

From: "Matthias Hofmann" <hofmannm@xxxxxxxxx.ie>
To: "Grand Comic Book Database List" <cdbl@xxxxxxxx.no>
Cc: <cdbl-chat@xxxxxxxxxxxxx.no>
Subject: GCD - GCD ONLINE INDEX - Grand Opening

Hello everybody,

>

now is time to get *really* excited, because we are in the process of opening and unveiling the "all-new, all-different" GCD Online Indexing (OI) for the public!

Beta Test Phase I is officially finished!

We started in April with about 14 members from the GCD indexer list and now, after months of tests and trials and lots of discussions, it is possible to go "live" with the project. Thanks to everybody involved!

It has to be mentioned separately and it can not be described with mere words, that Jon Arvid Lovstad is the ultimate mastermind behind all this. Not only did he spent countless hours programming "stuff" for us and the project, he managed to do all this between a very hectic and dramatic work life, family duties, movie previews and whatnot. Normally, it's great that this project is so international, but this one time I am frustrated that he lives so far away, because we should celebrate this event by inviting him to dinner or having a barbecue with Jon as "Guest of Honor" or something. Well, lads, more praise will follow, now to the specifics:

GCD ONLINE INDEX:

1. Phase II - Access & User Levels

In phase II we activate the accounts for the currently active indexers, giving them the option of login on and adding data online. A guide will be posted to the website shortly, showing the way around the system.

We have entered all currently pending reservations as reserved skeleton records into the system and are actively working on fleshing out the currently empty series with issues. New series are being added as well, but please bring to our attention series that we may have overlooked.

The OI has three different user levels: indexer, editor, administrator. Each level is capable of different activities.

Here is the overview:

1.1. INDEXER:

- reserve issues for indexing
- add series/issue data
- add sequence data
- submit for approval
- manage personal information (name, e-mail)

1.2. EDITOR:

- manage database backend

- create/delete/update publishers, series, issues, sequences
- edit and approve submitted indexes
- plus everything an indexer can do

1.3. ADMINISTRATOR:

- manage indexers
- manage reservations
- manage lists etc.
- plus everything an indexer and editor can do

1.4. CONTACTS

An updated list of contacts will be posted to the website shortly.

To all current editors from the first Beta Group:

Please let me know individually, if you want to keep your editor status.

Being an editor not only means

being able to do all the things mentioned above, it also means checking the OI regularly, maintaining the database, approving pending indexes, etc.

If somebody feels that he will be okay with a "regular" indexer status, let us know, so we can free up space for somebody else.

2. OI Registration

If you want to be an OI indexer and if you want to be able to submit your indexes online, directly to the database, then let me know. All you need to do is send me an e-mail with your request, and I will set you up and reply with access information and your password.

Of course, it will still be possible to submit indexes the "old way" by sending them to Lionel.

3. OI Handbook

In the beginning, you might be interested to have some helpful information about the whole OI thing. Jon has written a handbook which answers most common questions and gives helpful tips on the new system. It will be posted to the website in the next few days (or even hours), including screenshots of the OI.

Online help will also be fleshed out and made available as a constantly updated resource as the system evolves.

4. Upcoming Events

As we go to the next phase, there are still a lot of things which we need to improve or implement. The current backend is rather slow at times, not everything will always work smoothly and the occasional bugs in the system need to be sorted out. We have other projects in the pipeline, such as revising the publishers' list and data, but refining the OI will be our main concern for the near future.

Jon provided a short overview of the upcoming things regarding the OI:

Changes coming soon:

- support for multiple images, dust covers, wraparounds etc.
- creator checklist to look up names etc.
- easier route to unreserved works (i.e. more search options)
- more data validation routines

Coming as soon as we can:

- faster backend
- automated import of text files
- better search options for indexers
- more admin tools to help keep things organized

If you have suggestions, please let us have them.

Inbetween this release of the OI and the next update, we need to update the front end and the current searches to better take advantage of new stuff in the database, like job numbers and skeleton data. These changes are partially done and will appear gradually over the coming week.

NOTE: To not disencourage the indexers doing online work, some of the more complex searches may change slightly or go away temporarily to avoid stressing the backend too much. Searches are generally fast, sorting is not so expect sort options to be a bit trimmed.

Okay, that's all for today. If you have any questions or if you need more info, let myself or Jon know!

Keep on Indexing!!!

Regards,
Matthias Hofmann