Presentation to CENDI Group:
The NASA Thesaurus as an On-Line Tool

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I. Introduction/opening remarks
   a) The NASA Thesaurus; what is it
   b) On-going development to support present NASA research initiatives, including research in biological sciences, geologic studies, and other areas reflective to the Mars and other planetary missions.
   c) Continued development of terms in the aerospace/aeronautics subject areas.
   d) Thesaurus development as a team effort.

II. The on-line NASA Thesaurus and Related Products:
   a) NASA Thesaurus
      i.   Accessible: http://www.sti.nasa.gov/STI-public-homepage.html
      ii. Searchable using hyperlinks and Adobe functionality
      iii. Benefits
         1. Allows users to identify terms in a report.
         2. Monthly updates are provided.
         3. Utilize thesaurus terms in on-going searches.
   b) Related products:
      i.   Aerospace Science and Technology Dictionary
      ii. Aerospell Supplemental Spell Check File
      iii. NASA Thesaurus Terms Added (Monthly Update)
      iv. NASA Scope and Subject Category Guide

III. Machine Aided Indexing
   a) Description:
      i.   Tool currently used at CASI to provide indexers with suggested indexing terms based on abstract and title.
      ii. Spell-check of the abstract and title.
      iii. The knowledge base is continually being updated as indexers encounter new terms in reports, journal articles, etc.
   b) Features:
      i.   Linked to the NASA Thesaurus to suggest indexing terms.
      ii. An application is available at each indexers desktop for potential daily updates so that several individuals are contributing to the updates.

Pros/cons:

    iii. MAI suggestions are intended to be suggestions only so that the indexer must exercise caution when choosing a suggested term.

    iv. It serves as an excellent starting point for indexing, particularly when an indexer is responsible for several areas of technology.

    v. Since MAI identifies words not found in the knowledge base, it serves as a source of new terms for the thesaurus .

    vi. As on online tool for NASA authors or other registered users, it suggests the indexing terms which would result from a report going to the NA&SD database.

IV.   Current Activities:

  a) Integration of CASI lexical resources and term matching to subject categories as an aid to categorization.

  b) Currently make resources available online as products to support our customers (thesaurus products, monthly updates, subject category guide).

  c) Maintain authority files from individual staff PC's.

  d) Information received from external sources s pre-processed through programs to generate a file that contains information not matched. Staff them add translations to the file to map external information to the NASA Thesaurus terminology. Information may be loaded directly to NA&SD or routed for manual review if all field requirements are not satisfied.

V.   Ontology/taxonomy Development:

  a) Brief mention of efforts underway at JPL. Suggest going to site http://pub-lib.jpl.nasa.gov/pub-lib/dscgi/ds.py/View/Collection-10 which provides a good discussion on the project.