Metadata for You and Me: Moving Towards More Shareable Metadata

Sarah Shreeves
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
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Collection Registries

Photograph from Indiana University Charles W. Cushman Collection
Aggregations Aplenty

Metadata and content appearing in lots and lots of places – open web, subscription databases, specialized aggregations, general aggregations…

But what are we (aggregators) doing with that metadata?

Primarily simple aggregations
Primarily search and discovery

We need to build smart aggregations which requires that we make our data work harder (all credit to Lorcan Dempsey)
Metadata from DLF MODS Portal in Amazon’s A9 Search

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CUSHMAN PAGE
Karen Cushman was born in Chicago, Illinois. As a child, she learned about the public library very early. She would go alphabetically down the shelves and ...
http://www.scilis.rutgers.edu/~kvandor/cushman.html - 15k
Cached

Gapers Block, Chicago, IL - Photo Essay: Chicago Then &
What can aggregators do to enable shareable metadata?

- Better ways to navigate aggregations
- Specialized aggregations
  - Content focused
  - Audience focused
  - Services focused
- Develop and share tools and services that make the data work harder
  - Metadata remediation and normalization
  - Clustering
  - Incorporating collection description and other contextual information
Collaborative Effort to Distill the Experience of OAI service and data providers….

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OAI Best Practices

Best Practices for Shareable Metadata

A MS Word version of this document is available at: http://comm.nsdl.org/download.php/653/ (August 2005)

Introduction

- [Introduction]

General recommendations

- Metadata should be a [shareable and appropriate representation of the resource]
- [Granularity of description]
- Use of [metadata formats] in addition to simple Dublin Core is strongly encouraged
- [Tips for crosswalking]
- [Describing versions and reproductions]
- [Linking from a record to a resource] and other linking issues
- Providing [supplemental information] to service provider
- [Expressing rights over metadata]

Recommendations for classes of data elements

- [Titles]
- [Names]
- [Dates]
- [Subjects / Topics]
- [Language]
- [Geographic Places]
- [Identifiers]
- [Rights for Resources]
- [Bibliographic Citations]
- [Types of Resources]

Best Practices for Technical Aspects of Metadata

- [XML Namespaces and Schemas]
- [Character Encoding Issues]

Final Preparations

- [Final preparations]
Shareable Metadata...

- Is quality metadata (see Bruce and Hillmann)
- Is (at the least) human understandable outside of its local context
- Preferably is machine processable!
- Is an appropriate view of the resource
- Promotes search interoperability

  “the ability to perform a search over diverse sets of metadata records and obtain meaningful results.” (Priscilla Caplan)

- Is useful outside of its local context
  (Can we build something off of it?)
The Five C’s (and lots of S’s) of Shareable Metadata

Consistency
Coherence
Context
Communication
Conformance

Metadata standards
Vocabulary and encoding standards
Descriptive content standards
Technical standards
What else?

- Expression of provenance and reliability (trust)
- Better understanding of what’s worth putting effort into
- Metadata registries
- Giving back remediated metadata
- Demand that our vendors incorporate standards and give us the control to enable more shareable metadata (and content)
“We are beginning to explore how to share metadata for the digitized collections, and have very good technical solutions, but this has not yet matured into a well understood set of services. This is one aspect of what I meant when I said that this activity was in the 'cottage industry' stage.”

Lorcan Dempsey
March 5, 2005
http://orweblog.oclc.org/archives/000602.html
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