Against the Grain

November 2007
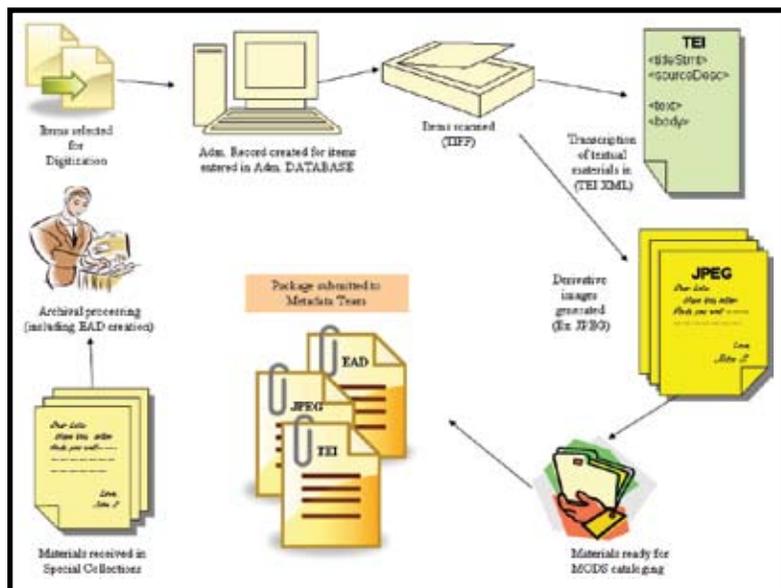
People Profile: Susan Mueller

Editor

administrative records, and transcriptions (if applicable) are transferred to the Metadata Team in the Technical Services department, where item level Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS) records are then created. By parsing out these duties appropriately, we are able to capitalize on the expertise of our various library departments' personnel: from archival description to scanning to descriptive cataloging, and thereby compress the time elapsed from initial processing to delivery in a digital collection.

Schema and Project Selection

Our digital collections currently employ a number of metadata schemas including Qualified Dublin Core (DC), EAD, Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), MARC, and MODS. While EAD is used for collection-level description in our Special Collections, we chose MODS as the schema appropriate for item level cataloging of these rare materials due to the diversity of their content, genre and resource types; additionally, MODS is rich enough to support the many access points and high level of granularity we chose to express in our records.

Under the supervision of the Metadata Librarian, the DLC and associated digital project grant staff had already begun creating MODS records for most of our digital content. The similarities between MODS and MARC created a unique opportunity for catalogers to carry over their existing skills of bibliographic description to a rich metadata format. MODS also offers other advantages that prove useful to our project. **Beall** summarizes these advantages: (1) MODS is highly connected to AACR2 and LCSH, but at the same time is flexible; and (2) associated with the library domain, MODS offers a high level of interoperability, is strongly supported by **Library of Congress**, is highly adaptable, and can handle most metadata functions.[3]

Figure 1

against the grain
people profile

Marielle Veve

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BORN & LIVED: Born and raised in San Juan, P.R.; lived in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, and now in Knoxville.

EARLY LIFE: I'm still in my early life!!

FAMILY: Two dogs (Oprah & RoJo).

EDUCATION: B.A. Geography, **University of Puerto Rico**, 2000; M.L.I.S., **Louisiana State University**, 2002.

FIRST JOB: Cataloger, **Tulane University**.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: Started as a student worker in an academic library for five years. Then realized I wanted to pursue this career professionally, so decided to get the MLIS. Later, worked at **Tulane University** for three and half years as the Latin American Catalog Librarian. Currently work as the cataloger for the **University of Tennessee Libraries**.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE TO: Spend time with my dogs, watch foreign movies, travel.

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: Cruelty to animals, rudeness.

PHILOSOPHY: Do to others as you would have them do to you.

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Becoming a PCC/NACO trained cataloger and having the opportunity to apply this knowledge in organizing digital collections.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Getting more immerse in the cataloging and organization of digital materials, having more material on the topic published.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: Cataloging staff will get more involved in metadata initiatives to help catalog the increasing volume of digital resources. 🌲

Team-building

With a well-defined digitization project and rich metadata standard in place, we were ready to invite Technical Services team members to contribute their metadata expertise to building our digital collections. Prior to this integration effort, however, metadata was coordinated by the Metadata Librarian in the DLC. Most technical services staff had little to no experience with non-MARC metadata standards and were also unfamiliar with the Metadata Librarian. To build a successful team of metadata creators in the Technical Services department, we employed the following strategies:

Building buy-in and ownership. To prepare the department for the integration effort, the Metadata Librarian gave a short presentation about the opportunity to become part of a metadata team. During this time, she defined the project and its mission, demonstrated the tools used for cataloging, as well as the digital collection that exemplified the end product. The introduction was aimed to make the department aware of the opportunity, ease their fears about metadata by illustrating the many commonalities with MARC cataloging, and raise curiosity about the project. The department members were invited to participate in the project on a volunteer basis. This element of personal choice allowed us to form a metadata team that embraced our mission and took ownership of the project together.