

OzCIS and Compuserve Forums

File: FORUMS.DOC

Introduction

When you work with forum messages, you use the same editors discussed in the CISMail chapter. The editor commands for forum messages are virtually identical to those used when you're working with CISMail messages. On the other hand, configuration, and the methods of working with forums, are much different from those for CISMail.

Uploading and downloading binary files will not be covered in this section of the documentation. See FILES.DOC for more information.

What's a Forum?

Forums are special areas of CIS for topical discussions and for exchanges of files often relating to those discussions. A forum might focus on a manufacturer's products, a kind of computer or software, or some other topic of interest to a specific group of people. Some forums are general, like the ISSUES forum, where there are discussions taking place on everything from the day's news events to UFOs; some forums are specific, like the DATASTORM forum, where that company's products are supported. Some forums are only for discussions and have very few files available for download. Others have relatively few messages but lots of files in their libraries.

All forums have a common user interface. A forum has one or more areas ("sections") where messages are stored and exchanged, and usually one or more areas ("libraries") that contain files available for downloading. Most forums also have conference rooms, facilities for members to chat together online. From time to time most forums post a set of announcements that provide up-to-date information on news of the forum, a "sysop roster" where the names and PPNs of the sysops are listed, perhaps a forum conference schedule, and other information.

Definition of Terms:

Here are some terms you've seen before and a couple of new ones:

Catalogue: Conventional CIS term - the file generated by a long scan.

Download: Receive a file from CIS and store it on your computer.

Library: The area of a forum where binary files are stored.

Long Scan: The part of a "pass" that gets extensive file information (more than you get in a short scan) - each file description may be several lines long.

Merge: Process an uploaded file, making it available for others to download. Uploaded files go into a special holding area; the sysops are responsible for checking out the uploads (making sure they match the forum's topic, don't contain viruses, and so on.) before making them available to forum members. Files checked and approved by sysops are then "merged" into the library.

New messages: As-yet-unread messages from anyone in the forum to anyone else in the forum.

Pending messages (or pending uploads): Outgoing forum messages (or files for uploading) you have not yet sent to the forum.

Quick scan: Retrieving a list of forum message headers (headers only). The result is a list of "quickscan headers"; you select (tag) them to tell OzCIS which messages to retrieve in their entirety during its next pass to the forum.

Scroll: Each forum has a fixed number of message "slots." Whenever a new message is posted to a forum, the oldest message "falls out" and is discarded, whether or not it has been received by its addressee. Old messages' "falling out" is called also "scrolling"; a message that has been discarded in this manner is said to have "scrolled off."

Scroll rate: How long it takes from the time a message is posted to the time it scrolls off. The scroll rate is a function of how many message slots the forum has been given and how busy the forum is; some busy forums have average scroll rates of only 2 to 3 days, while others' rates may be as long as two weeks. The typical scroll rate is around a week.

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Section: The part of a forum in which specific topics are discussed. Sections have names, but CIS navigation programs usually refer to them by number.

Short scan: The part of a forum pass that gets brief (single-line) information about files in a library.

Slot: Each message occupies a "slot" in a forum's message database.

Sysops: The people in charge of a forum.

Thread: A series of messages having the same subject matter (same subject-line in the message headers).

Upload: Transmit a file from your computer to CIS.

Waiting messages: Conventional CIS terminology: as-yet-unread forum messages addressed specifically TO YOU.

"Passes"

Virtually all CIS navigation programs work on a "1st pass / 2nd pass" basis: You log onto CIS and make a 1st pass for forum messages. This includes retrieving forum messages written specifically to you; and/or retrieving ALL new mail; and/or retrieving only "quickscan" headers.

Then comes the 2nd pass: Having looked over quickscan headers, you select (tag) the messages that look interesting and log back onto CIS, retrieving tagged messages in their entirety. Normally in a 2nd pass you also transmit any outbound mail you're writing to the forum. The 2nd pass might also involve uploading or downloading binary files to one or more forum libraries and retrieving the text of one or more announcements.

The differences among 1st- and 2nd-pass options in many CIS navigators are quite distinct. OzCIS blurs this distinction by allowing you a number of choices of what to do during a 1st or 2nd pass.

In general: During a 1st pass, OzCIS stops at any forums you have marked "active." It retrieves messages written to you; or retrieves quickscan headers; or retrieves ALL messages you haven't read yet. You can toggle these options on or off. You can also tell OzCIS to process pending (outgoing) forum messages or binary file uploads or downloads during a 1st

pass.

During a 2nd pass, OzCIS stops only at forums for which there is pending work: Replies you're making to forum messages, new messages you're posting, or files to upload and download. However, there are a few operations (like getting "waiting" mail) that you can also have OzCIS do during a 2nd pass.

Forum Configuration

You'll recall the suggestion in INTRO.DOC that you have OzCIS make a full profile configuration pass for one or more Host entries. A good reason to do so, even if your CIS options were already set before you started using OzCIS, is that the config pass retrieves an up-to-date list of forums - a description of each, along with its associated "GO" name. The forum information is stored in a file called OZCIS.FN in the main OzCIS directory. Use of this file will be explained shortly.

You must join a forum before you can participate in it. Joining is usually a quick process that puts your name into a list of forum members. OzCIS can automatically join a forum for you if you're not already a member.

After initial forum setup and before doing any work in the forum, you should have OzCIS do a forum configuration pass - a short, automated operation during which OzCIS retrieves up-to-date information about the forum's section names and numbers. This information will be important later as you work with the forum's sections and libraries.

1st Configuration Step -- Selecting a Forum:

From the main screen, select CONFIGURATION > FORUMS MAINTENANCE. An AVAILABLE FORUMS window opens at the upper-left of the screen (it looks much like the AVAILABLE HOSTS window you've already seen). If you have not unpacked the FORUMS.DB file from the OzCIS distribution archive OZCIS3.EXE, OzCIS will first display an alert reading:

ERROR 2 OPENING FORUMS FILE

and the AVAILABLE FORUMS window will open with "***NONE**" in it. Otherwise, the name of the sample forum in the .DB file will appear in the window.

The main menu bar items are temporarily replaced by EDIT, DELETE, ADD, SORT, and QUIT. We've already discussed using EDIT, DELETE, and QUIT with respect to Host names; the method of selecting these commands is identical when you're working with forums. The SORT command will be discussed later in this file.

Select ADD. A small dialogue called EDIT FORUM ENTRY appears at the bottom of the screen. This is one of several OzCIS dialogues that contain

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hints on available commands in the window border and hints (at the bottom of the screen) on the purposes of data fields. The following representation of the dialogue has all of the box-drawing characters removed; the "[o]" represent's the dialogue's "close without saving changes" check-box; "[x]" represents the dialogue's "close and save changes" check-box.

```
[o] - [x] _____ Edit Forum Entry _____
Forum Title  Desktop Publishing
"GO" Command DTPFORUM
Service prefix CIS
Files Path   C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM
User Name    Aaron Aardvark
Remove duplicate messages when reading? Y
Autosave Outbox messages when sending? Always
Set Options  <Enter>
_____ <F2> list, <F10> accepts, <Esc> abandons _____
```

The Dialogue's Data Fields:

FORUM TITLE (initially blank)

Type a description of the forum here; it doesn't have to be the forum's "GO" word. For example, if you are configuring DTPFORUM, you could type "Desktop Publishing" here.

Do you need to see a list of available forums? If you had OzCIS make a full profile configuration pass, you now have a file called OZCIS.FN in the OzCIS directory. In that case, "F2 list" appears in the window border when the cursor is in the FORUM TITLE field. (If there is no .FN file or you've moved it to a place OzCIS can't find it, "F2 list" will not appear at all.) Press F2 to pop up a pick- list (COMPUSERVE FORUM NAMES) showing all forums listed in the OZCIS.FN file.

The pick-list contains a brief description of each forum in the left column and the forum's "GO" word in the right column. Select a forum name from the list; the pick-list window closes. OzCIS then puts the description - the text in the left column - into the FORUM TITLE field of the dialogue and the "GO" word from the right column into the GO COMMAND field. You can change the FORUM NAME field if you prefer another description, but don't alter the "GO" word.

