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Not So Strange Bedfellows: Information Standards for Librarians AND Publishers

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Abstract

As our collections become increasingly electronic, standards play an increasingly important role not only for libraries but also for publishers. This session will describe standards and recommended practices that are designed to support the publishing, identification, and retrieval of electronic materials, including KBART (Knowledge Bases and Related Tools), the DOI (Digital Object Identifier), and EPUB. What are they, what do they do, how do they relate to the work of a broad spectrum of attendees, and, particularly, why we should care? The presenters are co-chairs of the NISO (National Information Standards Organization) Content and Collection Management Topic Committee.

As our collections become increasingly electronic, standards play an increasingly important role not only for libraries but also for publishers. This session will describe standards and recommended practices that are designed to support the publishing, identification, and retrieval of electronic materials, including KBART (Knowledge Bases and Related Tools), the DOI (Digital Object Identifier), and EPUB (not an acronym). What are they, what do they do, how do they relate to the work of a broad spectrum of attendees, and, particularly, why we should care? The presenters are co-chairs of the NISO (National Information Standards Organization) Content and Collection Management Topic Committee.

Standards are a collaborative effort by and for members of the information community to facilitate the work of all constituencies by doing things in a specified way to solve a shared problem. Standards and recommended practices may be developed by official standards bodies such as the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or emerge from industry groups such as the International Digital Publishing Forum (IDPF) or from member organizations such as the United Kingdom Serials Group (UKSG).

NISO is a membership organization representing all participants in the information community (creators, publishers, aggregators, vendors, libraries, and individual consumers). It identifies, develops, maintains, and publishes technical standards and recommended practices to support information retrieval, repurposing, storage, metadata, and preservation. More information about NISO can be found at http://www.niso.org/.

ISO is an independent, non-governmental organization made up of members from the national standards bodies of 162 countries. It has published nearly 20,000 international standards in the areas of technology and business. More information about ISO can be found at http://www.iso.org.

The IDPF is a global trade and standards organization that promotes the development of electronic publishing applications and products to benefit content creators and consumers as well as makers of reading systems. It develops and maintains the EPUB content publication standard. More information about the IDPF is available at http://idpf.org.

The UKSG is a membership-based organization with members from all parts of the scholarly information community (librarians, publishers, technology vendors, and intermediaries). It works to facilitate an efficient information chain and better understanding among all members of the scholarly and professional information communities. More information about the UKSG is available at http://www.uksg.org.

KBART

KBART is an acronym for Knowledge Bases and Related Tools. It is a National Information Standards Organization (NISO) Recommended Practice, RP-9-2014. A joint project of NISO and the United Kingdom Serials Group (UKSG), it recommends best practices for providing accurate and timely metadata to link resolver knowledge bases by content providers.

KBART was first released in 2010 (Phase I). It provided guidance on the role and importance of accurate and timely metadata supply to link resolvers to support the consistent and correct resolution of OpenURLs. It was revised in 2014 (Phase II) to go beyond basic metadata guidance, focusing on more granular, complex issues causing problems in metadata supply to knowledge bases. It also provides educational and outreach opportunities for all stakeholders and a centralized information portal.

What is the publisher's view of KBART?

- KBART Phase I and Phase II provide guidance on:
    - o Routes to providing higher quality data to Discovery Service partners and customers
    - o Higher quality data drives effectiveness of discovering and accessing content
- The KBART RP guidelines provide foundation for interoperability of key metadata elements between publishers, content aggregators, and discovery service partners
- Publishers benefit from accurate linking to their content and subsequently the possibility of increased usage of their content
    - o Increased revenue and decreased operational costs

What is the library's view of KBART?

- Libraries rely on accurate and consistent information from publishers, aggregators,

and link resolver knowledge bases to manage holdings and coverage information for licensed resources

- Inaccurate knowledge base information leads to poor service and user frustration
    - o Most users will just go somewhere else (Google, etc.) if our discovery systems say we have an article but access is denied
    - o Even if users report a problem, libraries do not have the staff to investigate large numbers of them and to manually update records

More information can be found at the KBART web site at http://www.niso.org/workrooms/kbart.

DOI

DOI is an acronym for Digital Object Identifier, defined as the digital identifier of an object. It is an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standard, ISO 26324. It allows the registration and use of persistent interoperable identifiers, called DOIs, for use on digital networks. DOI names permanently identify content. If the URLs or services change over time, e.g., the resource moves, this same DOI will continue to resolve to the correct resources or services at their new locations. Publishers collaborate with CrossRef, which maintains a database that keeps track of a current web address associated with each DOI. DOIs are assigned through a federation of worldwide Registration Agencies (RA).

What is the publisher's view of DOI?

- DOIs are coupled with metadata, so they can be modified over time to keep track of the locations and characteristics of the objects they identify, both for publishers and libraries
- Decreased operational costs:
    - o Benefit from efficient management and accurate tracking

- o Increased ability to more easily automate processes

- Increased interoperability and collaboration across participants in information community

What is the library's view of DOI?

- Use of the DOI facilitates discovery of the content even If the publisher or platform has changed over time

- Users can find articles quickly and easily without confronting old or broken links

More information can be found at the ISO website at https://www.iso.org/obp/ui/#iso:std:43506:en.

EPUB

EPUB is an International Digital Publishing Forum standard. The current version is EPUB 3.0.1. Previous iterations include:

- Open E-Book Publication Structure (OEB) from 1999

- EPUB 2 (2007 and 2010)

EPUB is a distribution and interchange format standard for digital publications and documents based on web standards. It defines a means of representing, packaging, and encoding structured and semantically enhanced web content for distribution in a single-file format. It allows publishers to produce and send a single digital publication file through distribution and offers consumers interoperability between software/ hardware for unencrypted "reflowable" digital books and other publications to suit the different display dimensions of mobile devices.

What is the publisher's view of EPUB?

- Decreased operational costs:
  - o Produce and send *a single digital publication file* through distribution
  - o Interoperability between software/hardware
  - o Reflowable digital books and other publications for all devices

What is the library's view of EPUB?

- Allows library users to read a book on disparate devices

- Easier viewing on mobile devices

- Display optimized for each device type

More information can be found at the International Digital Publishing Forum website at http://idpf.org/epub.

Summary

Our intention during this poster session was twofold. First, we wanted to highlight three of the standards and recommended practices which have been jointly developed by libraries, publishers, vendors, and other interested parties within the information community. Secondly, we wanted to emphasize that standards and recommended practices benefit all members of the information community, not just publishers and not just libraries. In all cases, the ultimate goal is to provide better, more efficient, and more reliable access to information resources.