
Cutting Through the Hype About Metadata

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Everything you need to know about metadata on one slide

- It's more than cataloging
- It's an essential part of any digital library project
- The planning is as important as the implementation
- Must choose the right tool for the job
- Always plan for interoperability
- There are lots of acronyms 😊

Well, not really...

- “Metadata” means many different things
- It involves applying traditional library principles to new environments
- These new environments are diverse
- Many of them have been developed for specific knowledge domains
- Metadata planning requires thinking abstractly
- There is *always* more to learn

Getting started with metadata

- Types of metadata
- Levels of control
- Methods of creating metadata
- A sample of other things to think about
- Some hot topics to watch

Some types of metadata

- Descriptive metadata
- Administrative metadata
 - Technical metadata
 - Preservation metadata
 - Rights metadata
- Structural metadata

How metadata is used

League of Nations. Secretariat. The aims, methods, and activity of the League of Nations. Geneva : Secretariat of the League of Nations, 1935.

View full record: [JUCAT](#)

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 - Publications
 - Preservation colophon

The Aims, Methods and Activity of the

**LEAGUE
OF
NATIONS**

League of Nations. Secretariat. The aims, methods, and activity of the League of Nations. Geneva : Secretariat of the League of Nations, 1935. Page 1 of 224

GENEVA 1935

SECRETARIAT OF THE LEAGUE
OF NATIONS

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Levels of control

- Data structure standards, a.k.a “metadata schemas”
- Data content standards
- There are others as well
- Standards don't always fall neatly into one category

When there's no data content standard...

Sheet Music Consortium Hosted by UCLA

You are not logged in

- Title : **Anaconda Two-Step. Souvenir Brockton Fair 1901.**
 - Creators : By Sylvester B. Grant.
Fisher
 - Publisher : Brockton, Mass.: Compliments of Old Colony Piano Co., 4 Main St.
Date : 1901
 - Subjects : Horses
Horse racing
 - Description : Respectfully Dedicated to mrs. A.E. Rice, Boston, Mass.
ads on back cover for Old Colony Piano Co.
 - Source : Johns Hopkins University, Levy Sheet Music Collection, Box 028, Item 003
 - Collection : Johns Hopkins University Levy Collection
 - Add a Note :
 - add/edit a note for this record

[[access online](#)] [- add to virtual collection]

Sheet Music Consortium Hosted by UCLA

You are not logged in

- Title : **Anaconda : two-step for piano**
 - Creators : Grant, Sylvester B. [composer]
Fisher, F.
 - Publisher : New York : Old Colony Piano Co.
Date : c1901
 - Subjects : Piano music
 - Type : Sheet music
 - Description : For piano
At head of title: Souvenir Brockton Fair 1901. Respectfully dedicated to Mrs. A. E. Rice, Boston, Mass
Illustration by F. Fisher
Includes publisher's advertising
 - Source : Lilly Library (Indiana University, Bloomington) Starr Sheet Music Collection.
Call number: M1 .S8 II Animals Horses
 - Relation : [IsPartOf http://www.indiana.edu/~liblilly/starr.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~liblilly/starr.shtml)
 - Rights : <http://purl.dlib.indiana.edu/iudl/lilly/starr/rights>
 - Collection : Indiana University
 - Add a Note :

Creating metadata

- HTML <meta> tags
- Spreadsheets
- Databases
- XML
- Library catalogs
- Digital library content management systems
 - [ContentDM](#)
 - [Greenstone](#)

A sample of other things to think about

- XML technologies (XML, DTDs, XML Schema, XSLT, XPath, etc.)
- Unique identifiers
- Linking between records
- Writing procedures
- Mapping between metadata schemas, a.k.a “crosswalking”
- Metadata shareability

Some hot topics to watch

- MODS
- METS
- VRA Core/CCO
- OAI
- FRBR
- RDA

Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS)

- Bibliographic element set
- Developed and maintained by the Library of Congress
- Expressed in XML
- Heavily influenced by MARC, but tag names are words rather than numbers
- Not necessarily tied to AACR2
- Allows for specification of controlled vocabularies and encoding schemes used

Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS)

- “Wrapper” schema for descriptive, administrative, and structural metadata
- Descriptive and administrative metadata can be in any format
- Developed in the digital library community, maintained by the Library of Congress
- Expressed in XML
- Often used for “preservation packages”

VRA Core/Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO)

- Initiatives of the Visual Resources Association
- Intended for the description for art & architecture
- VRA Core is a structure standard, CCO is a content standard
- Both currently in draft; VRA Core 4.0 and first version of CCO will be released early next year
- VRA Core takes some inspiration from Dublin Core
- VRA Core has separate records for Works and Images (and probably Collections in version 4)
- Together represent a major step forward for art image description

Open Archives Initiative (OAI)

- Protocol for metadata harvesting
- Began in the eprint community and expanded out
- “Data providers” expose metadata
- “Service providers” harvest metadata and pool it with metadata from other data providers
- Requires simple Dublin Core, but allows other supplementary formats
- Some OAI service providers
 - [OAIster](#)
 - [Arc](#)
 - [UIUC Digital Gateway to Cultural Heritage Materials](#)
 - [OLAC](#)

Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR)

- 1998 report from IFLA
- Purpose: “to provide a clearly defined, structured framework for relating the data that are recorded in bibliographic records to the needs of the users of those records.”
- User tasks: find, identify, select, obtain
- Entity-relationship analysis employed
- 3 groups of entities defined (see handout)
- Ideas starting to be extended to authority records

Resource Description and Access (RDA)

- Name for the forthcoming revision of AACR
- Will incorporate FRBR principles and terminology
- Structure
 - Part I — Resource Description
 - Part II — Relationships
 - Part III — Access Point Control
- Development has been controversial
 - Changes too extreme for some
 - Changes not extreme enough for others
- Scheduled for publication in 2008

For more information

- Metadata librarians listserv:
<<http://metadatalibrarians.monarchos.com>>
- Priscilla Caplan: Metadata Fundamentals for all Librarians, 2003
- These presentation slides and handouts:
<<http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/~jenlrile/presentations/iolug2005/>>
- jenlrile@indiana.edu