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"GO" COMMAND (initially blank)

Enter the "GO" word required to log onto the forum. Again, if OZCIS.FN is in the OzCIS directory, you can press F2 to open the pick-list of current forums and select the information that way.

SERVICE PREFIX (defaults to "CIS")

CompuServe is not just one service, but rather a collection of services accessible through the general CIS network. CompuServe Information Service (CIS) is the one with which most people are familiar; others include CompuServe Business Services and ZiffNet (operated in conjunction with Ziff-Davis Publishing, publishers of PC MAGAZINE, COMPUTER SHOPPER, and several other publications.)

When you join CompuServe you do so via one of these services, which is then your "home" service. If you joined CIS through the usual channels (sign-up kit purchased at a software store, membership arranged by calling CIS directly, and so on), CIS is your "home." If you joined by using the information provided in one of the Ziff publications, ZiffNet is your "home." Most of these services are interconnected via CompuServe's network, so you can call one local number for access no matter which service is "home." A few are "private" - specialty services operated under contract between CompuServe and other corporations, and not accessible to the general member population.

Your "home" is the only place to go for certain CompuServe services. Example: Each service has its own private mail area, and you can get access to it only via your home service; a user whose "home" is CIS cannot use the private mail facility of ZiffNet. No matter what service you are using at a given moment, a "GO MAIL" command will always take you to your home service. (But most other ZiffNet areas are accessible by CIS members and vice versa.)

In some cases, the services have forums or other areas that are named the same. The SERVICE PREFIX field tells the network on which service the forum or other area you want resides. This eliminates ambiguities and facilitates switching from one service to another.

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The majority of users will have CIS as their home service. OzCIS therefore defaults to "CIS" as the Service Prefix. If the forum you are configuring is on a different service, make sure you provide the correct prefix. For ZiffNet, use "ZNT." To get the right initials for other services, consult your CIS sign-up agreement.

FILES PATH (initially blank)

Where do you want to store incoming and outgoing message files and/or binary files downloaded from this forum? We suggest you create special subdirectories for forums. For instance, if you're configuring DTPFORUM and your main OzCIS directory is C:\OZCIS, you might type "C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM" into the FILES PATH field.

There's no need to create the subdirectory BEFORE you start the forum configuration - more about that shortly.

Leaving the directory field blank tells OzCIS to store ALL forum files in the main OzCIS directory itself (we don't recommend this; you'll end up with far too many files for comfort in the OzCIS directory).

USER NAME (initially blank)

The name you'll use for yourself when you post messages to this forum. If you'd rather use a name other than the one you gave when you did the Host configurations, type the new name into this field. If you leave the field blank, OzCIS uses the name you entered for yourself in the name-field of the Host configuration dialogues.

NOTE: Most forums do not permit handles in lieu of real names. Check with sysops before using a handle in their forums.

In the list of fields, below, OzCIS' default selection is shown in parentheses; other options are shown in square brackets.

REMOVE DUPLICATE MESSAGES WHEN READING? (Y) [N]

It's possible at times you'll see the same messages twice when reading forum messages. It's likely to happen if you have configured OzCIS to retrieve all "waiting" messages in a forum as well as read other new messages (those options are explained below). Answering "Y" to this

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question forces OzCIS to suppress the display of duplicate messages. (The duplicates will not be deleted from the file containing the forum messages.)

AUTOSAVE OUTBOX MESSAGES WHEN SENDING? (NEVER) [ALWAYS ASK]

Determines whether and/or how OzCIS saves outgoing forum messages. If "NEVER," outgoing messages are never saved. If "ALWAYS," the current group of outbound forum messages are saved to a file whose name is the first 8 characters of the forum's "GO" word, with an .OBS extension ("outbox save"). If "ASK," OzCIS asks you to decide at the time whether to save the messages.

SET OPTIONS

"ENTER" appears in this field, meaning that the only option here is to press ENTER. Doing so brings up the main forum configuration dialogue, headed FORUM AUTOPASS PRIMARY OPTIONS.

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2nd Configuration Step -- Automatic Configuration (On-Line):

Don't faint when the configuration dialogue opens. We'll explain the options by and by.

For now, just notice that all but two of the "Y/N" questions are answered "N". The two answered "Y" are in the bottom part of the window: UPDATE SECTION NAMES LIST and CONFIGURE FORUM OPTIONS. They are all you need for a forum configuration pass. You'll do the config pass, then complete the forum configuration afterward.

Close the configuration dialogue, then close the EDIT FORUM ENTRY dialogue, saving changes.

Just then, if the subdirectory you specified a moment ago doesn't exist, OzCIS asks if you want it created. Answer YES. If you answer NO, the dialogue won't close. Either let OzCIS create the directory or else supply the name of an existing directory.

From the main screen, drop down the FORUMS menu. This also opens an AVAILABLE FORUMS window (which will always be in view when you are working in the FORUMS menu).

Left-click the name of your newly-added forum. Alternative: Press ENTER. Because the cursor bar is initially on SELECT FORUM, pressing ENTER activates the AVAILABLE FORUMS window). Move the cursor bar to the name of the new forum and press ENTER.

When the AVAILABLE FORUMS window is accessible, its border will contain hints on available commands. When the window is not accessible, the border will not contain any hints or other text.

When you've made your selection, the forum's name appears at the top of the screen, and other FORUMS menu items are now accessible. They are never accessible until a forum name is selected.

NOTE: If you drive OzCIS from the keyboard, there's a shortcut for forum selection when the cursor bar is not on SELECT FORUM: Pressing the TAB key puts the cursor bar into the AVAILABLE FORUMS window right away. Move the cursor bar to the name of the forum you want and press ENTER. This gets the job done with the fewest keystrokes and, when you're done, leaves the cursor bar on the present menu item.

Now select FORUMS > 2ND PASS IN THIS FORUM.

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OzCIS goes into terminal mode and dials CIS. Any CISMail to send or retrieve is processed first. Then OzCIS logs onto the forum you're configuring, joins it, sets various forum parameters for you, retrieves current section and library names and numbers, logs off, and returns to its main screen. (If you are already a member of the forum, OzCIS skips the "join" step.)

NOTE: Once OzCIS goes into terminal mode, you can press ESC to abort dialing until the word "ESC" has disappeared from the window in the middle of the terminal-mode screen.

Suppose the forum you joined is DTPFORUM. When the config pass is over, there will be a file called DTPFORUM.SEC in the directory you specified during the first forum configuration step. The .SEC file contains a list of the forum's section and library names. Don't move it from the directory, nor rename it; you'll be needing it later.

You Can't "Join" a Gateway:

Sometimes you see a forum name in the COMPUSERVE FORUM NAMES pick-list that turns out not to be a forum at all, but rather a "gateway" - a menu that leads to other forums. The "gateway" has a "GO" word, but trying to auto-join or auto-configure a "gateway" doesn't work. OzCIS cannot join forums via these gateways.

If you inadvertently pick such a pseudo-forum, you'll see OzCIS try to log onto it during the configuration pass, then come to a halt. You'll probably be left at a CIS "!" prompt. OzCIS won't be able to complete the configuraton pass.

Press ESC - ONLY ONE TIME. A prompt appears asking if you want to abort immediately, not abort, or go into on-line-terminal mode. Press "T" for terminal mode. Then select EXIT from the menu at the top of the screen. The EXIT command does a proper disconnection from CIS. If you choose to abort instead (by answering "Y" to the prompt rather than "T"), OzCIS drops carrier.

NOTE: Logging off CIS by dropping carrier is not a good idea; doing so during mail processing can confuse CIS. When you drop carrier, the CIS "meter" continues running. However, it will usually stop running about 30 seconds after the carrier drop.

At one time you would have needed to log immediately back onto CIS, then log off again, to reset the "meter." This is no longer

necessary when you've dropped carrier.

3rd Configuration Step -- Completing Forum Configuration:

Now that the auto-configuration pass is done, re-open the forum configuration dialogue and finish the setup process.

From the main screen, pull down the FORUMS menu and select the forum to be configured, if it is not already selected.

