



The Intersection

A Newsletter for the users of Intersect Systems Retention Schedule Manager software systems and Records Control and Management software systems

Grand Prairie, Texas

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Wichita County, Texas Records Program



Plano Independent School District Records Program

The Intersection is published periodically by Intersect Systems Inc.

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New Features for RCAMS Records Database

Intersect's Records Control and Management System software has allowed users to re-name records container fields for several years. This helps accommodate naming conventions that vary from organization to organization.

However, for container contents fields — records within container entries — needs may differ for different types of media, making further capabilities in this area desirable. The recent introduction of Intersect's Image Manager modules for RCAMS underscored this need, since RCAMS can manage an unlimited number of separate records databases. An example might be a records database required for conventional containers and paper documents, another one for microfilm, and still another for electronic documents. Field names appropriate for paper records and file folders in the conventional database are probably not suitable for microfilm reels and electronic images.

scaling may not be installed on some computer systems.

With the new releases of the Retention Schedule Manager and Records Control and Management System software, Intersect addresses this area with a user-controlled font and font size selection option for fields, label names, and control buttons in these applications. The user can specify new parameters for font and font size, and the RSM and RCAMS applications will make the changes throughout the software's forms displays.

The new options are included in Retention Schedule Manager, Records Control and Management System, Accession Monitor, Accession, Global Editor, and Image Access. For more information, contact Intersect at (972) 641-7747.

Automatic Field Names

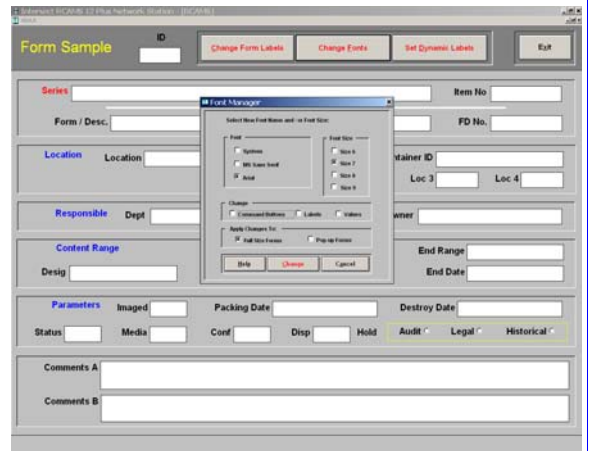
A new, automatic field and form label name option is now available in new updates for RSM and RCAMS software. This new feature allows the user to assign different names to contents fields for each different database. For microfilm, appropriate field names may include Reel No. and Frame No., for instance. An electronic image database might require still another set of names to be assigned to these same fields — image directory, image ID, file type, etc.

The new automatic label feature allows the user to assign a different set of field names for each database that is managed. As one database is closed and another opened, the software remembers the field names that go with each database, and automatically displays the correct names.

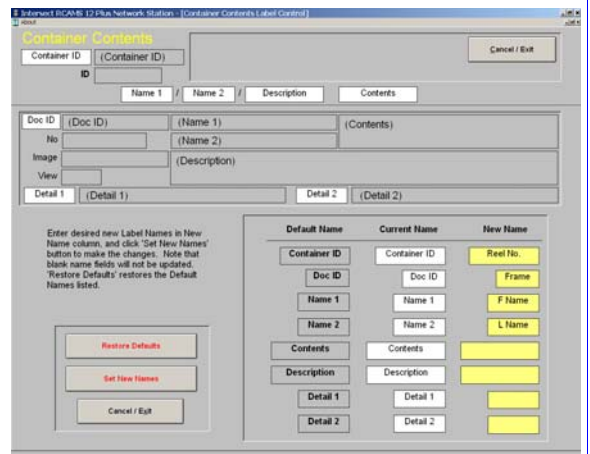
Beginning in the Summer, Intersect will be updating RCAMS installations for users to this new version of RCAMS.

