Standards Column: Transforming Metadata

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And They Were There
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eBook Intelligence: The 8th Annual Health Sciences Lively Lunch — Presented by Sandra Wenner (Assistant Director for Content Management, Rush University Medical Center Library); Pam Harley (ePublishing Strategy & Product Development, American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc.); Deborah Ruck (Information Resources Librarian, Medical College of Wisconsin Libraries); Meg White, Moderator (Director Technology Services, Rittenhouse)

Reported by: Ramune K. Kubilius (Northwestern University, Galter Health Sciences Library)
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After the introductions of moderator White and brief “highlights” of health publishing/library industry trends from the past year (by ATG session reporter Kubilius), panelist Harley revealed some eBook “secrets” from an association publisher’s perspective. Although her organization is “not-for-profit,” the publishing division is expected to turn a profit, maximizing the association’s brand. APPi products (their own platform) are designed for individual users, since 92% of the marketing of APPi products is to members. Associations also often have to deal with VIP author demands. Ruck provided examples of challenges in collection development/management of eBooks: e.g., a publisher requirement that faculty needs to license ancillary materials; bandwidth problems; difficulties with usage statistics and tracking eBook collection usage; different licensing start dates in the “brick by brick” model. She threw out the challenge to advocate for changes and communicate with publishers on what is wanted, needed. Lawyer and librarian Wenner provided some cautionary notes about licensing and reminded librarians of their responsibilities — leave yourself time, ask questions, make revisions, read carefully, watch for clause traps (copyright, statute of limitations, etc.). She shared some common misconceptions — you cannot ask for changes/deletions, everything is written in stone, “the vendor won’t like me if I ask for this.” Her conclusion? Contracts don’t kill anyone.

Just What the Doctor Ordered: A Remedy for Breaches — Presented by Mary Ann Mahoney (Head, Chemistry & Chemical Engineering Library, UC Berkeley); Margaret Phillips (Electronic Resources Librarian, University of California, Berkeley)

Reported by: Miranda Schenkel (SLIS Student, University of South Carolina, Columbia) <schenkel.mailbox.sc.edu>

Mahoney and Phillips’ presentation focused on licensing breaches and suggested best practices for publishers and librarians in the midst of dealing with violations. Because users may not be aware of restrictions on their use of databases, it is important to educate users on access limitations. Data and text mining are becoming more commonplace, as these methods are being used more as the nature of research changes. But how do you compel publishers, vendors, and access providers to view data and text mining as legitimate research? Future contracts may reflect these changes in the “academic use” of information, and perhaps allow a higher threshold for downloading information, as “excessive use” is the most common type of breach.

Just What the Doctor Ordered: A Remedy for Breaches

Second Report by: Ann Marie Miller (SLIS Student, University of South Carolina, Columbia) <annmarie.miller@gmail.com>

The speakers discussed scenarios where security was breached, usually accidentally, by searchers looking through online records. They suggested dealing with security breaches by giving users the benefit of the doubt, establishing a high threshold, limiting suspension to the single IP address, not asking for certification of deletion of data, not contacting multiple enforcement sources simultaneously, understanding the changing nature of research, and to not be restrictive out of fear, not to be a policeman, and don’t assume that patrons understand appropriate use.

The speakers took questions, and gave a number of real life examples where users breached the licensing terms by conducting searches that touched a large number of records without knowing that what they were doing was not a proper use of the system. That’s all the reports we have room for in this issue, but we do have more reports from the 2008 Charleston Conference. Watch for them in upcoming issues of Against the Grain. You may also visit the Charleston Conference Website at www.katina.info/conference for additional details.

Standards Column — Transforming Metadata

by Todd Carpenter (Managing Director, NISO, 1 North Charles Street, Suite 1905, Baltimore, MD 21201; Phone: 301-654-2512; Fax: 410-685-5278) <tcarpenter@niso.org> www.niso.org

Metadata is among the most critical requirements of our community. It is the one thing that ties producer to purchaser, acquisition through management and curation, searcher to content, and reader to reference. Each supplier and user of metadata, though, has different needs, different formats, and different priorities for the metadata created and used. It is these subtleties that over time have led to a variety of approaches, a number of community-specific standards, and problems in quality within the chain of information from creator to library and end users.

Today the need to share metadata from different suppliers and creators is greater than ever, if for no other reason than because the creation, distribution, and useful integration of metadata are costly processes. Last year, in part in reaction to the significant costs of catalog record creation, the Library of Congress convened a Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control (http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/). That group’s report (http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/news/lnwgc-ontheerecord-jan08-final.pdf) and the LC response (http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/news/LCWGResponse-Marcum-Final-061008.pdf) both highlighted the need of the library community to rely more heavily on publisher-supplied metadata to reduce the tremendous costs within the library community of creating catalog records. There are certainly challenges to this approach of building cataloging. Consider the differences between the ONIX data format and the MARC cataloging record format, partly due to the different purposes and uses of ONIX and MARC. For example, publishers use ONIX data to provide forthcoming information to booksellers that could significantly change by the final release of a text, while librarians want their MARC data to reflect the final publication. These issues, among many others, make the use of publisher supplied metadata in cataloging fraught with potential problems. Earlier this year, the Library of Congress announced a follow-up study to research and describe the marketplace for cataloging records in the MARC format to explore the economics of current practices and the incentives and barriers to sharing information.

Publishers, too, are focusing on the exchange of metadata and the costs within the publishing supply chain. The library community is only one recipient of their metadata. During the Charleston Conference last year, Andreas Bieedenbach (http://www.linkedin.com/pub/dt/ andreas/biedenbach), eProduct Manager Data Systems & Quality at Springer Science + Business Media (http://www.springer-sbm.de/) described the variety of organizations, to whom his departments distribute metadata — and the many formats that those organizations require. The list was long and the challenges many. It is not surprising that Springer has a large team focused on this issue. Likely, many publishers have similar teams invested in addressing the problems of distributing metadata to their community.

In an environment when controlling costs is a high priority for all organizations, the management and sharing of metadata can be an area of significant continued on page 69

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>
From the University Presses — The Google Settlement: Boon, Boondoggle, or Mixed Blessing?

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Everyone seems to agree that the Google settlement announced in October 2008 represents a milestone of some kind in the development of access to information, but there is a wide spectrum of views about whether, overall, this is a good thing or a bad thing as far as the general public interest is concerned. Publishers appear to be as mixed in their opinions as librarians.

A lively debate is ongoing over the libelous listserv on the merits of the settlement. Rick Anderson, in a posting on January 23, prefers to accent the positive: “Look at what the Google settlement has done: the general public now has far better (though still imperfect) access to vastly more literary and scientific writing than it ever has had before. This access is, by any sane definition of the term, free. (More comprehensive access is available at a price, but what’s available at no charge is still amazing.) Even better, the content to which we now have access is, for the first time ever, fully searchable, and we can get it from our homes and around the clock. Better still, the public is paying virtually nothing in return for what it now has.”

Others have more explicitly developed Vaidyanathan’s critique in terms of an alleged monopoly or quasi-monopoly that the settlement has effectively created for Google. Robert Darnton, writing about “Google & the Future of Books” in the New York Review of Books (February 12, 2009), concedes that “Google can make the Enlightenment dream come true,” but reminds us that “the eighteenth-century philosophers saw monopoly as a main obstacle to the diffusion of knowledge — not merely monopolies in general, which stifled trade according to Adam Smith and the Physiocrats, but specific monopolies such as the Stationers’ Company in London and the booksellers’ guild in

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