Select FORUMS > PASS OPTION SETTINGS. The large forum configuration dialogue opens. With some of its fields filled in, it might look like this:

```
[o] - [x] AutoPass Primary Options for DTPFORUM
Include this forum in 1st Pass? Y
Read NEW Messages
QuickScan Headers 1,2,6,7,12,13,14,17
Reset HIGH Message Number after QuickScans? Y
Purge old messages by Always Save purge? N
----- Other 1st-Pass Options -----
Read WAITING messages? Y Send PENDING messages? N
Get pending DOWNLOADS? N Send pending UPLOADS? N
Permanent script Read WAITING on 2nd Pass? Y
----- 1st/2nd One-Pass Options -----
New HIGH Msg Num
Update sections names list? N Configure forum options? N
Scan Libs (Long) N Sec 5,12 Update? Y
Scan Libs (Short) N Sec 5,6,12,17
Read announcements
New Default Sections
Temporary script
----- <F10> accepts, <Esc> abandons -----
```

It is divided into three sections:

The top part is AUTOPASS PRIMARY OPTIONS. It contains options relevant ONLY to a 1st pass. The middle part (OTHER 1ST-PASS OPTIONS) sets options for work to be performed during either a 1st pass or a 2nd pass. The lower part (1ST/2ND ONE-PASS OPTIONS) sets other options for work to be done during either kind of pass.

As you work in this dialogue, keep your eye on the window border and the bottom screen line for helpful hints.

In the list of fields, below, OzCIS' default selection is shown in parentheses; other options are shown in square brackets.

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Forum Autopass Primary Options: (Options controlling basic 1st-pass processing)

INCLUDE THIS FORUM IN 1ST PASS? (Y) [N]

If "Y", the forum will be processed any time you request a 1st pass.
If "N", the forum will be skipped.

When you select "Y", OzCIS considers the forum "active"; its name will be marked with a "*" character in the AVAILABLE FORUMS window.

READ NEW MESSAGES (blank by default)

(That's ALL messages you haven't read yet.) Here you enter the names of forum sections from which OzCIS will get new messages. Press F2 to open a pick-list showing sections by number and name. If you want only one section, highlight it with the cursor bar and press ENTER (or left-click on it).

Each time you select from the pick-list that way, any information now in the field will be replaced with a single section number. To select MORE than one number from the pick-list, move the cursor bar from one entry to another, selecting by pressing the space bar. A check-mark will appear next to each selected section. Press F10 or ENTER to confirm, closing the window. This puts multiple section numbers into the field.

Or type the numbers yourself, separating them by commas (thus: 1,2,4,6,12). Use a hyphen to indicate a range of sections - like: 1,3,4-7,10 for sections 1 and 3, 4 through/including 7, and 10. Do not type spaces within the string of numbers and commas. To select all of the forum's section numbers, type the word "all" into the field or select "ALL" from the pick-list.

NOTE: The pick-list is available only after OzCIS makes an auto-config pass for this forum and writes the .SEC file to disk.

QUICKSCAN HEADERS (blank)

During a 1st pass, shall OzCIS retrieve subject-matter header lines for you to review off-line? If so, type the desired section numbers into the field, separated by commas. Press F2 to open a pick-list of section names and numbers if the .SEC file is now in the forum's subdirectory. Enter section numbers, separated by commas and/or hyphens, as discussed just above.

RESET HIGH MESSAGE NUMBER AFTER QUICKSCANS? (N) [Y]

Shall OzCIS reset your "high message" (last-read) number for the forum after getting a list of message headers? If "Y" the quickscan AFTER that will begin at the next highest (unread) message number. We recommend you set this option to "Y," especially if you do NOT have OzCIS read "new" messages (via the "read new" option, discussed above). "Read new" automatically re-sets the high message number; others kinds of message retrieval do not.

PURGE OLD MESSAGES BY (Always) [Never Sessions Days Manual]

Toggle the settings by pressing the space bar. The options mean the same as they do in OzCIS' general configuration dialogue. As before, selecting SESSIONS or DAYS opens a PURGE COUNTER field within the dialogue; use that field to chose the number of sessions (or days' worth) of mail to retain.

There is also a new option in the Host Config (Mail) and Forum Config (Forum) dialogues for Purge type: MANUAL. Selecting this purge type allows you to define default settings for the manual purging process but makes sure that no automatic purge is performed after an online session.

The fewer "sessions" you keep on hand, the faster OzCIS indexes the message file each time you start reading forum messages.

NOTE: If you use the "Always" setting, a 1st pass will replace all old messages with the new ones. However, a 2nd pass will ADD new messages to the old ones. Example: You do a 1st pass to a forum and get waiting message and quickscan headers. This removes all old messages. You tag quickscan headers and make a 2nd pass soon afterward. Even if the "PURGE" field is set to "Always," the 2nd pass will APPEND the new messages to the ones you just retrieved during the 1st pass.

SAVE PURGE? (N) [Y]

"Y" tells OzCIS to save purged messages into a file. If you were configuring DTPFORUM, the purge file's name would be DTPFORUM.PRG. A .PRG file can be read (and messages within it replied-to) via the FORUMS > MESSAGES IN FOLDERS command.

Other 1st-Pass Options Section: (Options for work performed during either a 1st pass or 2nd pass, and performed EVERY time you make a 1st or 2nd pass.)

READ WAITING MESSAGES? (N) [Y]

If "Y": During a 1st pass OzCIS will always download new forum messages addressed specifically TO YOU before it does anything else.

If "N": OzCIS will take no extra steps to get messages addressed to you. Messages to you will be retrieved from a section for which you have the "read new" option set. "Waiting" messages in OTHER sections will be ignored.

SEND PENDING MESSAGES? (N) [Y]

If "Y": OzCIS will send any outgoing messages FROM YOU during a 1st pass. If "N", it will send them only during a 2nd pass.

GET PENDING DOWNLOADS? (N) [Y]

If "Y": during a 1st pass OzCIS will download any binary files you've requested; if "N": it will do so only during a 2nd pass.

SEND PENDING UPLOADS? (N) [Y]

If "Y": during a 1st pass OzCIS will upload any binary files you're sending to the forum; if "N": it will do so only during a 2nd pass.

PERMANENT SCRIPT (blank)

Enter the name (including path information, if need be) of an OzCIS script file that will be executed during EVERY 1st pass to this forum. The script is always executed when OzCIS has completed all other normal work for this forum. Scripts are discussed in detail in TERMINAL.DOC.

READ WAITING ON 2ND PASS? (N) [Y]

If "Y": OzCIS will read any waiting messages during a 2nd pass in the forum - not only during a 1st pass. A "Y" setting in this field tells OzCIS to

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retrieve waiting messages even if you have the 1st- pass "retrieve waiting?" field (see above) set to "N".

"1st/2nd One-Pass Options" Section:

(Options controlling work performed during either a 1st or 2nd pass, but performed only ONCE; to have the work done again, you must re- enter the configuration dialogue and re-enable the options.)

NEW HIGH MSG NUM (blank)

This is an alternative to having OzCIS set the "high message" number following a quickscan. Here, enter the message number to become the "last-read" message. OzCIS automatically blanks out this field following the pass. Use the field if you find you're seeing mail several times that you've already read one or more times and if you HAVE told OzCIS to reset the "high message" number following quickscans. CIS' own software has a bug that sometimes causes a "reset high number" command not to work properly. This is a way of defeating the bug.

UPDATE SECTION NAMES LIST? (N) [Y]

If "Y": OzCIS updates all section and library information for the forum, creating a new .SEC file in the forum's directory (e.g., DTPFORUM.SEC if you're working in DTPFORUM). The update will be done during either a 1st or 2nd pass. As soon as the pass is over, the "Y" is automatically reset to "N".

CONFIGURE FORUM OPTIONS? (N) [Y]

If "Y": OzCIS will do an auto-configuration pass in addition to any other work performed during the pass. The auto-config takes place during either a 1st or 2nd pass. When the configuration is done, the "Y" is automatically reset to "N".

SCAN LIBS (LONG) (blank)

Enter library numbers into the data field just as you entered section numbers into the READ NEW MESSAGES field (and others - see above). Press F2 to see a list of libraries for the forum (if you made a configuration pass and OzCIS wrote a .SEC file for this forum). NOTE: Unlike message section number lines, you CANNOT use the hyphen to denote sequential library numbers. In other words, this is legal: "1,2,3,4,6,8" and this is not: "1-4,6,8".

