About ISAN

Background

Electronic data describing audio-visual works is an increasingly valuable asset. As the level of investment in content creation continues to climb, information systems supporting business intelligence and strategic analysis become critical. In an increasingly global marketplace, the days of one organisation controlling end-to-end production are disappearing. The need for a standard identifying number to track audiovisual works has finally been met.

ISAN Australasia is presented by Screenrights and APRA/AMCOS to give the Australasian audio-visual industries access to the most efficient means of identifying and tracking their work in the global digital environment. We are part of a worldwide network of ISAN Registration Agencies involved in issuing a unique identifying number to works created by the film and TV, music, games, advertising and software industries.

Welcome to the world of ISAN…

ISAN 1881-66C7-3420-0000-7-9F3A-0245-U

Root 12/48 · Episode 4/16 · Version 8/32

24 hex digits / 96 bits

Section	Represents
Root	Identifies a work throughout its existence whether it is a feature film, serial, documentary, live broadcast or any other type of work.
Episode	Identifies parts of a serial work sharing a common root.
Version*	Indicates a different version of a work, (eg another language, edit, format). Both the episode and version section share a common root.

* The version standard (ISO 15706-2) is pending final ISO approval. Version numbers are not yet assigned at this stage (scheduled for 2006).

What is ISAN?

The ISAN (International Standard Audiovisual Number) is a voluntary numbering system for the identification of AV works. ISAN gives registered works a unique, permanent, internationally recognised, reference number. ISAN is designed to be read by humans and processed in information systems, as a 24-bit hexadecimal number or as a 96-bit binary number, for easier systems integration.

The structure of an ISAN reflects many hours of careful analysis and thought by leading AV industry experts. It has been designed to meet the diverse needs of the entire AV supply chain.

The ISAN is not a "content descriptor". It is a "dumb" number, meaning that it does not include any codes or other signifying elements. Its purpose is to identify the work with a unique number, not to provide any type of descriptive information about the work. ISAN can be affixed to any work, digital or analogue.

ISAN identifies individual AV works, not publications, nor right holders and relates to specific descriptive metadata such as original and alternative titles, language, type, duration, and cast. ISAN is an ISO standard, designed for all users of AV content from authors, creators, producers, and rights holders, to broadcasters, platform operators, content aggregators, retailers and consumers.

What is ISAN used for?

An ISAN uniquely distinguishes one AV work from all other AV works. Other methods of identifying AV works, such as by title, can result in confusion about the specific work being referenced. For example, one title can be very similar to another. Titles also change when a work is distributed beyond its country (or countries) of origin and the title is translated into other languages.

Because each ISAN is a unique number that is permanently assigned to an AV work, it can identify that work across national boundaries and language barriers.

As a unique identifier, the ISAN is useful in a wide range of computerised applications, particularly those which involve databases or the exchange of information about AV works.

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Applications of ISAN

- Basic archive identification
- Royalty management
- Television program guide linking
- Tracking the use of AV works
- Anti-piracy purposes such as verifying title registrations
- Rights management
- Audience measurement

Why does my work need an ISAN?

The global digital environment will continue to see a rapid expansion in ways of using AV work – both legally and illegally. An ISAN is the most effective means of identifying your work in this environment, improving efficiencies in managing rights data, exchanging information about the work, tracking use and protecting against piracy.

Who will use ISAN?

The ISAN will bring greater efficiency in tasks of the content creators, facilitators and end-users of audiovisual content. An ISAN is useful to:

- library and information services
- audio-visual copyright management
- buyers and licensees of content, such as broadcasters and distributors
- broadcast programmers and schedulers
- secondary rights holders who derive income streams from content use
- those seeking to track unauthorised use of content

What does an ISAN cost?

Please refer to the Rate Card in the "Downloads" section at www.australasia-isan.org

The development of ISAN

The ISAN standard was approved and published in November 2002. The ISAN International Agency that administers the system is established in Geneva, Switzerland. ISAN was developed with AGICOA, FIAPF and CISAC.

Which industries will benefit?

An ISAN enables commerce for several industries including feature films, digital cinema, program guide services, Internet content and gaming. The following sectors have adopted ISAN:

- Films and TV
- Games
- Broadcast engineers
- Ratings
- Software/Multimedia
- Music

How do I get an ISAN?

- Apply for an account with ISAN Australasia as an ISAN registrant and wait for approval. On the ISAN website, go to the "Create Account" section and download an application form.
- Apply to have an ISAN assigned for your AV work(s) The procedures are explained in the ISAN Users Guide – go to the "Downloads" section on the ISAN website.

www.australasia-isan.org

ISAN
INTERNATIONAL STANDARD
AUDIOVISUAL NUMBER
ISAN 0000-3BAB-939C-0000-W-0000-0000-F

We've got your number...