
ONIX AND OTHER OCLC INITIATIVES

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Publisher/vendor/aggregator-supplied metadata will become more valuable than ever as libraries work to avoid redundancy and to facilitate more cost-effective bibliographic data creation. One of the recommendations of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control (LCWG) focuses on increased metadata sharing by various constituencies in the information chain.

At the ALA ALCTS Electronic Resources Group meeting in January 2008, Timothy Savage described OCLC's use of ONIX data in the automation of MARC record creation for electronic resources.

OCLC is taking a great step forward in producing quality upstream data for electronic resources by "receiving metadata directly from the publishing community in an Extensible Markup Language (XML) standard called Online Information Exchange (ONIX)." ONIX is a widely-accepted standard in the publishing industry, used by both commercial publishers and Amazon.com.

Savage explained that there are two ways of automating the descriptive tasks of cataloging workflow for electronic resources, depending on the nature of those resources: 1) template-based cloning, and 2) born-digital processes.

In the template-based cloning process, used when there is already a record in OCLC for the same title in a different form, the best parts of the ONIX record will be combined with the best parts of data that is already in WorldCat.

If there is no matching OCLC record to clone, the system deletes unnecessary fields from the ONIX record and applies data from an OCLC format template or constant data to describe the born-digital record. The next step of the process is to add title-specific data from the ONIX record, including the e-ISBN and the URL for the link between the catalog and the e-resource. The final step of the born-digital process is quality control to ensure the completeness of the record--basically checking for the presence of call numbers, subject headings, and URLs. Since this is a fairly radical approach to automating descriptive cataloging, the whole process and details will have to be assessed by OCLC and its members, (i.e., each of us) to decide if it works.

Savage also indicated that a subject vocabulary developed by the Book Industry Study Group could potentially be used to leverage some of the work of assigning LC subject headings and call numbers. These days, Book Industry Standards and Communications (BISAC) headings are assigned by many publishers in their metadata records for electronic transfer of standardized subject information to trading partners. This sharing of BISAC publisher metadata is a library-book industry collaboration model that can potentially eliminate duplicate subject analysis work.

A summary of this presentation may be found at the Electronic Resources Interest Group blog. Go to <http://blogs.ala.org/erig.php>, choose "Edit," "Find in this Page," then search for the term "Savage."

Another important OCLC initiative is participation in the development of the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF), along with the Library of Congress (LC), Deutsche Nationalbibliothek (DNB), and Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF). This undertaking is in line with the LCWG's recommendations to transform LCSH and to share authority files internationally for a more seamless search environment.

Dr. Thom Hickey successfully led the project to automate the process of linking existing headings to authority records systematically in WorldCat by using identifiers from the VIAF and LCCNs instead of using a text string based on the name. The outcome of the project was announced by OCLC's Glenn E. Patton, in May 2008. Details of the project may be found at <http://outgoing.typepad.com/outgoing/2008/04/controlling-nam.html>

Automation of cataloging sounds great! I hope it liberates catalog librarians to engage in the work that represents the core values of cataloging, such as subject analysis, authority control, and original record creation. I may be a dreamer, but I believe the time will come when our intellectual cataloging skills and expertise will be recognized for the value they add in the bibliographic environment. Catalog librarians will continue to be proponents of effective resource discovery and delivery for our users.

Portland Program Announcement: Task Group on Vendor-Supplied Bibliographic Records

The Task Group on Vendor-Supplied Bibliographic Records will be meeting on Tuesday, July 15, from 12-1:30. We will be discussing several issues, including the progress to date on evaluating various vendor record sets and posting those evaluations to the group's wiki, the possibility of doing a combined wiki with ALA's Catalog Form and Function Interest Group, and planning for next year. Anyone who is interested in the topic of vendor-supplied MARC records is welcome to join us.

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Announcement: Full Draft of RDA Delayed Until October 2008

The Co-Publishers of RDA Online (the American Library Association, the Canadian Library Association, and the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) have reached the conclusion that further time is required to complete the development of the new software that will be used for distributing the full draft of RDA for constituency review.

The full draft was originally scheduled for release on August 4, 2008. Instead, it will now be issued in October 2008. The three month time period allocated for comments on the full draft is unchanged, and in this new schedule will extend from October into January 2009. More specific dates for RDA's final release will be forthcoming.

Members of the Committee of Principals (CoP) and the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (JSC) agree that the importance of distributing RDA content in a well-developed and tested version of the new software is such that a two-month delay is justified. They concluded that this extension is worthwhile given the ultimate value of the exceptional effort that is going into RDA and feel that the review by constituencies will be enhanced as a result.

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TS-SIS Acquisitions Committee Announcement

The TS-SIS Acquisitions Committee meeting will be followed immediately by the Acquisitions Roundtable meeting during this year's annual conference. The Committee meeting will begin at 7:00 am on Monday, 14 July, and will segue into the Roundtable meeting approximately at 7:45 am. The Roundtable meeting will conclude at 8:30 am. During the Committee meeting, reports will be given from the Task Forces on ACQWEB and Collection Development Policies, and the Roundtable will be an open discussion on acquisitions issues.

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