Note the "Y/N" field to the left of the section-numbers field. The default

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setting is "N". When you're ready to do a scan, change the "N" to "Y", then close the configuration dialogue, saving changes. When OzCIS has finished the scan, the "Y" will be automatically reset to "N".

Make sure to enter library numbers, NOT SECTION NUMBERS, into the field - and the same with the short-scan field (see below).

UPDATE? (N) [Y]

A "long scan" writes a file with the extension .L?? into the forum's subdirectory (where "??" is a forum library's number). Library contents change all the time. Set this option to "Y" to have OzCIS perform a long scan in selected libraries but retrieve ONLY new or changed information. Using "update" rather than scanning from scratch can save much time on-line, especially in large libraries.

Updating writes a file with the extension .U?? into the forum's subdirectory - with "??" again being a specific library number. Later, when you view the long-scan information, OzCIS merges the contents of the .U?? file into its associated .L?? file, then deletes the .U?? file.

SCAN LIBS (SHORT) (blank)

Enter library numbers into this field if you want OzCIS to make a "short scan" of selected forum libraries.

As with the SCAN LIBS (LONG) option, this one also has a "Y/N" field, set to "N" by default. As with the other one, change the "N" to "Y" when you're ready to do a short-format scan and tell OzCIS to save changes in the dialogue. When the scan is done, OzCIS automatically resets the "Y" to "N" again.

READ ANNOUNCEMENTS (blank)

Forums often have announcements about new products, services, files, real-time conferences on specific topics, and so on. Press F2 to see a list of possible announcement topics. Enter the desired announcements into the field, again separating the numbers by commas. Select multiple announcement numbers with the space bar, then press F10 or ENTER to have OzCIS automatically type the numbers into the field. Do NOT enter SECTION or LIBRARY numbers here.

Announcement names and numbers are the same in virtually all forums,

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though it is up to sysops whether all possible announcement numbers are used at all times. If an announcement isn't available at a given moment, OzCIS' attempting to read it won't have any ill effect.

When the pass is completed, OzCIS writes files to disk containing the text of the announcements. If the forum were DTPFORUM and you'd asked for announcements 2, 3, and 5, your DTPFORUM subdirectory would now contain files named DTPFORUM.AN2, DTPFORUM.AN3, and DTPFORUM.AN5.

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NOTE: There is no reader within OzCIS that automatically opens the announcement files. But you can use the General Editor to read them; from the main screen, select WINDOWS > EDITOR and then specify the path and name for an announcement file.

After the pass that retrieves the announcements, the READ ANNOUNCEMENTS field is automatically blanked out.

NEW DEFAULT SECTIONS (blank)

CIS stores a list of sections you normally visit - set to "ALL" when you join a forum. OzCIS' own work in forum sections does not change the default. Entering section numbers here DOES change the default. Restricting default sections can save you a bit of time on-line. You can always enter new information into the field later to alter the default setting.

TEMPORARY SCRIPT (blank)

Here you can specify the name of an OzCIS script file to be executed only ONCE - the next time OzCIS enters the forum. The temporary script takes precedence - one time only - over any other script you normally run in the forum (see information about the PERMANENT SCRIPT field, above). The script is executed when OzCIS has finished all other work in the forum. After the end of the pass during which the temporary script is used, the TEMPORARY SCRIPT field is automatically blanked out. For more information on OzCIS scripts, see the documentation file TERMINAL.DOC.

To save the settings in the forum configuration dialogue, press F10. Or press ESC to quit without saving the settings.

Configuration via the Forums-Menu, Versus the Configuration-Menu:

The dialogue you open via FORUMS > PASS OPTIONS SETTINGS is a subset of the full configuration routine. It is usually all you need once you have done the initial forum setup. But if you ever need to change, say, subdirectory information, do so via the CONFIGURATION menu. Select CONFIGURATION > FORUMS MAINTENANCE. Then selecting EDIT brings up the first config dialogue you saw; then you can change directory information or the other options not available via FORUMS > PASS OPTIONS SETTINGS.

What Are the Right Pass Option Settings?

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Answer: There are no "right" options. What you tell OzCIS to do in the configuration dialogue is entirely dependent on your needs with respect to forum messages and files.

Many people use a 1st pass only to get waiting messages and quickscan headers. They read and reply to the waiting mail off-line and tag the quickscan headers for retrieval of forum messages in their entirety. Then they do a 2nd pass in which OzCIS retrieves the full text of tagged headers and sends any replies. Uploads and downloads are usually sent or retrieved only during a second pass, too. Other users prefer always to capture all new messages in some or all sections of a forum, to eliminate the second "2nd Pass" that sending replies might require. Some users intermix the two methods, depending on the forum, level of message traffic and other factors.

We suggest you experiment a bit with pass option settings until you arrive at a routine you like. Remember that you can use CIS' forum called PRACTICE to carry out these experiments without piling up connect-time charges (although you might be charged for certain connection surcharges related to your use of a particular Host).

Passes via Forums-Menu Versus Passes via Online-Menu:

The main screen's ONLINE menu also has 1st- and 2nd-pass selections. The difference between them and a pass selected from FORUMS menu: When you select FORUMS > 1ST PASS IN THIS FORUM or FORUMS > 2ND PASS IN THIS FORUM, the pass is made only with respect to the CURRENTLY SELECTED FORUM. CISMmail (if any) is processed then as well, but no other forums are entered.

When you select ONLINE > 1ST PASS, OzCIS enters ALL forums you have marked "active."

When you select ONLINE > 2ND PASS, OzCIS enters ALL forums for which there is 2nd-pass work pending.

Flags in the Available Forums Window:

From time to time symbols (flags) appear in the AVAILABLE FORUMS window:

* Forum is "active"

Means: This forum has been marked "active" - you've answered "YES" to

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the question "Include this forum in 1st Pass?" in the forum configuration dialogue.

NOTE: Shortcut - move the cursor bar within the AVAILABLE FORUMS window to a forum name and press F2 to toggle its "active" status on and off. The corresponding field in the forum config dialogue automatically changes from "Y" to "N" or back again, depending on how you've toggled "active" status in the AVAILABLE FORUMS window. Likewise, changing the setting in the config dialogue will toggle the "*" on and off in the AVAILABLE FORUMS window.

"2" (SUPERSCRIPT) 2nd-Pass work pending

Means: There is 2nd pass work to be done the next time OzCIS enters this forum. For example, you might have tagged quickscan headers. The "2" appears next to the forum's name until OzCIS logs onto CIS again and performs the pending 2nd-pass work, which could include messages to be sent, library scans you've requested, or files to be uploaded to or downloaded from the forum.

CHECK-MARK Unread mail

Means: There are new forum messages you have not read yet.

Note: If you erase the forum message file (the one with the extension .MES), the check-mark will sometimes appear in the window, anyway.

"SMILEY-FACE" (the ^A symbol) Unread personal mail

Means: There are "waiting" messages you haven't yet read. If your new mail includes messages to you, this symbols take the place of the check-mark - but only if "read waiting" is part of your forum configuration settings.

? Quickscan headers

Means: OzCIS has retrieved quickscan headers, but you haven't yet tagged any of them. The first time you start a "tag headers" routine (discussed below), the "?" disappears from the window).

Sorting the List of Forums:

You can change the order of forum names in the AVAILABLE FORUMS window. Select CONFIGURATION > FORUMS MAINTENANCE. The AVAILABLE FORUMS window opens not in the center of the screen, but in the upper left.

First highlight the name of the forum whose position you want to change in the list. Select SORT from the menu bar. (Notice the hint that appears at the bottom of the screen.)

Move the cursor bar to the forum name BELOW WHICH you want the selected name to be moved. Press ENTER. The name you selected first (the one that was highlighted when you pressed Alt-S or left-clicked "SORT") will be moved below the presently-highlighted name. To move the name to the top of the list, highlight it, select SORT, move the cursor bar to the very BOTTOM of the list, then press ENTER.

Forum Messages

After configuring a forum, make sure the configuration options include getting quickscan headers or waiting messages in one or more forum sections, then have OzCIS make a 1st Pass there.

Even if this is your first time in the forum, go ahead and tell OzCIS via the forum configuration dialogue to check for waiting messages; there won't be any for you yet, but you won't do any harm by setting the option to "Y". If you know you'd like to see ALL mail in particular sections right off the bat, put the desired section numbers into the configuration-dialogue's field for "NEW" mail.

