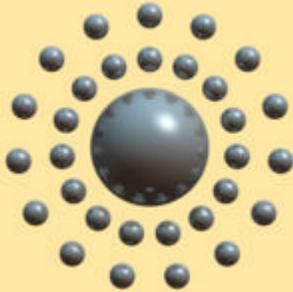


<http://purl.org/dc>

Tuesday, November 30, 1999

DUBLIN CORE METADATA INITIATIVE

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The Dublin Core: A Simple Content Description Model for Electronic Resources**Metadata for Electronic Resources**

The Dublin Core is a metadata element set intended to facilitate discovery of electronic resources. Originally conceived for author-generated description of Web resources, it has attracted the attention of formal resource description communities such as museums, libraries, government agencies, and commercial organizations.

The Dublin Core Workshop Series has gathered experts from the library world, the networking and digital library research communities, and a variety of content specialties in a series of invitational workshops. The building of an interdisciplinary, international consensus around a core element set is the central feature of the Dublin Core. The progress represents the emergent wisdom and collective experience of many stakeholders in the resource description arena. An open mailing list supports ongoing work.

The characteristics of the Dublin Core that distinguish it as a prominent candidate for description of electronic resources fall into several categories:

Simplicity

The Dublin Core is intended to be usable by non-catalogers as well as resource description specialists. Most of the elements have a commonly understood semantics of roughly the complexity of a library catalog card.

Semantic Interoperability

In the Internet Commons, disparate description models interfere with the ability to search across discipline boundaries. Promoting a commonly understood set of descriptors that helps to unify other data content standards increases the possibility of semantic interoperability across disciplines.

International Consensus

Recognition of the international scope of resource discovery on the Web is critical to the development of effective discovery infrastructure. The Dublin Core benefits from active participation and promotion in some 20 countries in North America, Europe, Australia, and Asia.



Extensibility

The Dublin Core provides an economical alternative to more elaborate description models such as the full MARC cataloging of the library world. Additionally, it includes sufficient flexibility and extensibility to encode the structure and more elaborate semantics inherent in richer description standards

Metadata Modularity on the Web

The diversity of metadata needs on the Web requires an infrastructure that supports the coexistence of complementary, independently maintained metadata packages. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) has begun implementing an architecture for metadata for the Web. The Resource Description Framework, or RDF, is designed to support the many different metadata needs of vendors and information providers. Representatives of the Dublin Core effort are actively involved in the development of this architecture, bringing the digital library perspective to bear on this important component of the Web infrastructure.

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