

Bringing it all together:



*Metadata and museums,
libraries and archives*

Richard Ovenden

Director of Collections

Edinburgh University Library

Or



Why we should all be archivists now



Collections, life cycles, and digital curation

Summary



- Current view of metadata
- Organisational change in UK
- Case study: Edinburgh University
- Archival approaches to metadata
- New directions in collection management
- Digital curation
- Concluding remarks

A History of metadata until now



- Items versus collections
- Authors versus subjects
- Access versus control
- Description versus content

Organisational change in the UK



- History of isolation
- Compartmentalisation
- Re:source
- AHRB
- mda (Cornucopia)
- Growing trends / revisiting the past

Case Study: Edinburgh University



- Edinburgh University Library
 - Special Collections
- Talbot Rice Art Gallery
- Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments
- Russell Collection of Early Keyboard Instruments
- DOMS

Archival approaches to metadata (1)



- Metadata for collections
 - RSLP Collection-level schema
- Increasing focus on comprehensive description
- Controlling access
 - Authentication
 - Re-use
- Fonds & Sub Fonds
 - Archival cataloguing (EAD/ISAD(G))
- Scope and content
- Access

Archival approaches to metadata (2)



- Digital preservation (OCLC/RLG Preservation metadata)
 - CEDARS
 - NEDLIB, NLA
- Describing in greater depth Dublin core as common denominator (MIMAS)
 - Revealing relationships (internal navigation)
 - 'Bubble-up' (Endeavour)
- Records management
- Hierarchical relationships

New directions in collection management



- Metadata for physical as well as digital
 - ie managing the transition from physical to digital
 - Describing, managing physical (documentation)
- Long-term management of digital resources
 - Documenting actions
 - Preserving other types of data
 - Workflow management
- Metadata is for life, not just for Christmas

Digital curation



- Should we be talking of librarians (archivists) any more ...
- Instead, think of 'Digital curators':
 - Managing the resource over the long-term (ie life-cycle)
 - Managing physical together with the digital
 - Managing access more closely
 - Managing versions of the same stuff
- Metadata makes this possible

Concluding remarks (1)



- Provenance once more critical element of metadata
 - Controlling access to resources
 - Recording actions to resources for preservation purposes
 - Assuring quality control
 - Asserting rights control on resources
- Collections as well as items - hierarchies
- Preservation – requires control of the life-cycle
- Metadata to embrace the totality (METS)
- Skills-gap

or ...



Concluding remarks (2)



- Archivists were right all along ...
- Presentation of metadata still requires effort
- Databases versus mark-up
- Metadata to be a two-way street

Anecdote



- When we are wailing and gnashing our teeth about the complexities of the digital age
- OCLC Will provide the teeth

FIN

A horizontal yellow brushstroke with a textured, painterly appearance, extending across the width of the slide below the 'FIN' text.

- Richard.ovenden@ed.ac.uk