Make sure you have the right Host and forum names selected. From the main screen, select FORUMS > 1ST PASS IN THIS FORUM. (If you want to begin collecting mail in more than one forum, mark the desired forums "active" - as discussed above - and select ONLINE > 1ST PASS. The following discussion assumes you're doing the pass via the FORUMS menu, however).

OzCIS logs onto CIS, processes outgoing and incoming CISMail (if any), logs onto the forum, collects the messages you've told it to get, then logs off and returns to the main screen.

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New forum messages are written to a file whose base name is the first 8 characters of the forum's "GO" word and whose extension is .MES (example: DTPFORUM.MES for the DTPFORUM). The quickscan information (message headers only) is written to a .QS file (example: DTPFORUM.QS). Both files are stored in the directory you specified during forum configuration (example: C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.MES).

Reading Forum Messages:

After OzCIS has retrieved new forum messages, from the main screen select FORUMS > READ CURRENT MESSAGES.

There will be a short pause as OzCIS indexes the messages. If you have configured it not to display duplicated mail, an alert containing "Removing duplicates" will appear briefly. Then the Message Reader opens.

The first thing you see is a kind of greeting-message. Using DTPFORUM as the example - the greeting looks something like this:

```
#: 0 S0/Forum Header Announcement
   02-Jan-92 17:41:37
Sb: Pass 1 Header
Fr: OzCIS
To: Melvin Cowznofski 12345,6789
```

Welcome to Desktop Publishing Forum, V. 2G(31)

```
Hello, Melvin Cowznofski
Last visit: 02-Jan-92 15:02:22
```

```
Forum messages: 161081 to 167918
Last message you've read: 167780
```

```
Section(s) Selected: All
2 members are in conference.
You have 2 messages waiting.
```

This is essentially the same screen you'd see if you were to log onto the forum manually from the CIS prompt. The "last message" number will be the

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lowest message number in the forum if this is your first visit (aside from the forum auto-configuration pass). If it is your first visit, the "You have 'x' messages waiting" line does not appear.

The line reading "Fr: OzCIS" indicates that it's a message to which you cannot reply; if you try to make a reply here, nothing happens.

When the Message Reader is used to read forum messages, virtually all of its commands and functions are identical to those available when you use it with CISMmail, including commands that pertain to moving within and between "groups" of messages. We won't go over all the Message Reader commands again here, but will note a couple of differences in its OTHER menu:

DELEte online - DEL key

This command is accessible ONLY if the message you're reading is either to you or from you. Its purpose is to remove the message from the forum's message base. Pressing DEL opens an alert in which OzCIS asks you to confirm deleting the message the next time you're on-line in the forum. Press "N" or "ESC" if you don't want to do this, or "Y" if you do. The message will be deleted during either the next 1st pass or the next 2nd pass. A flag reading DELETE ONLINE will appear any time you view this message. Pressing DEL again will toggle OFF the "delete on-line" status, and the flag will disappear.

Deleting your own messages on-line is not usually necessary for forum housekeeping purposes and in fact is frowned upon by some sysops, although some strongly prefer that you delete messages posted PRIVATELY by or to you in the forum. Deletion of publicly-viewable messages can disrupt message threads or keep others from seeing useful information. If

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you've posted a message you later decide you really don't want others to see, go ahead and delete it. If in doubt about forum policy, post a message to the sysop or sysops and ask for further information.

FORWARD COPY - ALT-F

This command allows you to forward a copy of the current message to another user, either in the forum or via CISMaiL. You will be prompted for the destination and the addressee's information. See the "Forward Copy" command in CISMaiL.DOC for more information, especially concerning copyright on messages.

SEND VIA MAIL

This new option places the reply directly into the CISMaiL.REP file to be sent the next time you process Mail online. It also allows you to receipt the message.

When replying to a forum message, you have always had the option to "Forward to Mail" the reply. This process actually placed the reply in the forum's outbox file, and commanded the forum message software to in turn send the message to the recipient's EMail box rather than in the forum. While this is still the preferred method, it has limitations - for example, you cannot request a return receipt on a Mail message when it is forwarded via a forum. OzCIS now offers a second Mail option: "Send Via Mail".

PREVIOUS FORUM - F7

Moves to the previous ACTIVE forum in your list of forums.

NEXT FORUM - F9

Moves to the next ACTIVE forum in your list of forums. In either case (F7 or F9) OzCIS looks for a ".MES" file containing messages. If none exists in the next forum area, OzCIS presents a "file not found" error message.

There are also several commands that jump rapidly from one message "thread" to another:

JUMP TO PREVIOUS MESSAGE IN THREAD - ALT-F3

JUMP TO NEXT MESSAGE IN THREAD - ALT-F5

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JUMP TO THE FIRST MESSAGE IN THIS THREAD - ALT-F4

ALT-F7

returns to the message you were reading when you first began reading the thread (might not be the same as the very first message in the thread).

MOVE TO THE NEXT MESSAGE THREAD - ALT-W

One major difference in what you now see in the Message Reader is the way messages begin. A typical forum message has a header that looks like this (here we use a fictitious section name):

```
#: 167828 S2/Advanced Keyboard Designs
   02-Jan-92 13:10:04
Sb: #167783-MY KEYS ARE STUCK WORSE THAN I AM
Fm: Aaron A. Aardvark 00000,111
To: Irving Arglebargle 12345,6789
```

The first line of the header shows the message number, the section number ("S2" for "section 2" in this example), and the section's title (in this example, "Advanced Keyboard Designs"). The next line shows the date and time the message was posted to the forum. The third line is the subject-matter line, where you can see if the current message is a reply to another.

In that example, Mr. Aardvark has posted forum message number 167828, a reply to Mr. Arglebargle's message number 167783, the subject being "MY KEYS ARE STUCK WORSE THAN I AM."

Sometimes "#" characters appear in the subject-line. They are inserted automatically by CIS.

```
Sb: #167783-MY KEYS ARE STUCK WORSE THAN I AM
```

means the message is a reply to message 167883.

```
Sb: #167783-#MY KEYS ARE STUCK WORSE THAN I AM
```

means the message is a REPLY TO A REPLY to message 167883.

From time to time other flags appear at the ends of "To:" lines in forum messages:

(X) Message has been received by addressee.

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(P) Message is private.

(T) You have used a CIS procedure, not an OzCIS procedure, to tag the message for later retrieval.

(H) Message has been placed "on hold" by a forum sysop, who might have deemed a particular message important enough to keep around rather than allow it to scroll out of the forum's message base.

"[F]," appearing between "To:" and an recipient's name, means the message was manually forwarded by a forum sysop to the recipient, perhaps from another section. A sysop might forward a message once addressed to "ALL" if its content indicates it should be sent to a particular forum member, not to "ALL". Sysops sometimes forward messages that have been inadvertently mis-addressed.

A sysop can also forward a forum message via CISMmail - sometimes done when the addressee has not yet read it, it's about to scroll out of the message base, and the sysop deems the contents important enough that the addressee should see the message.

Replying to Forum Messages:

You start a reply to a forum message the same way you start a reply to a CISMmail message. The screen splits, and the cursor moves into the lower window - OzCIS' Reply Editor. You can move from one window to another, scroll text in both windows, and copy text from the upper window into the lower one, just as when you reply to CISMmail.

Remember that when you're using the Reply Editor, F5 and F7 load the next message in the current group, and the previous message in the current group, respectively, into the upper window. You can use these commands to copy text easily from several messages, pasting them into a SINGLE reply (the one you're working on in the lower window).

IMPORTANT: As with CISMmail, NEVER begin a line in a forum message with a semicolon. If you have to have a semicolon as the first character on the line, start the line with at least one space. Otherwise, OzCIS will become mighty confused; it uses semicolons in its own headers (normally not visible).

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Always press ENTER at least one time following the last character of the last line of a forum message. Otherwise, the last line might be cut off.

The Address Book:

The Address Book is available when the window is not split, and you can have OzCIS enter names automatically into the Address Book as is possible with CISMail messages.

