

## Book Industry Communication

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### PRESS RELEASE

## International subject scheme proposals launched

The first steps towards a global multilingual subject classification scheme were taken at the Frankfurt Book Fair this year, with the announcement of IBIC, based on the long-established BIC subject categories. The first release of the new scheme is planned for October 2012, with participation and support from publishing industries in the UK, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, Norway and the Arab world.

IBIC will have as its basis the existing BIC categories, which are already in use in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and in variant forms in a number of European countries; but will be adapted to individual countries' needs by extensions to the 'qualifiers' which define geographical, historical, educational and other country-specific aspects.

Howard Willows of Nielsen, who has been in charge of the BIC categories since 1997 comments: 'Countless national subject category schemes have emerged over the years. With the emergence of a global marketplace for books and digital products, this fragmented situation is no longer tenable. There is a huge amount of work being put into mappings and workarounds which would be unnecessary if we had a single scheme. This initiative is all about making it easier for customers, wherever they are, to find the books and content they want more efficiently and more quickly. It's about selling more.'

Peter Kilborn, Executive Director of BIC, adds: 'We see this as just a start in the process towards addressing the needs of future consumers and readers. In parallel with the IBIC initiative, we are delighted to have agreed in principle with the Book Industry Study Group in the US to conduct research into content discovery and online taxonomies to further inform the creation of global standards and best practices.'

Jesus Peraita, representing the Spanish Publishers Association, commented: 'Traditionally, publishers in Spain have used up to four different local subject classification schemes for each individual book, in order to cater to the needs of different actors of the value chain. Although it is a significant endeavour for the Spanish book sector, the transition to IBIC as an industry-wide international standard is expected to streamline the book supply workflow, reducing inherent costs and increasing the presence of Spanish books in global markets.'

Simonetta Pillon, of Informazioni Editoriali in Italy, said: 'We have been using CCE

(the Italian localisation of BIC) since 2006 with great success. Now it's time for a real international BIC that will surely improve interoperability and data interchange between different countries and will help us keeping our subject scheme up-to-date and consistent with many other countries.'

Emad Eldeen Elakehal, of Elkotob.com, said: "The Arabic book market is characterised by many local different schemes with no obvious dominant standard. This forms one of the main obstacles both Arabic speaking customers and Arabic book publishers/sellers are facing today. A single comprehensive international scheme would definitely contribute to the organising of Arabic book supply chain as well as bringing Arabic books closer to customers worldwide.'

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