarkets, 59% expect to be laser scanning in five years.

The report costs: UK, £105; rest of the world, \$205. Available from: POST-NEWS, Stoke-sub-Hamdon, Somerset TA14 6BR, England.

Comment

We have to be careful when interpreting figures such as these. They indicate retailers' future intentions, as perceived by those retailers now. A few of our own qualifying comments: no mention was made of the Kimball tag or Esselte's Option Code; magnetic tag readers are not available on most EPOS terminals; hand-held laser scanners have yet to make their impact in the UK and the distinction between these and flat bed (slot) scanners may not have been appreciated.

Having made these points, the report does indicate the potential for growth in bar coding in the UK retail sector. The market is likely to take off over the next two years with sustainable growth thereafter.

Numeric Arts....

....has just announced two products which it is now handling in the United Kingdom:

- The Computer Systeme CS 3000 range of wand reader terminals. Of German origin, the decoder is particularly compact, being 80mm square and 18mm high. Auto-discrimination between all major bar codes is standard.
- Data Specialities Inc's Zebra on-demand bar code printer.

Numeric Arts Ltd., Gardner Road, Maidenhead, Berks SL6 7PP, England; UK 'phone (0628) 39753.

The Intermec....

....Model 8625 square matrix thermal bar code printer is now available from Intermec distributors in Europe. The Model 8625 printer is described as compact, lightweight and highly flexible (SCAN Apr 84): seven bar code symbologies; three graphic fonts, including an OCR-A like font; and user definable layouts.