**Networked Resources & Metadata Interest Group**

**Midwinter Meeting, January 25, 2009**

**8:00 am – 10:00 am**

**Denver, Colorado**

1. **Facilitated Discussion on Taxonomy Development** (90 minutes)

The first portion of the NRMIG meeting featured a presentation on taxonomy development by Laura Dorricott, Project Delivery Manager of Taxonomy services with Dow Jones. Her presentation can be viewed at: <http://presentations.ala.org/index.php?title=Sunday,_January_25>

* Taxonomies are part of an “evolutionary path” featuring the following elements:

Dictionaries & flat lists 🡪 Structured authority files 🡪 Hierarchical taxonomies 🡪 Controlled vocabulary thesauri 🡪 Ontologies.

* Taxonomies form the building blocks for ontologies; ontologies are semantic representations of the real world in all its rich diversity.
* The purposes of controlled vocabulary include translation, consistency, indication of semantic relationships, hierarchical relationships to assist browsing, search and retrieval (precision and recall). The return of investment comes when you enable someone to save time and increase productivity.
* In response to a question: folksonomies are actually in a different class than taxonomies, as they generally consist of social tagging that are not typically hierarchical.
* Keyword searching has many drawbacks and is insufficient for information seeking purposes. Taxonomy helps people filter out the noise and discover relevant information needs regardless of what they’re labeled.
* Search and navigation are not alternative, but complimentary solutions that serve audiences well considering the many different viewpoints they bring to the table.
* When building taxonomies and controlled vocabularies, you must account for ambiguity (polysemes), synonymy, semantic relationships (hierarchical and associative), facets, warrant, structures, metadata (controlled vocabulary).
* In response to a list of standards, Diane Hillman recommended that SKOS (Simple Knowledge Organization System) be added to that list (see <http://metadataregistry.org> for more information).
* What is the rationale for creating a thesaurus, which is usually labor-intensive and requires specialized software when it grows beyond a certain size? A revealing statistic is that 40% of corporate users can’t find the information they need to do their jobs on the intranet. Companies have many information retrieval issues which result in loss of productivity and profits. There is significant value in using controlled vocabularies, including improving productivity, reducing costs, gaining competitive advantages, driving usage, driving cultural change, and leveraging information management skills.
* In response to a question about corporate versus library taxonomy, she revealed that enterprise-wide taxonomies usually feature around fifteen terms up top, fairly broad-based and not very deep. However, if the client offers information about information, they will have subject based taxonomy, such as libraries have. You can see many examples of taxonomies at: <http://taxonomywarehouse.com/>
* In terms of what experience is needed, Laura responded that she most frequently hires people who have experience building taxonomies. Sometimes you do need subject expertise. The client should be involved in all stages and she uses a live session that the client can view.
* What prompts companies to hire taxonomists? They often reach a point where they have excess information and their situation becomes urgent, especially considering the increasing regulations about managing documents. It is expensive to do manual indexing of all documents and a taxonomy provides a framework for both auto-classifying and manual indexing. Additionally, acquisition of companies often results in a need for taxonomies.

1. **Business Meeting**
2. Approval of minutes from Annual Meeting: Will be approved via email at a later date.
3. Reports

* Program update (Jennifer Roper and Joanna Burgess)
  + They’ve met with ALCTS Program Committee and confirmed that the preconference “Manipulating Metadata: XLST for Librarians” will be held on Friday from 8:00 to 5:00. It is intended to be hands-on, and is the only preconference asking for computers.
  + NRMIG will hold a program on metadata workflow tools on Saturday from 10:30 to noon featuring three speakers: Jenn Riley, Ann Caldwell and Rhonda Marker.
  + NRMIG is also co-sponsoring an ALCTS metadata applications class which Steve Miller is teaching with Jennifer Lang.
* Publications updates (Sai Deng & Lucas Mak)
  + The publications co-chairs attended the Content Management System Collage training provided by the ALA Information Technology & Telecommunications division. They’ve updated the website <<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alcts/mgrps/ig/nrm/index.cfm>> by adding links to minutes, program announcements, and lists of past programming to and links to the metadata blog and the conference wikis. They also sent Mid-winter program information to ANO (ALCTS Newsletter Online) for the December 2008 issue.
  + Lucas contacted the ALCTS Paper Series editor about turning the upcoming 2008 Annual program on metadata tools into a publication. If the three presenters would be willing to transform their presentations into manuscripts, then NMRIG will need to submit a proposal to the publications board. If approved, the manuscript will need to be submitted within 12 months.
  + Diane Hillman expressed doubts about the approach of formal publication, as she has been placed in that position before as a presenter. She recommended thinking about other ways to make the contents of the presentation available, particularly ways that are faster and more widely disseminated online.
  + Even if we wanted to record the session, the deadline has been passed to request any video equipment.
  + No one could recall if NRMIG had formally published before.
* CC:DA update (Steven Miller)
  + An RDA update forum immediately follows the NRMIG meeting. There will also be a preconference next Annual about RDA.
  + CC:DA has expressed several reactions to RDA. The general consensus was that the timeframe was not adequate for review. CC:DA does feel that new standard is indeed necessary, but has the following concerns about the current version of RDA:

1) the technical writing is poor

2) a print version is required, as not all libraries may afford the online product or have Internet access or electricity

3) there is of yet no online interface for RDA which will be critical to understanding how the product works

4) there is no information regarding price from the publishers

* + The general feeling is one of disappointment toward RDA not in terms of goals, but in that RDA has failed to meet clarity of language and rationale. Training catalogers will be extremely challenging. However, there is certainly the feeling that aspects of RDA will move this forward, including work that Diane Hillman and Karen Coyle have done in registering elements and vocabularies for an RDF/Semantic Web context. General recommendations include requesting that ALA rewrite RDA to meet stated expectations and that they provide pricing information.
  + There was some discussion about “core elements” in RDA. There may be one set of general core elements and other sets specific to different communities; the online version of RDA will allow different communities to develop different workflows.
  + Tillett has announced that LC will have a response on the full draft of RDA in the next couple of months.
  + The three national libraries (Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Agricultural Library) will undertake RDA testing before deciding to implement, and they are seeking to recruit twenty partners representing a wide variety of libraries to help them test.
  + It was also reported that LCSH as SKOS was taken down per LC’s request. LC has reported that they will put up an official version and incorporate MARC code lists within the next few months.
* LITA update (Holley Long)
  + Announcements of LITA meetings at Midwinter of potential interest to NRMIG.
* LITA will be hosting an “unconference” on the “Everywhere Library: Creating, Communicating, Integrating” in Dublin Ohio on May 7-8, 2009.
* LITA’s national forum will be held in Salt Lake City in Utah from October 1-4, 2009 and proposals are still being accepted.
* Blog update (Erin Stalberg for Kristin Martin)
  + Kristin has been listing programs of potential interest to the metadata community before ALA and soliciting bloggers. She had success at recruiting bloggers last Annual, but not as many volunteered during this Mid-Winter. She would like to revisit the conversation on whether we should continue this practice or whether the programs are covered well enough on the blogosphere.
  + One suggestion submitted is that perhaps someone could take on job of trying to find out what’s being blogged and where. For example, is LITA blogging their own programs?
  + Another question Kristin raised is that most blog activity is focused on Midwinter & Annual conferences, leading to a vast amount of time that it’s quiet in interim. Would people be willing to put together articles here and there?
  + Is there any interest in reporting on other kinds of conferences that related to metadata? We will continue this conversation via email.

1. New Business

* Erin reported that she submitted the renewal petition with an interest group to change names to Metadata Interest Group per the board vote. It’s uncertain whether the name can be advertised before Annual if it’s approved.
* Erin also announced that we have a formal relationship with Music Library Association’s metadata group and will have a representative with us during every Annual conference. For the next three years, this representative will be Jenn Riley.

1. Announcements

* Erin will be soliciting nominations for people interested in vice-chair or any other position in this group for the Annual meeting.
* Jennifer brought up the issue that traditionally, after the annual NRMIG meeting, members have hallway conferences in which the next program proposal for Annual (due four days after) is hurriedly decided. She would like to bring up the topic sooner via email to provide more time to create a program description. She will start discussing the 2010 program ahead of Annual via email this year.

Submitted by Mary Aycock, NRMIG Secretary