Font and Font Size Selection

Intersect's software applications for records management have always had one particular feature that is often commented on favorably by our users: the screen displays are automatically sized to fit the monitor being used. However, as monitor sizes have increased in recent years, and as screen resolutions have increased, some standard system fonts normally used in Windows-based software applications may not scale well for higher resolutions. And the ideal fonts for



Font and Font Size Selection control



Management Screen for Setting Dynamic Field Names



Focus on: Wichita County Records Management Wichita Falls, Texas

Intersect Systems welcomes Wichita County as one of our newest users of Intersect records management software. Located in the northern-most part of Texas, Wichita County is 144 miles north of Dallas, and 141 miles south of Oklahoma City. The county seat is Wichita Falls, a city of 110,000. Agriculture, varied manufacturing, and oil-field services are important factors in the local economy. The county and city have experienced strong growth in recent years. Sheppard Air Force Base, the largest employer in the area, is the headquarters for the European NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training Program, the only program of its kind in the world, which trains our allies' most promising fighter pilots.

Wichita County has recently implemented not only Intersect's Retention Schedule Manager and RCAMS records database, but also the Global Editor and the Accession and Accession Monitor work-flow components. In addition, the Image Manager component of Intersect's software is currently being installed for use in indexing, maintaining, and accessing electronic images of minutes for County Commissioners' meetings, and will be used for other similar information access as plans progress.

Planning for a central records facility has been underway for several years by the County. As plans developed, an existing building was identified as a possible location for the center. The building was actually a former bank records facility, located a few blocks from the Wichita County Courthouse. The building was available to the County under very favorable terms – as a donation. As plans proceeded, the County purchased an adjacent parking garage as part of a multi-use plan for the building.

The basement area of the building was designated for use for Wichita County records, and a history museum is planned for the first floor. Other county operations will eventually be located in the building as well.



Janet Sikes explaining the importance of developing a consistent container labeling method

Up and Running in Ten Months Once the necessary steps had been taken to acquire the former bank facility, Wichita County moved in record time to establish and equip a county records center. The center was equipped, and up and running, in less than ten months from the initial go-ahead.

Intersect Systems software was acquired for operation of the center. The Accession workflow components were installed in the new center, and in selected County departments to support the operation of the center.

The County Clerk and District Clerk offices represent the highest volume of activity for the new records center, and both departments use the LAN-based Accession program to look up and request records from the records center, which is located several blocks from the courthouse. The Accession Monitor receives requests, and records personnel can process and check out records with the Monitor. The due date and related information are automatically entered in the RCAMS system.

Ms. Janet Sikes, Records Manager for the county, has been central to the planning for the operation of the new Wichita County records facility. Janet had previously worked in the County Clerk's office, responsible for imaging systems, before being asked to help plan and organize the new records facility. This past records-related experience has been an asset, she noted. In addition, the County sent her to several of the records management workshops conducted by the Texas State Library and Archives, Local Government Division, for additional training.

A lot had to be accomplished in a short time to get the new facility configured, and up and running. Sikes notes that departments in the county have been very receptive to the new operation, as it has provided a place for records that had previously been taking up more and more space in the various departments.

Elimination of Duplication Another benefit has been elimination of duplication and consolidation of master copies of records in one location as redundant copies of records in some departments were identified and eliminated, and records centralized in the new records center.

The concept of operation is centered largely around on-line access by the departments to their records inventories in the Records Center. The County Clerk's office, for instance, can look up a desired record container on-line, using the Accession software system, and then send a re-



Janet Sikes at RCAMS master station, which also runs Accession Monitor

quest to the Records Center directly through the Accession function; there is no need to fill out paper forms, or to fax requests to the center.

Sikes notes that another benefit of the new operation is that the retention requirements are included in the Accession system; departments can readily see the retention requirements for each category of records, so that there is no doubt about these requirements.

Community Service workers are used in the operation of the program. From one to three persons work for Sikes in the facility at any one time.

Judge Woodrow Gossom has been central to the original concept and plans for a records center for the county. Judge Gossom noted recently that the plans for the records facility have come together smoothly and in a surprisingly short period of time through the efforts of Sikes.

One challenge of the new operation, located several blocks from the Courthouse, was the relatively low-speed data line that was available for data communications. A special split-connection data configuration was set up, with both local (at the records facility) and server-based (at the courthouse) copies of the records data being maintained. This arrangement has proven satisfactory for operation with no delays for the departmental customers in accessing their records inventories. However, a high-speed data line will be added as (Cont. page 4)



Jerrie Hutchison at RCAMS Accession Station in the County Clerk's office



Focus on: Plano Independent School District Records Management

Located approximately 20 miles north of downtown Dallas, the Plano Independent School District includes 67 schools with a total current enrollment of over 52,000 students.

