

RDA AND PUBLIC SERVICES: LIBRARY SYSTEMS AND RDA IMPLEMENTATION

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The session on RDA and Public Services took place on Saturday and was a joint presentation by the MLA Public Services Committee and the Bibliographic Control Committee. Presenters took a look at “what’s done now” and “what’s coming up” with regard to RDA implementation.

Sonia Archer-Capuzzo (University of North Carolina-Greensboro), pointed out that many have wondered “why RDA and not AACR3?” and yet, in some ways RDA *is* “AACR3.” Patrons, catalogers and public services staff now work more often with electronic catalogs than cards; increasingly those catalogs include varied and integrated resources. RDA will help in moving toward being able to handle linked data. Two additional important qualities of RDA are extensibility and flexibility: extensibility in that, as new materials appear, RDA gives us a way to handle them in a timely manner; and flexibility of encoding standards, which is an important part of the RDA model.

Much of the session focused on noticeable changes that the application of RDA is causing in integrated library systems (ILSs). While we know that the on-screen display of search results continues to evolve, we are also aware that these changes affect the methods used by library patrons and staff to discover materials. Some of these new or changing elements to be dealt with include: decisions that have affected indexing, new or changing fields, defunct fields, changes in terminology, and display of RDA-related fields.

Although we are going to move out of MARC and into something else (probably BIBFRAME), we already use alternative metadata standards such as MODS, Dublin Core, and others. It is true that RDA is something else that is new, but as Sonia reminded everyone, “don’t panic!”

Elizabeth Hille Cribbs (Northern Illinois University) outlined a few more RDA changes to date that have had an effect on ILSs. Some of these are immediately noticeable and others we have to watch out for:

1) Many abbreviations have disappeared. There is no longer a need to fit all the information onto a catalog card, and in a web-based environment it isn’t necessary to conserve as much space. Since we’re trying to transcribe what actually appears on the resource, there are fewer abbreviations. Catalog users will notice words spelled out in relation to editions, pagination, company names, arrangements, accompanied by, and so forth. RDA Appendix B lists the acceptable abbreviations that are still in use.

2) Latin terminology has been replaced with English phrases in most cases.

3) The general material designation (GMD) has been discontinued. It is replaced by content, media and carrier fields. There were problems with the GMD, including that it was difficult to distinguish between closely related formats (such as video disc, DVD, and Blu-ray), and we weren’t able to use more than one GMD. For instance, a map on microfilm had to be designated

as Cartographic or Microform, but not both. The new fields are meant to provide more specificity and the ability to customize search limits for formats.

4) Many name and name-title headings (authorized access points and preferred titles) have changed under RDA instructions. This is important to know when new records come into our system, as there could be an older form of the name or name-title already in the system. Changes for names include: spelling out “approximately”; changing “fl.” for flourished to the word “active”; changing the form for name qualifiers from “pianist” to “(Pianist)”; and spelling out “Department”. Changes for preferred titles include: entering libretti under librettist rather than composer; using “Works. Selections” rather than “Selections” by itself; and placing “Selections” before other expression elements, rather than at the end of preferred titles. Additionally, the practice of adding languages to an access point has changed. All languages are now separated out into individual preferred titles. For example, the record for the score of Rigoletto in Italian and English would contain one entry for the Italian, and one for the English. Instructions for medium of performance have also changed. Preferred titles can now include more than three medium elements. For example, “Suites, clarinet, strings” is now “Suites, clarinet, violins (2), viola, cello”. Also, certain terms for ensembles (brasses, plucked instruments, keyboard instruments) are not used in preferred titles. “Instrumental ensemble” may be used in a preferred title if it is for an accompanying ensemble. Finally, the term “cello” is used in place of “violoncello.”

5) MARC 264 fields are used in place of the 260 for publishing data. This causes potential problems with “cite this” functions in various ILSs; when the citation is extracted, the date is not picked up from the 264 field. Problems have been reported with RefWorks, Zotero, and others.

Patty Falk (Bowling Green State University), talked about issues that must be addressed with systems staff. She suggested that it is most efficient for cataloging and systems staff to work together, in cooperation with the vendor. Some points for consideration are: discovering what your vendor is doing regarding RDA implementation; review indexing and display configurations; add new MARC 21 fields to indexes; make changes in validation tables; create new macros as needed; configure import/export profiles to include new fields; test the online system; determine which fields or data to suppress; and change field names in the ILS if necessary.

During the implementation of RDA at Bowling Green, catalogers met regularly and used webinars as a means to work through the new policies. Catalogers then created local policies and brought them to the relevant library groups that would be affected (technical services, special collections, public services, consortial groups), before presenting the changes to all the staff.