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The ARCA Z39.50 Client

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in tec*s*

sistemi s.p.a

*Advanced technology for
information management*

***Z39.50
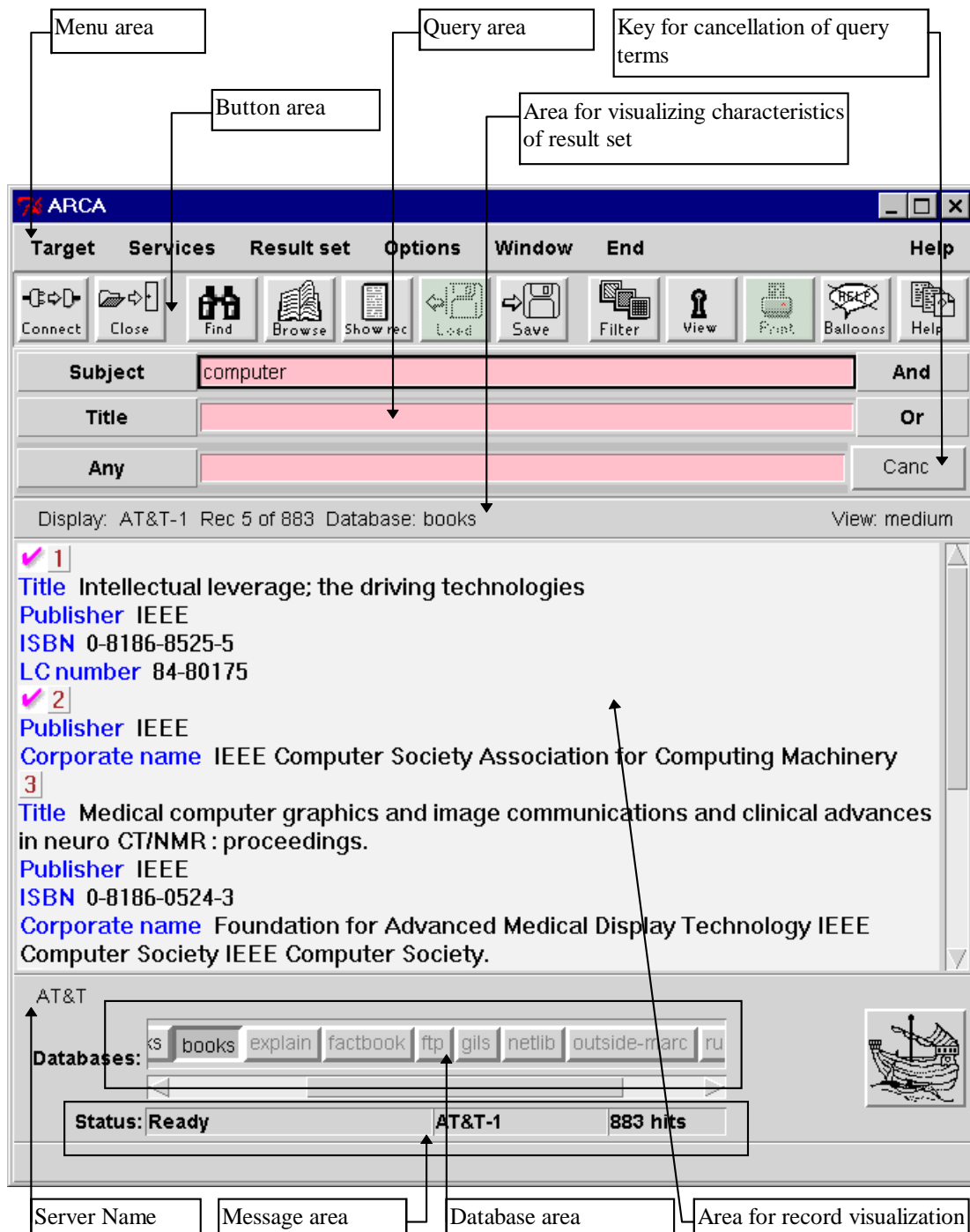Solutions for
Information Retrieval***

ARCA

The ARCA Z39.50 Client

With the emergence of Z39.50 as *the* standard for online access to library resources, the European Commission made it a top priority to assist the European library community in taking the steps necessary to acquire this important technology. The ARCA project, sponsored by the Libraries Programme of the Commission, had the mission of making Z39.50 technology widely available at modest prices.

Intecs Sistemi, coordinating partner of ARCA, is proud to announce the availability of its ***ARCA Z39.50 Client*** product—a modern, high-performance visual browser for communication with online public access catalogues all over the world in a uniform and convenient way. The ARCA Client contains all of the features expected from a Z39.50 browser today and more:

- ◆ Protocol Version 3 support
- ◆ Self-configuration with EXPLAIN
- ◆ Multiple platform implementation—Unix, LINUX, Windows 95
- ◆ Multilingual user interface—English, Italian, Spanish, others coming
- ◆ User-friendly, highly visual interface
- ◆ Personalisation of record views according to individual user tastes
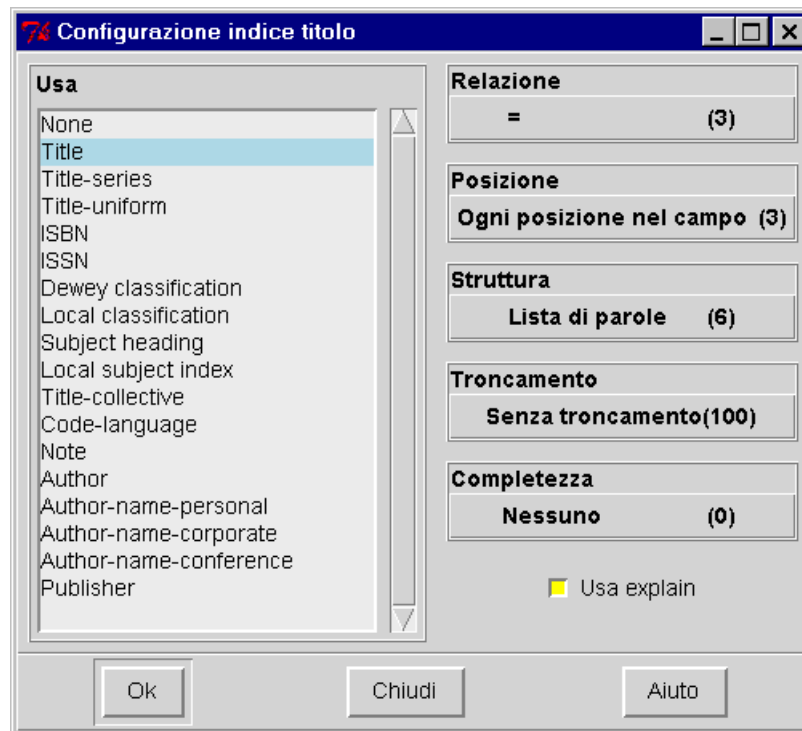- ◆ Full context-sensitive help facilities

ARCA Client Main Screen

Menu area

Button area

Query area

Key for cancellation of query terms

Area for visualizing characteristics of result set

Server Name

Message area

Database area

Area for record visualization

All of the information needed by a user is displayed in an easy-to-understand, logical layout on his screen. The user has full control over his information retrieval environment at all times.

Self-Configuration with EXPLAIN

One of the most powerful features of Z39.50 Version 3 is the EXPLAIN facility, which allows a server to communicate its characteristics to the client (such as the databases and attribute sets it supports). EXPLAIN opens up a whole new world of customised, efficient information retrieval for the user.
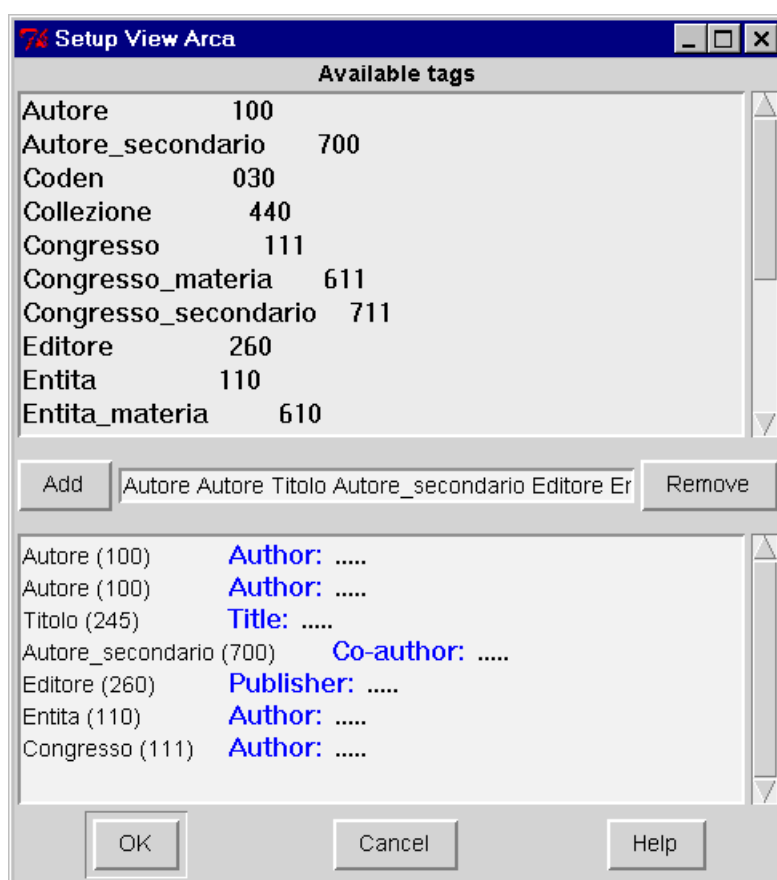
Here we can see (in the Italian version of the user interface) the subset of the BIB-1 standard attribute set that is supported by the server, which the ARCA client discovered with EXPLAIN.

When one of the BIB-1 attributes on the left is selected, then the categories on the right configure themselves according to whatever the server supports. For example, some position or relational operators may be supported for some attributes, others not. With EXPLAIN, the user can save time, effort, and money by avoiding useless communication with queries that are not supported by the server.

Personalisation of User Views

Library information retrieval is also a complex *visual* task, and each individual user will have his own preferences for viewing the records that are presented to him by an online catalogue. The ARCA client has been developed with special care to allow the user to personalise his viewing environment according to his tastes.

Here we can see (in the English language version of the ARCA client) the facility for personalising views with tags. As an example, the user has instructed the client to associate the word "Autore" with the tag 100. In the lower window, we see how the user can instruct the client to display only those tags (e.g. author and title) that are of interest to him, and *in which order* he would like them to be presented.

Contact Information

For more information about the ARCA client, including a flexible pricing policy

for large institutions, please contact us at the address below.

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