

ALA Midwinter Meeting 2014
Report from the Metadata Standards Committee
and the Metadata Interest Group
Kimmy Szeto, Interim Chair, Metadata Subcommittee, MLA BCC

Metadata Standards Committee

Eva J. Bolkovac and Jenn Riley, Co-Chairs

<http://connect.ala.org/node/217521>

The Metadata Standards Committee began with a discussion of their upcoming program “Understanding Schema.org” at the 2014 ALA Annual. Speakers are being considered at this time.

The committee then turned its focus back to the 2014 Midwinter, focusing on the many programs devoted to Bibframe being presented. The committee came to a consensus that it can have a role in bridging the gaps between the highly technical development of Bibframe, librarians, and coders who develop services for libraries. A long discussion ensued regarding how to implement the gap-bridging: forums, pre-conference, partnering with an interest group (such as ones under CaMMS), setting up a web site or a blog, developing instructional materials (manuals, infographics, posters, animations, videos), etc. No consensus was reached at the meeting; liaisons will take the partnership ideas back to their respective groups; discussion on a web site was further down on the agenda.

The Metadata Standards Committee wants to issue a joint statement with PCC on the report on internal MARC field punctuation. The two groups are now working on the language of that statement.

The topic returned to the idea of a community-curated metadata news/awareness web site. The issue of “bridging the gap” remained central in this discussion, with ACRL’s dh+lib web site being frequently cited. The committee agreed that such a site would be useful. After much discussion, one committee member volunteered to draft a statement of mission and scope for this site.

Metadata Interest Group

Maureen Walsh, Chair

<http://connect.ala.org/node/65847>

The MIG meeting at ALA Midwinter 2014 featured two presentations on large-scale metadata aggregation followed by a business meeting. Slides from these presentations can be found on the MIG site on ALAConnect: <http://connect.ala.org/node/65847>

The first presentation was given by Diane Hillmann titled “The Other Side of Linked Data: Managing Metadata Aggregation.” Diane focused on consumption of Linked Open Data (LOD)—taking advantage of LOD exposed by libraries and non-libraries and putting them to sensible use. An example of this, one that we are accustomed to, is OCLC’s curated, pre-aggregated MARC records for libraries to ingest into ILSs. Diane

pointed out that LOD are statements, not records, even though the initial import might still be in the form of records. She recognized the need to examine closely how we manage LOD resources, how we store them as statements, how we re-aggregate them based on the information services provided, and how we re-constitute meaningful displays of information. By “information services,” she means different ways to search, access, and act on these LOD, including meaningfully exposing them back to users and to the outside world. She suggested developing and defining services of modest scope, and then building them up. She called this an “orchestration” of services. Over time, a clearer service definition will emerge, especially in dividing tasks into human work and machine automation. Finally, she emphasized the importance of provenance of statements, which allows machines to decipher conflicting statements, at the same time eliminating the need to overlay, an ingrained concept among librarians.

The second presentation was given by Sandra McIntyre and Amy Rudersdorf from the Digital Public Library of America titled “Digital Public Library of America: Lessons from a Diverse Aggregation.” Their talk outlined the challenges of aggregating metadata of disparate flavors from 1,000+ data partners. They introduced DPLA’s hub model, in which metadata sets are first normalized (and improved) at the 123 hubs. The most challenging aspect is to standardize field labels, vocabulary, and geospatial names. They tried to reach out to all data partners to make them realize that their data will reach a global scope, so local knowledge and assumptions need to be explicitly stated and/or clarified (for example, what is “Springfield?”). They found that local institutions are generally more willing to cooperate with other local institutions. Their current modus operandi is to decentralize the work so that the message is passed down through regional hubs. Finally, they touched on the subject of rights. They are working on raising awareness of rights issues when data are exposed beyond the local level, and encouraging the use of Creative Commons licenses.

At the business meeting, the group discussed their upcoming session “Metadata Beyond the Library” at the 2014 ALA Annual, Saturday, June 28, 2014, 4:30-5:30 PM. The CFP went out in November, 2013, and the group received over a dozen proposals (presenters TBA). Due to overwhelming demand, the group is pursuing some form of a fall series after the 2014 ALA Annual.

Another session upcoming at the 2014 ALA Annual is “Metadata and Indicators for Open Access” on Saturday, June 28, 10:30-11:30 AM. There will be 2 presenters: 1 confirmed, 1 in negotiation.

The group discussed the difficulty in keeping a blog going. They want to try a rotating editorship model where each interested member of the group serves as the blog editor for a week or a month, and editors will curate contents as they see fit. The Metadata Blog can be found here: <http://www.alcts.ala.org/metadatablog/> This might be of interest to MLA’s own “Metadata for Music Resources” web site, and, perhaps, ETSC’s Music Discovery Requirements site.