But there is a major difference: When you're reading forum messages, you have the choice to enter either the name/address information in the "Fm:" ("From") line into the Address Book, or else the name/address information in the "To:" line. Selecting ADDRESS from the top-line menu opens a small window in which you choose either the "To" line or the "From" line. Then the Address Book opens; the procedure thereafter is the same as you've seen before for CISMail. If you want to put the information for both sender and recipient into the Address Book, make a couple of passes with the Address Book here.

These Address Book commands are available when you're looking at a message in the Message Reader but NOT when the window is split and you're using the Reply Editor.

Sending the Reply:

When you're done in the Reply Editor, give the SEND command (pressing ESC, on the other hand, allows you to quit the reply without saving).

If you were working with CISMail, you'd then see a window in which you select "Standard" or "Return Receipt". There are different options (flags) for forum messages:

Standard

A standard "save" allows CIS to format the reply (wrap the lines) in a way that suits the terminal type of each reader. This may not be desirable if you want a message's lines to remain as you've typed them.

Unformatted

"Unformatted" prevents CIS from wrapping the lines to suit the reader's terminal type, preserving your original line endings. Suppose you make a reply that includes quotes taken from the "parent" message, marking the quoted lines with ">" - thus:

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> So, when the keys got stuck, what did you
> figure you were going to do about them?

CIS, in reformatting such a message, will probably bring the second ">" up onto the first line. Using "save unformatted" prevents the reformatting.

Private

Some forums support private messages, which stay in the forum (they aren't sent via CISMai), but only the senders and recipients can see them. If you don't know for sure that private replies are allowed in a given forum, ask the sysops about this. If you post a private message in a forum, a reply to it and any reply to THAT reply will always have the "private" flag set.

Both Pri/Unf

A private reply is normally saved "formatted." This option makes the reply private (within the forum) and prevents CIS from doing its own line-wrapping.

NOTE: No one other than the sender and recipient of private messages can see the messages, but it is possible that once in a great while, a software error could make public a message intended to be private. If you desire more secure mail, post via CISMai. Even then, you should be aware that no electronic mail can ever be considered truly private.

Via CISMai

This is, in our opinion, a better way of making a private reply, even if a forum supports private replies WITHIN the forum. Private replies take up space in the forum's message base; if people go hog-wild leaving private replies, they take up too many message "slots," limiting the number of public messages the forum can hold at a given time. This can become a nuisance to all forum participants.

This flag does not place the reply into the file containing your other outbound CISMai messages. When OzCIS transmits your outbound forum messages, a "Via CISMai" message is routed to CISMai at the moment OzCIS finishes posting the message. This option always saves messages "unformatted."

Change Info

This opens a CHANGE REPLY ADDRESS dialogue, containing SEND TO, SUBJECT, and SEC (section) fields. The fields will already be filled in with the existing name, address, and subject information. You can call up a pick-list of section numbers by pressing F2 when the cursor is in the SEC field. Change information as needed and press F10 to close the dialogue and save changes - or press ESC to close it without making any changes.

Confirming new name, subject, or section information closes the dialogue but leaves the window containing "Standard," "Unformatted," et al., on the screen.

Choosing any option BUT "Change Info" completes the reply, closes the Reply Editor, stores the reply in your outbound forum message file, and returns you to the Message Reader.

OzCIS stores outbound forum messages (replies and brand-new messages) in a file whose base is the first 8 characters of the forum's "GO" word and whose extension is .REP. As with .MES and .QS files, the .REP file is stored in the forum's own subdirectory.

Composing a New Forum Message:

Select FORUMS > NEW MESSAGE COMPOSE from the main screen.

Writing new forum messages is like writing new CISMai; you use the New Message Editor in both cases. But when you choose SEND from the menu, the MESSAGE ADDRESS dialogue options are different:

As before, you enter the recipient's name and UserID, and the subject matter. But there are also fields for the forum section number and for flags you might need to add ("Private," "unformatted," or "Via CISMai").

You can leave the flag-fields blank, but you must fill in the NAME, SUBJECT, and SECTION fields. Otherwise OzCIS beeps, puts an alert on the screen reading "ALL FIELDS MUST BE PROVIDED," and refuses to close the dialogue (unless you press ESC to cancel addressing the message). The ADDRESS field can be left blank so that you can post a message to "All" ("All" doesn't have a UserID number of its own, of course.)

You can also address messages to particular people, omitting their UserID

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numbers from the ADDRESS fields. It's entirely possible the recipients will see the messages the next time they log onto the forum. However, if they log on to check ONLY "waiting" mail, they will not get any messages missing the UserID numbers - CIS alerts them to "waiting" mail by reference to UserID numbers, not names.

TIP: If you need to post a message to a forum sysop but don't know his or her name or UserID number, post to **"*SYSOP"** (without the double quote marks but WITH the asterisk). CIS will send a message, thus addressed, privately to the sysop; when he or she replies, then you'll know the name and UserID number and will be able to store the information in your Address Book if you want. This kind of message is stored privately within the forum; it is not sent to the sysop via CISMail.

Composing a New Message and Staying in the Editor:

As with CISMail, you can compose a new message and use F4 to begin saving it instead of selecting SEND from the menu bar. As long as you go on using F4, confirming the name/address (etc.) information will save the message and leave you in the New Message Editor with a new blank editing screen.

Reviewing Outgoing Forum Messages:

The menu item FORUMS > VIEW OUTGOING MESSAGES is accessible when you've made replies to forum messages or composed entirely new messages (that is, when OzCIS has written a .REP file in the forum's subdirectory). The command opens the Review Editor, whose commands are the same as those you've seen when reviewing CISMail.

Selecting "KILL" from the top line of the Review Editor has the same effect as selecting "KILL" when you're reviewing outgoing CISMail: It gives you the choice to remove the message completely from the outbound mail file (the .REP file).

It's not the same as the "DELETE" command that can be given when you read forum messages in the Message Reader; in that case, the "kill" doesn't occur until the next time OzCIS goes on-line in the forum.

Saving Reviewed Messages:

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As with CISMail, when you quit the Review Editor, OzCIS asks if you want to save the messages - IF you set the configuration dialogue's "auto-save?" field to "ASK." If you reply YES, ALL of the new outbound messages are stored in the selected forum's subdirectory. The "save file" has a base name consisting of the first 8 characters of the forum's "GO" word and the extension .OBS (for "outbox save"). This file is a "folder" that can be opened later via the command FORUMS > MESSAGES IN FOLDERS. If you put "ALWAYS" into the configuration dialogue's "auto-save?" field, the outbound messages are saved in the .OBS file at roughly the time they are being posted in the forum.

Maximum Length of Forum Messages; Splitting a Message:

CISMail messages can be up to 512 Kbytes, but the maximum length of a forum message is only about 2,100 characters. As you write, keep an eye on the character count displayed in the New Message Editor's (or Reply Editor's) status line.

If the message length exceeds the maximum figure, OzCIS automatically splits it. At the end of each section, it inserts a line reading: "[OzCIS: Continued in next msg]" and at the beginning of the next section, it inserts a line reading

[OzCIS: Continued from previous msg]

A split always occurs at the beginning of a line - never in the middle of a line.

The automatic split does not take place until after you have finished composing the message and have closed the editor. You'll be able to see the "splits" when you review the outgoing mail.

There are times when you might want to force a split at a particular line rather than let OzCIS make the decision. In that case, use the SPLIT command (in the menu bar). Selecting SPLIT inserts a ^S character into the message at the present cursor position. A highlighted letter "S" appears there. This split will occur FIRST, over-riding any decision OzCIS makes UNLESS you put the "split character" too far down in the message body (in which case OzCIS will, itself, split the message, THEN read the manually inserted ^S). (You can confirm the cursor position - number of bytes "into" the message - by watching the readouts in the editor's status line.)

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If you are replying to an existing message, all "splits" are sent as replies to the original message, unless the first message in the split group is flagged "Private" or "Via CISMaiL."

When you compose a NEW multi-part message (i.e., not a reply to someone else's mail), whether split manually or automatically, OzCIS sends the second and any additional segments as a reply to the first message of the REPLY. In other words, when you see the message in the forum during your next pass, you'll see the second segment of the reply addressed TO YOU - even though you'd addressed the first part will to the recipient. This method best preserves message-thread ordering.

