

Library and Archives Data Structures

EAD, MODS, RSLP Collection
Description

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Differences, similarities

- All data structure standards
- 3 flavors of XML: DTDs, XML Schema Language, RDF
- Different community influences

EAD – Encoded Archival Description

- Expressed as an SGML/XML DTD
- Society of American Archivists
- Supports archival descriptive practices and standards
- Supports discovery, exchange and use of data

What EAD is not

- Content or data value standard
 - ISAD(G)
 - APPM
 - RAD
 - Coming soon...CUSTARD
- Archival management system

Before EAD

- MARC AMC
- Limitations of MARC AMC
- Need for a machine readable format
- Need for platform and software independence

Brief history

- 1993 – FindAid Project
- 1995 – Alpha
- 1996 – Beta
- 1998 – Version 1.0
- 2002 – Version 2002

Continued Relationship with MARC

- Desirability of having collection-level description in the catalog
- Use of “encodinganalog” attributes
 - Produce MARC records from finding aid
 - Produce some finding aid fields from MARC record

How applicable for other communities?

- Based very much on the needs of archival community
- Good at describing blocks of information, poor at providing granular information
- Some uptake by museum community
 - Museums and the Online Archive of California project
 - Challenge in defining “collection”
 - “...groups of meaningfully related objects within a museum”

MODS Metadata Object Description Schema

- Initiative of Network Development and MARC Standards Office at LC
- Motivated by LC's move forward into XML
- Expressed in XML Schema Language
 - OAI, METS, ZING
- MARC-like
- Allows for more richness than Dublin Core without enforcing MARC

MODS top level elements

- Title Info (mandatory)
- Name
- Type of resource
- Genre
- Origin Info
- Language
- Physical description
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Target audience
- Note
- Subject
- Classification
- Related item
- Identifier
- Location
- Access conditions
- Extension
- Record Info

MODS features

- Does not require or assume a particular descriptive standard
- Intuitive design
 - Element descriptions are repurposed throughout the schema
 - Language-based element names
- Recursive hierarchy allows for description of complex digital objects

```
<titleInfo>
  <title>William P. Gottlieb Collection</title>
</titleInfo>
<relatedItem type="constituent">
  <titleInfo>
    <title>[Portrait of Charlie Parker and Tommy Potter, Three
Deuces, New York, N.Y., ca. Oct. 1947]</title>
  </titleInfo>
  <name>
    <namePart>Gottlieb, William P.</namePart>
    <namePart type="date">1917-</namePart>
  </name>
  <identifier type="local">LC-GLB23-0542</identifier>
</relatedItem>
```

MODS and MARC

- Does not include the full element set
- Does not cover all content rules
- “Round-trip” conversion not possible — a one-way ticket only

MODS and Dublin Core

- MODS is richer than Dublin Core
- More natural fit in a library environment
- Unqualified Dublin Core still an excellent transfer syntax between diverse descriptive communities

Uses of MODS

- Library of Congress
 - Web Archiving
 - Audio / Visual project
 - OAI
- California Digital Library
- University of Chicago Press

More MODS

- Version 1.2 June 2002 – January 2003
- Version 2.0 now available
- Part of the “MARC tool kit”
- User guidelines newly issued, very MARC based

How applicable for other communities?

- Based on the needs of the library community, but could well be useful elsewhere
- Good at describing granular information
- More generalize user guidelines will help make this more palatable for some

RSLP Collection Description

- Implemented in RDF/XML
- Research Support Libraries Programme (RSLP) and UK Office for Library and Information Networking (UKOLN)
- “Dublin Core” for collection description
- Very broad definition of “collection”

RSLP CLD Motivations

[From 1999 proposal]

To enable...

- users to discover and locate collections of interest
- users to perform searches across multiple collections in a controlled way
- software to perform such tasks on behalf of users, based on known user preferences.

Collections Broadly Defined

- Collection
 - “an aggregation of items”
- Aggregations of, e.g.
 - natural objects: fossils, mineral samples...
 - created objects: artifacts, documents, records...
 - digital resources: documents, images, multimedia objects, data, software...
 - digital surrogates of physical objects: documents, images...
 - metadata: catalogue records, item descriptions, collection-level descriptions...

Collection description is...

- Information about collection
- Information about location
- Information about agents (owners, collectors, administrators, etc.)

What collection description is not

- Goes to “sub collection” level, not to items
- A replacement for EAD
- Does not provide data value & content standards
- Does not provide a community focus (as yet)

Relationship to EAD

- Not intended as a replacement for EAD
- Desirability of mapping from ISAD(G) compliant EAD to RSLP Collection Description

How is it useful?

- Acknowledgement that collection description is different than item-level description
- Still “early days”
- Do users want a Dublin Core for collections?

Summary

■ EAD

- Best suited for archival description
- Needs help at the item level

■ MODS

- Richer than Dublin Core
- Community best practice guidelines would enhance usefulness

■ RSLP Collection Description

- “Dublin Core” for collections
- Community best practice guidelines would enhance usefulness



