

EARN EXECUTIVE

LISTSERV plan

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June 21, 1989

1 Actions Taken

A list called LISTTECH has been developed among the persons who have a good understanding of the LISTSERV code, and who have free time to donate to this task. The purpose of this list is to pool knowledge on LISTSERV, find solutions to problems which may arise, and to assist those users whose problem cannot be solved by myself.

A research assistant at Ege University has been assigned to start learning LISTSERV. Since his LISTSERV knowledge is still minimal, he is not expected to be useful for another month. I intend to first get him familiar with LISTSERV as a user, then giving him specific sections of the code to be analysed. These reports, along with the ones I prepare, will be valuable to understanding the functioning of the code.

Several hours a day are spent daily to produce a report of the various sections of the code. Although the code is mostly straightforward, it has some complex sections - such as LSVDIST2, which I am currently working on. I have first tried the distribution as a user, examined the inter-server distribution jobs, then started reading the code. I expect to finish LSVDIST2 by the end of the week.

I intend to follow the analysis of the code on the sections which are either asked by a user, such as the "Notebook=" question, or which seem relevant for the listgate project.

The user queries that I have replied so far have been taking a lot of my time. Some of them, such as "how do we create a filelist, how do I define myself in it" have been easy to reply, but on others, considerable time was spent looking through the code to understand the logic. In fact, I have two replies pending right now as I write this document.

However, I expect this time to decrease drastically as the questions I receive start repeating themselves (which they almost always do), and as my understanding of the code improves. In fact, these queries are

great motivators to learn the code.

2 Time Spent

Since I used to be NAD at this site, I had to give assistance to the new NAD, Esra Delen. Fortunately, she is an avid EARN user, with a fair knowledge of Rexx. Now I have shifted my NAD load to her, and quit my systems programmer role. There are several utility programs which I had prepared for the university, and after our switch to 3090, there was a problem with one of them, which I had to spend about an hour on.

There was also some delay in my work with the switch to the new computer, but the end result is very pleasing to work with. Since the servers are much more responsive, I accomplish much more in a given time.

During the day, I usually respond to user queries on LISTSERV, and at home, I tackle the LISTSERV code, and continue with the analysis and documentation of the code. This documentation is not user documentation: it is merely a description of what a particular (1-3 lines at a time) section of the code does.

I have not worked on the documentation of LISTSERV. I know that Marc De Lyon is working on some documentation. I have some good documentation for local use - in Turkish, which needs to be translated. However, I did not have time for it yet.

I spent a little time compiling some improvements that I and Niall had. I placed those in the LISTTECH filelist. I had some objections from Eric, on copyright reasons, so I had to make the files not available for the time being.

3 Taking Other Projects

It depends. I believe that we need to get the listgate working quickly, before the two servers are too different to work together as a single backbone. If the EXEC feels differently about it, then I could change the priorities as well.

4 Future

I expect my time spent on user queries to drop substantially, giving more room for the development of the listgate, and other needed improvements to the code. There seems to be a good need for

documentation on LISTSERV, especially new user introduction, and filelist maintenance seems to be the hot topics. By dividing the load on my colleagues, I expect some parallel processing on these issues.