Exceptions: Again, in multi-part new messages posted PRIVATELY to a forum, or posted using the "Via CISMaiL" option, the original recipient's name will be used in all of the "TO:" lines of the message headers.

If You Need to Change an Outgoing Forum Message:

The outbound-message file OzCIS writes - the .REP file - is a plain- text file stored in the directory you've established for the forum. Each message within the file has a distinct header area you don't see when you're writing or reviewing outbound messages (unless you use the General Editor to view or edit the file). See "Custom Message Services," below, for information on quickly opening forum mail or other files without having to quit OzCIS and run a text editor.

Editing the text of an outbound message is simple enough; use the Review Editor. And you should use it for changing body text, rather than the General Editor. See note below for the reasons. But what if you need to change the header of a given message?

Here's a typical-looking header as it appears in the .REP file:

```
 ;REP 168277;;Bjorn MacFeldman 12345,987;Peculiar names;2
```

This would be a reply (REP) to message number 168277. The double-semicolon marks the place where a message-formatting instruction might be inserted. In this example, the formatting "field" is blank, indicating that CIS will apply "standard" formatting. The recipient is Bjorn MacFeldman, CIS UserID number 12345,987. The subject of the message is "Peculiar names." The message is to be posted in section 2 of the forum.

If you wanted to send the message "unformatted," you'd add the flag "UNF"

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to the header between the double semicolons. Thus:

```
;REP 168277;UNF;Bjorn MacFeldman 12345,987;Peculiar names;2
```

If it were not a reply but an entirely new message from you, the header information might look something like this:

```
;COMP;;Bjorn MacFeldman 12345,987;Peculiar names;2
```

... with "COMP" standing for "compose new message." This is also a message to the infamous MacFeldman and is also posted to section 2. Note, again, the double-semicolon string.

Other formatting flags that might appear in such headers:

PRI: private and with standard CIS formatting

UNF PRI: UNformatted and private

```
;MAIL;;Bjorn MacFeldman 12345,987;More about weird names;2
```

The line just above means the message goes to Mr. MacFeldman not in the forum but via CISMaiL. Formatting flags won't appear in a via- CISMaiL message posted initially to a forum. Note that the section number still appears at the end of the line.

If you need to open a .REP file and change any header information or message text, make VERY sure that:

1) You save the file in plain-text format; 2) You do NOT add or remove any semicolons in the header area; 3) You do NOT alter the string "EOM" at the end of each message. "EOM" will have on each side of it two "highbit" characters - box-drawing characters; do not alter or remove either of those.

OzCIS' General Editor always saves in plain-text format, so consider using it - if only to save time - when you need to alter .REP file headers (see "Other FORUM Commands," below).

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IMPORTANT: If you edit a forum message outside the Reply Editor or the Review Editor, OzCIS is NOT able to keep track of the message size such that it can automatically place a "split" character into the message body when need be. For this reason, PLEASE limit custom editing done with the General Editor (or your own text editor) to changing header information ONLY, and use the Review Editor to change the message body itself.

Saving Individual Forum Messages to a File:

The procedures are the same as noted elsewhere (for saving individual outgoing or incoming CISMai messages). You can save an individual message written TO you, using any file name you want. One difference between this procedure and the CISMai procedure: OzCIS stores the name of the last "save file" you used and puts that name by default into the data field that appears when you choose "SAVE".

Saving a message FROM you stores the message in a file whose base name is the first 8 characters of the forum's "GO" word and whose extension is .OBS. The .OBS file is stored in the subdirectory containing all of the other files for this forum; you cannot supply alternate path or file name information for an outbox-save file. As with CISMai, messages stored this way can be read again, and replied-to, via the command FORUMS > MESSAGES IN FOLDERS.

Quickscan Headers

When you go on-line and collect quickscan headers from a forum, OzCIS writes a file with the extension .QS in the forum's subdirectory. You peruse this file off-line, looking for messages of interest and selecting those you'd like OzCIS to retrieve in their entirety during the next 2nd pass to the forum.

NOTE: Later, during a 2nd pass when you retrieve messages in their entirety, OzCIS appends the new messages to the end of the file (if any) containing existing forum messages. This is different from the result of making a first pass and retrieving "waiting" or "new" messages, either of which will cause an existing forum message file to be OVER-WRITTEN.

Selecting FORUMS > TAG QUICKSCAN LIST opens a window that shows the most recently retrieved headers. If you'd collected headers for the DTPFORUM, the display might look something like this:

Quickscan Headers, 19:24:10 06-Jan-92

0 Msgs Tagged

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Reality of tech support	#169607: S 1 / The Corner Pub
5000 degrees KEVIN??	#169590: S 1 / The Corner Pub
Latest scanners	(1) #169602: S 6 / Scanners & Gizmos
Font prices, etc.	#169609: S 12 / Type & Typography
PFM->AFM?	#169612: S 12 / Type & Typography
Direct-to-plate tech.	(6) #169605: S 13 / Printing & Prepress

On each line OzCIS displays the subject of the message, the number of replies to that message (in parentheses), the message number, the forum section number and section name. In the above example, message 169602 has one reply; message 169605 has 6 replies.

This is a standard pick-list. You can scroll the list up and down with PG UP and PG DN (or use the mouse and the scroll bars and scroll arrows) if the list is longer than one screen. The other commands are:

SPACE BAR Tags the message now highlighted by the cursor bar. Tagging a message puts a check-mark next to it and moves the cursor bar to the next line. The space bar is also used to UNtag tagged messages. You can also left-click on a given line to tag a message.

ALT-T Tags ALL messages in the quickscan list.

ALT-U UNtags ALL messages in the quickscan list.

ALT-S Send (store) the tagged selections.

ESC Close the window without saving tagged messages.

When you save the list, OzCIS writes a file with the extension .GET into the forum's subdirectory (in this example, it would write DTPFORUM.GET). During the next 2nd pass, OzCIS reads the .GET file and retrieves in their entirety all messages you've tagged, including all the replies, plus any replies posted in the forum since you did the quick-scan. (You might end up with more messages than you originally thought you'd retrieve.) The .GET file is deleted when OzCIS is done retrieving the messages.

NOTE: Tagging a quickscan list and saving the selections ALWAYS causes any existing .GET file to be over-written.

Can't remember whether or not you've tagged the latest crop of quickscan headers? It's easy enough to forget if you have made several passes to a given forum on the same day. Keep an eye on the Available Forums window, always visible when you have the FORUMS menu dropped down. If a "?"

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appears next to a forum's name, there is a quickscan file that you haven't yet inspected. (The first time you open it, whether or not you tag headers, the "?" flag disappears from the Available Forums window.)

If you re-open the quickscan-headers window before going on-line to get the tagged messages, the check-markss will still be there. Alter them if you need to, then use the SAVE command to save the altered list. If you don't need to make any changes at all, press ESC to close the window. OzCIS then asks if you want to save the tagged headers. If you made NO changes, answering "N" will have no effect on the present tagging. Answer "Y" if you made changes and want to save them.

Other Forum Menu Commands

Messages in Folders:

Selecting FORUMS > MESSAGE IN FOLDERS opens a sub-menu with four items. The first three mentioned below are accessible only if OzCIS can find specific files it considers "folders".

SAVED RECEIVED MESSAGES

Opens a .SAV file whose base name is the first 8 characters of the selected forum's "GO" word. This is the file you create or add to by selecting "SAVE" when you're in the Message Reader. You can also give such files another name (see "Manual Selection," below).

SAVED OUTBOX MESSAGES

Opens an .OBS file whose base name is the first 8 characters of the selected forum's "GO" word. The .OBS file is created by OzCIS when you select "SAVE" in the Review Editor.

PURGED MESSAGES

When you configure a forum, you can tell OzCIS to save any forum message "sessions" it removes from the current message file (the .MES file). The purged-but-saved messages are stored in a file with the extension .PRG (as before, its base name is the first 8 characters of the

forum's "GO" word). This menu item opens the forum's .PRG file, if any.

MANUAL SELECTION

Allows you to select a "save file" for which you've assigned the name (rather than use OzCIS' default name). Selecting this item opens a window containing a data field for the file name (supply path information if need be). Entering a name including wildcards gives you a standard OzCIS file pick-list.

