

REQUESTING IUE DATA VIA SPAN

by

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What Is the NSSDC?

The National Space Science Data Center (NSSDC) is the national archive and "Library of Congress" for NASA data and related information. As stated in its charter, the purpose of NSSDC is "...to serve as the long-term archive and distribution center for data obtained on NASA Space- and Earth-science flight investigations and to develop and perform a variety of services to enhance the scientific return in these missions."

One of NSSDC's continuing goals is to make useful data more accessible to the national and international scientific community. The International Ultraviolet Explorer (IUE) data are one of a wide variety of scientific data that are available to the public.

What's New at NSSDC?

NSSDC is now offering the IUE community another method of accessing IUE data. A network request service has been developed that will allow IUE archival data to be requested and transmitted by the Space Physics Analysis Network (SPAN) from NSSDC to the requester's node. For requesters desiring a small number of spectra, this will eliminate the need to send a tape for their images.

The data supplied will be in the Guest Observer (GO) format. This new service has been made possible by the recent software modifications developed by E. Sullivan (GSFC) in cooperation with the IUE Observatory.

To acquire IUE data, a requester will log on to a captive account at NSSDC and execute a menu that will prompt for the necessary information. The requested spectra will be retrieved from an IBM 3850 mass storage system or a raw data tape archive and placed on the VAX. The requester will then be notified that the data are available for a specified period of time, during which the data may be copied via SPAN to his or her node. If the requested spectra are not available from mass storage, the requester will receive a message describing the current status of the image.

What Is the New Method for Requesting IUE Data?

First, the requester must make a connection via SPAN to one of the computers in our VAX cluster. This is done by using "SET HOST NSSDC" for the VAX 8650.

The terminal will display:

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<<< NSSDC VAX8650 >>> SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1987
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UNAUTHORIZED ATTEMPTS TO ACCESS THIS SYSTEM ARE A FEDERAL OFFENSE

Username:

The user name a requester will enter is "NSSDC." No password is required, and previous account approval is not necessary. The following will then be displayed on the terminal:

For information/file-naming purposes please give the following information:

Your last name:

Your first name:

Your Network Node address (e.g., nodename::username for SPAN;
node/name for TELENET...):

The main NSSDC option menu is now displayed and will look like the one below.

Welcome to the NSSDC Account

The following functions are available

- ? - Help information display
- 0 - Exit NSSDC
- 1 - Personnel Information Management System
- 2 - Central Online Data Directory (CODD)
- 3 - Nimbus Data Products
- 4 - Interplanetary Medium Data (OMNI)
- 5 - Request data and/or information from NSSDC
- 6 - Directory of Directories/Data Systems
- 7 - Enter CANOPUS Newsletter System
- 8 - International Ultraviolet Explorer Data Request

Enter Selection #:

By following the prompts in each option menu, the instructions become self-explanatory. When the requested images are available, notification is sent to the requester along with other essential information. A comments/suggestion option is also available without having to request data.

What Happens to All the Information That Is Entered?

When the requester leaves the IUE option menu, this information is stored on disk as a file and forwarded to the IUE coordinator for review and action. A copy of the request is also forwarded to Request Coordination for in-house accounting at the same time. The IUE coordinator then retrieves the requested images from the IBM 3850 Mass Store via the gateway.

After the data are written to a disk area on the VAX dedicated for this purpose, the spectra are then checked for accuracy and data integrity by using established NSSDC procedures. When it is determined that everything is in order, the requester will receive an electronic mail message stating that the images are ready to be copied to his or her node. The requester is also told how much disk area will be needed to move the images and given the file name(s) assigned to each image.

How Long Does It Take To Receive Requested Data?

If all the necessary links are operational, a small request may be completed within 24 hours of its receipt during normal business hours at NSSDC. This new procedure is a much faster and easier method of requesting and receiving data.

How Is Further Information Obtained?

Further information on this new service may be obtained as follows:

National Space Science Data Center
Code 633.4
Goddard Space Flight Center
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771

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Telex: 89675 NASCOM GBLT
TWX: 7108289716
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