

Members Council February 2003
Interest Group
Discussion Summary Report

Name of Group ___Digital Libraries Research Interest Group_____

Recorder ___Sharon Bosarge_____

1. Summary of topics & discussions

Full presentation slides for the two meetings are located at
<http://www.oclc.org/research/memberscouncil/meetings/2003/02/>

Following were the three primary topics of the day 1 session of this interest group meeting.

- **Overview of current projects and activities within the Office of Research.** In addition to the overview, the presentation also covered the process for initiating research and the framework within which research projects are selected. Current projects center around three primary themes; Metadata Management, Content Management, and Knowledge Organization.
- **Non-MARC Cataloging Standards.** The presentation covered a brief overview of the many new and emerging metadata format standards. Among the members of the group, there were few that had any metadata description projects underway that were using any of these standards. It was noted that Library of Congress is involved in most, if not all, of these standards. Although convergence of standards is desired by librarians and ultimately necessary, it does not seem likely that it will occur any time soon.
- **Dublin Core Metadata Initiative.** The presentation covered an update on the current status of the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative and its relationship to OAI. OAI promotes interoperability between legacy repositories built from diverse metadata schemas, all mapped to Dublin Core as the lowest common denominator.

On Day 2, the Digital Libraries Research Interest met jointly with the Cataloging and Metadata Interest Group. During this meeting of the interest groups, Office of Research staff (Dempsey, Vizine-Goetz, Hickey, and Godby) presented an overview and demonstrated specific projects underway in the "Web Services" technology area. The term "Web Services" in this case represents a way to deliver modular, web-based, machine-to-machine components that add value to metadata by transformation, enrichment, and recombination. The knowledge contained inherently within WorldCat (class numbers, subject headings, authority headings, etc.) is leveraged to add value to the end result of the transformation process. Examples demonstrated included: entering a DDC number and getting back DDC captions, correlating GSAFD (genre terms for fiction) with LCSH, translations of Dewey captions into a number of languages, a schema registry where metadata schemes can be translated from one to another (such as MARC to DC, ONIX to MARC, etc.) through use of XML and an ISBN "bookmarklet" tool which enables a person to (i) search a bibliographic web site (example: Amazon), then (ii) click a toolbar button to transmit the ISBN found on the Amazon record to an OCLC database of related "FRBR-ized" ISBNs and (iii) launch the wider search of multiple, related, ISBNs against a local library OPAC. Following the presentations, a brief discussion ensued surrounding the questions listed in the agenda. A few points are listed below.

- Of the libraries represented in the room, only 6 mentioned having undertaken projects involving XML-based metadata or other non-MARC schema, such as EAD

- Members wondered how to get ILS vendors to allow loading of other schema besides MARC. As long as MARC is all that can be loaded into the OPAC, that will limit many libraries from utilizing non-MARC schema.
 - A FEDLINK delegate mentioned that government libraries are currently being asked to take on many types of information management tasks (beyond management of traditional library collections) within various agencies. She views the work presented by the Office of Research as giving libraries the necessary tools to work with the multitude of data types and that this work is crucial to the information management role.
2. List **3-4 significant issues** that the group wants to communicate to Members Council and OCLC.
- **Library Staff Education.** The need for library staff education on the what, how, and why of the multitude of competing metadata schemas was identified as crucial. The group felt that both OCLC and the Regional Networks have an important role to play in providing library staff education on emerging metadata creation trends and schemas. The group noted that unless a standard is fully understood, it shouldn't be rejected as inappropriate for a project at hand. There is a critical need for additional educational opportunities in this area.
 - **Profusion of standards.** The profusion of standards is creating a barrier to providing good service to users. Additionally, local library system vendors need to expand their support beyond just MARC.
 - **Business Model.** Developing the appropriate business model for Web Services must be an integral part of the development work for these tools. Various business models in use in other sectors for similar services should be studied for their strengths and weaknesses.
3. Remembering that OCLC's role is to be the leading global library cooperative, which of the issues in #2 are most urgent and why?

Library Staff Education. Understanding the standards and their strengths and weaknesses is crucial to selecting the best means for completing the important metadata creation projects at hand.

4. Please indicate if the group feels that an issue or presentation should be presented to the full Council.

None were identified for full Council.