If the file you specify is not in the correct format for a "folder," OzCIS displays an error message and refuses to open the file (for more information about the correct file format, review the "messages in folders" section of the OzCIS documentation for CISMmail).

Selecting a "folder" opens the Message Reader. The previously- discussed Message Reader commands are available there, including access to the Reply Editor.

Custom Message Services:

Selecting FORUMS > CUSTOM SERVICES opens a sub-menu with four items:

CUSTOM ONLINE PROCESSING

Selecting this item opens a Custom Message Services window on the right side of the main screen - a pick-list with about 30 selections for custom processing, including retrieval of forum messages with specific message headers, messages posted in the past 'x' days (you specify what 'x' is), and so on. As you move the cursor bar through the list, text explaining the purpose of each selection appears at the bottom of the main screen. We think the hints are informative enough that the selections do not need to be discussed here one by one.

Two of the items (near the top) contain your OWN CIS UserID number. The initial OzCIS configuration you did automatically inserts the number into this part of the pick-list. The first item is a custom command to read all messages written by you; the second reads all written TO you.

There are a few items toward the bottom of the pick-list that pertain to collecting message headers (only). Most other ("read") options retrieve forum messages in their entirety.

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Some of the items, when selected, will bring up one or two additional windows into which you enter forum section numbers, subject matter text, date information, or someone's UserID.

These fields are all fairly long, but if you happen to fill a field completely, the cursor disappears from the field and the highlighted text in the field changes to the regular text attribute. The contents of the field are temporarily un-editable - but: Notice that there is a command name in the field, containing a single highlighted letter. Press that letter. You will be able to resume editing the field.

Custom processing commands are stored in the forum's subdirectory in the .GET file - the same one where OzCIS stores information about any quickscan headers you've tagged. Each new custom-processing command you select is added to the .GET file. During the next 2nd pass, OzCIS executes the custom instructions in the order you entered them.

NOTE: The .GET file is ALWAYS OVER-WRITTEN each time you tag quickscan headers. Therefore, if you want to retrieve tagged messages AND have custom message processing executed, do all of the tagging first, THEN select the custom processing commands.

PURGE MESSAGES FILES

Menu options are available under FORUMS->CUSTOM PROCESSING, and under MAIL, called "Purge Messages File". In either case, selecting these options do the following:

- 1) A dialogue pops up asking if you want to "Purge by sessions?". Answering YES selects purge-by-session, answering NO selects purge-by-days. (Pressing <ESC> aborts the process.)
- 2) Another dialogue pops up, allowing you to input the number of sessions or days to purge by. (Cancelling this dialogue also aborts the process.) The number of sessions/days defined in the Host Config (Mail) or Forum Config (Forum) is displayed as a default value; you can change this to anywhere between 1 and 99. Once you have done this, the purge process is performed.

Note: Whether or not purged messages are saved to the .PRG file is controlled by that setting in the Host Config (Mail) or Forum Config (Forum);

no input option is provided in this command for controlling whether purged messages are saved.

CUSTOM LIBRARY SCAN

This menu item allows you to make a custom scan of the selected library, selecting scanning criteria in ways not supported via the scan options of the forum configuration dialogue. The command opens a window called CUSTOM LONG SCAN IN <name of forum>, containing these fields:

LIBS TO SEARCH

The numbers of libraries where you want to search for files. As with other such data fields, enter the numbers separated by commas, or press F2 for a pick-list from which you select libraries.

CIS NAME MASK

Here, type a file name or file name "mask." If you wished to do a custom long scan for all of the OzCIS files in the IBMCOM forum, you could type a name like "OZC*.*".

AGE PARAMETERS

Enter a number representing how many days back you'd like to have OzCIS check for files matching the name-criteria just entered.

KEYWORDS

Enter a keyword you are hoping to find within the keywords "field" for the files in question (maximum, 17 characters). For more information on keywords, see the OzCIS documentation file FILES.DOC.

CUSTOM PARAMS

Customization information of the sort that you would normally enter at a CIS forum prompt when searching for files.

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Close the dialogue in the usual ways. A custom scan will be executed on either the next 1st or 2nd pass that visits this particular forum.

EDIT ONLINE PROCESS FILE

This is the second sub-menu item for custom message services. Selecting it opens an ONLINE FILES window on the right side of the screen, containing a list of files OzCIS reads and writes when processing forum messages. For the purposes of this explanation, suppose we're talking about DTPFORUM and that you've created the subdirectory C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM for it. These are the ONLINE FILES window's menu items:

OUTBOX FILE (.REP)

C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.REP is the file containing all of your replies and all newly-composed mail to be posted to the forum.

CUSTOM FILE (.GET)

C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.GET contains information pertaining to any quickscan headers you've tagged - and/or: any custom-on-line-processing information you've created via the command FORUMS > CUSTOM SERVICES > CUSTOM ONLINE PROCESSING.

SECTION NAMES (.SEC)

C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.SEC is the plain-text file OzCIS created when you had OzCIS make the automatic forum configuration pass.

PENDING UPLOADS (.UL)

C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.UL contains information about any binary files you are going to upload to one or more of the forum's libraries.

PENDING DOWNLOADS (.DL)

C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.DL contains information about any binary files you will download from one or more of the forum's libraries.

CURRENT MESSAGES (.MES)

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C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.MES is the file containing all forum messages retrieved by OzCIS during 1st or 2nd passes.

CURRENT QS HEADERS (.QS)

C:\OZCIS\DTPFORUM\DTPFORUM.QS contains the list of quickscan headers you peruse (and tag) off-line - not the list of headers you have already TAGGED for later retrieval in their entirety.

The files with the extensions .REP, .GET, .UL, and .DL are deleted at the end of the pass in which OzCIS reads them to get forum message or file processing instructions.

All of these menu items are accessible whether or not the files in question exist. If you select a file name that doesn't exist, OzCIS notifies you that it can't find the file, and you are returned to the FORUMS > CUSTOM SERVICES menu item.

Otherwise, OzCIS finds and opens the file at once in the General Editor. This is a convenient way to edit or view the various utility files without having to run the General Editor and then specify a full path and file name (or via choosing from a file pick-list).

NOTE: When you open a file this way, you are looking at the "raw" file, including all header information OzCIS normally does not display when you're using the Message Reader, Reply Editor, or Review Editor. And this method of opening, say, the .MES file does NOT provide you with a way to reply to the messages in it.

When you have one of these text files open in the General Editor, take careful note of the formatting for instruction lines within the file. It is especially important that if you need to edit an instruction line, you leave its general formatting as-is.

That is: Don't add or remove any semicolons; don't add or remove any "highbit" characters or character strings reading "SOM" or "EOM"; if an instruction appears entirely on one line, don't allow the line to break or wrap. If you change the subject-matter part of the header in an outgoing message, make sure it doesn't exceed the 24-character limit.

IMPORTANT: If you edit a forum message outside the Reply Editor or the

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Review Editor, OzCIS is NOT able to keep track of the message size such that it can automatically place a "split" character into the message body when need be. For this reason, PLEASE limit custom editing done with the General Editor (or your own text editor) to changing header information ONLY, and use the Review Editor to change the message body itself.

1st Pass in This Forum:

Selecting FORUMS > 1ST PASS IN THIS FORUM runs a 1st pass during which OzCIS visits ONLY the currently selected forum. If you want to run a 1st pass to ALL forums you have marked "active," use the ONLINE menu.

2nd Pass in This Forum:

Selecting FORUMS > 2ND PASS IN THIS FORUM runs a 2nd pass during which OzCIS visits ONLY the currently selected forum. Again, if you want to do a 2nd pass and process instructions for ALL forums that have 2nd- pass work pending, use the ONLINE menu.

Forum Error Messages

?Remote out of disk

When you request a download, OzCIS and CompuServe communicate to each other several pieces of information, one of which is the name of the file to be downloaded. This filename can include path information if desired. However, if the path information you provide is invalid, or the "Download Path" defined in the current Host Configuration is invalid, CIS will abort the download and issue a rather uninformative error message: "?Remote out of disk". There are several other reasons you may receive this error message, such as really not having enough disk space or having used an illegal character in the file name, but an invalid path is by far the most common reason. If you get this error message, check that your download path actually exists and that all filename information provided is valid. OzCIS will not create a directory for a download where one does not already exist.

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