

EARN EXECUTIVE

Project proposal for LISTSERV maintenance  
from EARN Germany

issued by  
M Hebgen  
April 20, 1989

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LISTSERV MAINTENANCE

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Function

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LISTSERV provides several services, especially distribution list, mass file distribution, mail traffic archival and file server functions - see also LISTSERV MEMO and LISTPRES MEMO.

Problem description

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Today EARN offers much more service than just interpersonal mail. Examples of these value added services are group communication, file servers and bulletin boards and many of these are offered by LISTSERV.

Eric Thomas, the author of LISTSERV, has indicated he will stop supporting LISTSERV for EARN on the 1st of June at the latest - see attached mail.

Furthermore EARN and BITNET have agreed on a change of the format of the BITEARN NODES file which in any case requires an update to the current LISTSERV.

Proposed EARN project

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The urgent problem is the maintenance of LISTSERV which has to be resolved immediately by an EARN employee. In the long term EARN has to provide central maintenance for LISTSERV. We propose to look for an institution which uses LISTSERV intensively for internal reasons and have people with a good knowledge of LISTSERV, and to achieve there a part time contract for central LISTSERV maintenance. Because of the strong relation with BITNET and a common LISTSERV usage within EARN and BITNET the project must be in co-operation with BITNET.

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Date: Wed, 19 Apr 89 17:05:22 GMT  
Sender: Network Operations Group <EARN-NOG@FRMOP11>  
From: "Eric Thomas (CERN/L3)" <ERIC@LEPICS>  
Subject: Re: new nodes file format.  
To: "Michael Hebgen, EARN Executive committee"  
<\$02@DHDURZ1>

In-Reply-To: Your message of Wed, 19 Apr 89 15:40:00 MET

I really don't understand why everybody is so surprised about that. I have notified Alain Auroux and David Lord, in a note dated 9th of February, that I planned to stop providing LISTSERV support to EARN in the future and that they should therefore start looking for someone else. In a note dated 6th of March, I have very clearly indicated that I would stop supporting LISTSERV for EARN on the 1st of June at the latest. This was confirmed by another note dated 9th of March. On the 15th of March, I wrote a letter to Alain Auroux, Frode Greisen and Michael Hebgren to make sure that they were aware of the implications that this withdrawal would have on EARN service. I specifically mentioned the loss of network bandwidth caused by the unavoidable "split" of the backbone following the "split" of the software, and the various losses of functionality (LISTS database, netwide signoff, loss of the "subscribe to any LISTSERV and he'll forward to the node housing the list" facility, etc). I strongly recommended to write a "LISTSERV gateway" (LISTGATE) to prevent the loss of these functions, and I even volunteered to provide advice in the design of such software (but not in its implementation). I had not mentioned the "new BITEARN NODES" problem because I thought it was so far away in the future that it didn't matter, and I didn't want the Exec to think I was trying to scare them with fancy problems that do not really exist.

I have received neither answer nor acknowledgement to this last letter, and I have no idea what the Exec plans to do about LISTSERV. But when I finally withdraw my support, they will have had almost 4 months of advance warning from me, and that ought to have been enough to find someone to do that work. If LISTSERV drops to the ground because there is nobody to catch it on the 1st of June, it will not have been by lack of advance warning.

Eric