Plano ISD enjoys a reputation for excellence. Twenty-two Plano schools have captured the prestigious National Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence honor, awarded by the U.S. Department of Education. Plano Senior High School, Plano East Senior High School and Clark High School have been two-time recipients of the award.

Thirty-nine Plano schools were rated "exemplary" in the 2003 state accountability report released by the Texas Education Agency. For the fourth consecutive year, Plano ISD achieved "recognized" status based on its accountability rankings.

Located in the high-tech telecom corridor extending north of Dallas along US 75, it isn't too surprising that Plano ISD has a strong focus on technology. In 2004, Plano ISD received *The National Digital School Board Award* from the National School Association. The school district was one of 100 organizations, and the only public school system, recognized in the 2003 InfoWorld 100 list for making the best use of information technology to meet business needs for the district's "myPISD.net" home network access program, connecting schools and families. Plano ISD was also named one of the "Top 10 Tech Districts" in 2002 by *District Administration* magazine.

In 2001, Plano ISD completed implementation of a \$16 million private fiber-optic network linking all of the district's 67 campuses and eight service facilities — a first for a school district anywhere in the US.

The Plano Records Management Department has used Intersect Systems' retention schedule and records management software since



Sylvia Garza, Bettie LeCrone, and Sue Meek at Plano ISD Records Center

2002. The Plano ISD Purchasing Department also uses the records management software.

Located in the Plano ISD Administration building, the records center has been planning the expansion of the records warehouse for a couple of years. Last Fall, those plans were realized with the opening of the expanded records warehouse at one of the Plano ISD facilities.

With the school district's focus on technology, and with the high-speed fiber-optic network in place, it isn't surprising that this district-wide data link plays a central part in the operation and management of the new records warehouse.

Wireless Data Link During a recent visit to the new Plano ISD records warehouse, Bettie LeCrone, Records Management Officer, explained to *The Intersection* that wireless access points in the records warehouse allow a laptop computer system running the Intersect records management software to communicate directly with the server in the Plano ISD administration building, located in another part of the city. Communication within the warehouse is by wireless link from the laptop to one of several wireless access points located in records bays in the building, which is then routed from the wireless access point through the fiber-optic wide area network to the central network server at the administration building, located over five miles from the records warehouse.

Sylvia Garza, Records Management Secretary, pointed out that the computer with Intersect software interacts directly with the records database on the central server, just as though the computer was connected directly to the server through the local area network in the administration building. She notes that interaction with the server through the wireless link and more than five miles of fiber-optic cable is immediate, with no discernable delay.

Sylvia also noted that the significant operational advantage of the wireless link is that the laptop can be located on a wheeled cart in the records warehouse, and rolled directly down the aisles of stored containers as necessary without cumbersome wires or cables. The advantage of the high speed fiber-optic wide area network is the immediate, real time interaction with the network server running the records database.

David Souders, Plano ISD Network Engineer, provided performance details for the fiber-optic system. The data rate is an impressive 622 megabits per second, using an OC12 link. He adds that, since wireless connections can raise security questions, several levels of security are provided, including encryption of the wireless signals,



Sylvia Garza at laptop system in records warehouse, linked by wireless and fiber-optics to remote server

computer ID protection, and two levels of password protection. Souders notes that the district's fiber-optic network required over seventy miles of underground fiber-optic cable in order to link all of the district's administrative sites and schools.

Souders adds that, although a single laptop computer is currently in use at the records warehouse, the wireless access points will easily support a number of additional systems if required at a future date.

Other Security Other types of security safeguards are important for a records storage area, as well. Sprinkler systems are a common means of protecting records in the event of a fire; however, water can be almost as damaging to paper documents as an actual fire. The Plano ISD records warehouse uses an alternative to sprinkler systems to eliminate the risk of water damage. A red metal tank in each room of the warehouse contains an inert gas and an associated system of pipes and sensors, which will quickly replace the oxygen in the warehouse in the event of a fire. The result is that the fire will be extinguished without water damage to the paper documents. (Cont. page 4)



Wireless access point in one of the records storage bays at the new Plano ISD records warehouse

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Intersect Systems Inc. has a number of ongoing software development projects, as well as a continuing series of updates and enhancements to existing software applications. For more information on Intersect software for Retention Schedule Development and Management, software for Records Control and Management, to discuss your software requirements, or to discuss current software development and software enhancements, contact Intersect Systems at the address, telephone number, or e-mail address listed above.

