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"current comments"

Introducing *ASCA*® *IV*, An SDI System with Exclusive Features

May 2, 1969

Since its conception by ISI in 1965, *ASCA (Automatic Subject Citation Alert)* has provided scientists and research workers throughout the world with a convenient, efficient means of keeping up with the literature of their own and ancillary fields.

In case you are not familiar with *ASCA*, it is a computerized selective dissemination of information (SDI) service. *ASCA* subscribers receive individualized computer printouts showing articles of specific interest which have been recently published each week in over 2,000 periodicals in all fields of science. *ASCA* searches are based on interest-profiles, in which any of a variety of question types can be used–alone or in combination–to tell the computer what articles to report and what not to report. *ASCA* is the only SDI service available which employs Citation Indexing.

Several new and important features which significantly add to *ASCA*'s retrieval and reporting capabilities have been incorporated recently. With these changes, *ASCA* now enters the fourth generation of its development and is appropriately designated *ASCA IV*.

Cited Journal Questions can now be used in *ASCA IV*. Through these questions, editors and others can be alerted to new papers which cite any paper previously published in *any* specified journal. These are not limited to *ASCA*'s list of 2,000 source journals. The question can cover the entire history of the journal or can be limited to items published during a given time. *Cited Journal Questions* are particularly useful for defining subject coverage represented by smaller or newer journals devoted to specialized topics. Cited journal data can be especially valuable to journal editors for monitoring the use and impact of their journals.

The retrieval flexibility of *ASCA IV* also has been increased through the addition of *Floating Stem Questions*, which produce a report of any new item in which a specified sequence of characters appears anywhere in that item's title. *Terminal Stem Questions* are also possible. Previously, only *Initial Stem Questions* were available.

The number of journals covered by *ASCA IV* is constantly expanding, especially in fields not stressed before, such as behavioral sciences, education, agriculture and technology. Most journals covered in *CC* are, of course, covered in *ASCA*.

You will find a more comprehensive description of *ASCA IV* elsewhere in this issue.