RUDICS[1]
An Information Network for the Health Sciences in Uruguay

Authors: Ursula Bartram[2] ,Andrea Arcia[2], Santiago Arraga[2], Carlos Ferreira[2], Rodrigo Filgueira[2], Stella Launy[3], Franco Simini[4]
Internet: http://www.biname.edu.uy, soporte@biname.edu.uy
Address: School of Medicine, Av. General Flores 2125, 11800, Montevideo, URUGUAY.

Background

In 1994 BINAME[5] designed an information network for the health sciences to offer remote databases access. It was only in February 1996, after funding had been secured that technical work was undertaken, and in March 1996 that RUDICS was operational.

Goals

- Offering up to date biomedical information via remote modem access.
- Sending full text and image articles via fax or e-mail to all physicians in the country.
- 24 hour direct access to information.
- Optimization of information resources.
- Enhance medical community access to Internet.
- WEB page to integrate all search systems.
- Creation of databases on national publications and the collection of BINAME for later CD-ROM publishing.
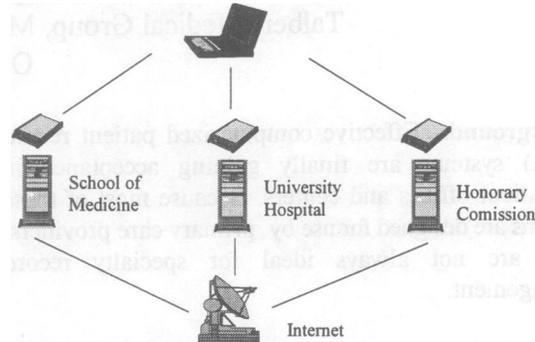
Design

RUDICS was designed with standard communication and computing equipment, with redundancy to avoid service downtime; a support team of 4 computer science and 8 bibliotecology students, all half time, was hired to face the workload increase associated with computerization. RUDICS works on TCP/IP to allow full integration to INTERNET.

The network consists of 3 LANs (Local Area Network), one at the School of Medicine, another at the University Hospital, and the third at the CHLCC[6]. The nodes are integrated over a WAN (Wide Area Network); with leased lines (33,6 KBPS). Each node has up to 8 dial-in lines, through which users establish PPP links.

Connection to any of the three nodes allows access to Silverplatter's Medline and CANCER-CD from 1966 to 1997, and Micromedex Databases.
By September 1996 the University provided an Internet link. Since January 1997 users are being assigned e-mail accounts and have access to usenet groups on medical and biosciences areas.

Operation and Use

The computing team was responsible for installing and maintaining the network and training of staff and users. The bibliotecology students were integrated to the existing staff in the duties of assisting users and creating databases. New users 250 from August 96 to July 97 are trained monthly in the use of RUDICS during an intensive 3 hours session.

The "Red Nacional de Información en Cáncer" is a sub network dedicated to foster cancer research and training, run as a joint venture with the CHLCC.

Expansions

Most of the 39 biomedical libraries of Uruguay have dialed access to RUDICS services. RUDICS is available to other health facilities such as capitated and private Hospitals.

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[1] RUDICS: Red Uruguaya de Informacion en Ciencias de la Salud.
[2] Computer Science Students.
[3] Head of the National Library of Medicine (BINAME).
[4] Professor of Biosciences Engeneering.
[5] BINAME: Biblioteca Nacional de Medicina-Uruguay.
[6] CHLCC: Cancer Honoray Commission.