Intersect Systems Inc. is a registered Information Systems Vendor (CISV) in the state of Texas, specializing in software for records retention and for records database management. For more information, contact Intersect Systems Inc. or visit Intersect's web site at www.intersectsystems.com.

Wichita County... (cont. from page 2)

plans progress and as additional county offices are located on the upper floors of the new facility to help justify the cost for a high-speed connection. At that point, a standard single-server configuration will be set up.

Many medium-sized counties in Texas maintain records at departmental levels. Wichita County's experience demonstrates that a centralized records facility can be feasible, and can eliminate redundant copies of records while greatly reducing the problems of departmental storage of records.

Janet Sikes and Wichita County personnel are happy to share their experience with other interested records managers. Janet Sikes can be reached at (940) 763-0001.



A portion of the new Wichita County records storage facility

About Intersect Systems ...

Intersect Systems Inc. is a Texas corporation, founded in 1993, dedicated to the design and development of innovative computer software systems and applications for retention schedule development and management, and for records control and management, with an exclusive focus on proven approaches and user-friendly systems.

The Intersect Systems design and development team includes top-notch software professionals and consultants, as well as experienced records management professionals.

Intersect Systems develops software applications for both local governments and state agencies to help meet state requirements in maintaining records programs. Intersect also offers specialized software tools for commercial businesses, including *Clark's Encyclopedia of Records Retention*, and commercial versions of its Retention Schedule Manager and Records Control and Management System database. Intersect software applications combine innovative ideas with proven, effective, and user-friendly approaches that produce results in the critical area of records management.

Records Consulting Services

Is your organization planning to expand or upgrade your records management program, or designing or expanding a records storage facility? Do you need assistance in creating a local Records Control Schedule, or in developing a records management policy for your organization? Are you evaluating imaging systems?

Mr. Joe Harry offers consultation and assistance in these and related areas of records management to local governments and businesses in North Texas. With over ten years of experience in the field, Mr. Harry can help you with your records management program. References available on request.

Mr. Harry can be contacted at (817) 274-8487.

Local governments and businesses that have failed to establish and maintain credible records management programs can find that they are at a serious disadvantage in a lawsuit. The inability to produce documents during the discovery process, and the inability to explain the circumstances and authority under which documents were destroyed, can have serious consequences in a lawsuit. Judges have been known to enter default judgments against defendants due to faulty records management practices.

Plano ISD... (cont. from page 3)

Jesse Alvarez, Fire Protection Technician for the district, explained that in order to install a gas system for fire protection, the building and rooms must be sealed for the system to be effective. He points out that, in the event of an alarm, individuals in the building must leave immediately; although the gas is not poisonous, it does replace the oxygen in the facility very quickly. Alvarez said that the district is adding gas systems for protection in other locations where a lot of computer equipment is concentrated, since water can be damaging to computer systems as well.

In addition to paper records, Plano ISD microfilms certain records including student transcripts. The Intersect records system allows the index files from the microfilming process to be indexed into the Intersect records database, making it possible to use the records database to locate microfilm reel numbers and frame numbers for a student transcript using the student's name.

Intersect's customers have often made requests or suggestions for new additions or features to Intersect software based on their experience or need, and Plano ISD is no exception. When using the Retention Schedule Manager program to create Plano ISD's re-

ords control schedule, Bettie LeCrone annotated the schedule extensively to relate Texas records titles to those used in the school district. Bettie asked Intersect about a feature to make this easier, leading to the Citation / Comments editor in new versions of the program.

Plano ISD welcomes records professionals to the records office to share information. Please contact Bettie LeCrone at (469) 752-8137 if you have any questions.



Bettie LeCrone with Records Management Staff: Sondra Skaggs, Sylvia Garza, and Sue Meek

Users of Intersect Systems retention schedule development and records management software can publish records control schedules, as well as all or part of their records database, on the Internet or on a private intranet.