

Electronic Resources Standards and Best Practices: What Do Bibliographers, Catalogers, Publishers, and Vendors Need to Know? (Tuesday, March 25, 2014)

Q & A

Morning session on OpenURL, DOI, KBART, and IOTA by Nettie Lagace

Q1: Can CJK character be embedded?

A1: OpenURL V1.0 (ANSI/NISO Z39.88-2004 (R2010)) includes a provision for character encoding so that non UTF-8 characters can be transmitted if needed. This is not possible in OpenURL 0.1 (which is still in use at some OpenURL providers, including Google Scholar – for these the characters must be UTF-8 encoded, the default).

Q2: What is the relationship between MARC and SFX?

A2: Most link resolver providers (including SFX) offer MARC records service where you can create basic MARC records for loading into your catalog from the holdings you have specified in your knowledge base. However, it's important to recognize that the link resolver knowledge base is concentrated on holdings information, not descriptive information. The main function of the knowledge base is to link a user to a library's content, not to provide descriptions of journals for discovery purposes.

Q3: Does CrossRef recognize DOI?

A3: Yes, DOIs are issued by CrossRef, which is one of the DOI Registration Agencies. When a DOI is included on an OpenURL, the link resolver queries CrossRef and retrieves the metadata that is associated with the DOI, and uses it for further checking against the link resolver KnowledgeBase and provision of link services, including full text using the library's subscriptions.

Q4: CJK materials need at least three fields for title information, i.e., title in original script, romanized title, and translated title, which are not covered by KBART. Do we need another standard?

A4: It is a general problem with standards, if one doesn't meet needs, to use or make another one.

Q5: What about link resolution for old journal titles?

A5: If they are ceased journals, see A9 below; if they are former titles, the new KBART Phase II have fields to indicate former and related titles to better enable the creation of relationships between titles. But most successful link resolution also depends on the year and volume and start page fields (see the work of IOTA).

Q6: What is the relationship between KBART and RDA/MARC21?

A6: No relationship. RDA and MARC 21 are for library descriptive metadata. KBART files are to transmit library electronic holdings information; KBART doesn't concentrate on descriptive metadata.

Q7: Could KBART and RDA collaborate?

A7: No. Those two standards serve different purposes.

Q8: Can holding information in MARC 21 format be harvested for OpenURL?

A8: We should rather ask ourselves whether it is practical to do so. Is the holding information that is held in the catalog accurate enough? (Often libraries do the reverse – create MARC records from their KnowledgeBase holdings to place into the catalog.)

Q9: Is it up to publishers/vendors which version (KBART 1 or 2) to use?

A9: Publishers have six months to be KBART 2 compliant. After that period, all publishers should adopt the new version.

Q10: Can KBART be used for discovery systems?

A10: NISO's Open Discovery Initiative is working on open discovery. The initiative utilizes KBART recommendations for the data to be transferred via ODI (Open Discovery Initiative), but it is not a requirement. The initiative's recommendation will be issued soon, hopefully by the time of ALA Annual in June 2014.

Q11: What are standards for e-book chapters?

A11: KBART does not specify chapter level information – holdings are communicated at the top level – e.g. journal or book-level.

Q12: Some CJK materials have no ISSN. Are they excluded from KBART's scope?

A12: KBART can communicate titles without ISSN, but of course it is preferred that they possess one. If there is any identifier for those titles, vendors have to make a matching program/algorithm. They also should contact the ISSN center to request ISSNs for such titles. In cases like this, most link resolutions services allow an option of imbedding Non-Roman language titles, in Romanization or scripts, in the OpenURLs for link resolution where they can be matched against an item in the KnowledgeBase. The titles without ISSN should be in KB and libraries/users should be able to formulate an OpenURL with the language title instead of the ISSN. OpenURL v1.0 supports communication of a specific character set on the OpenURL.

Q13: Why are all fields in the research done by IOTA Working Group considered to have an equal weight?

A13: That is not what they found, but was how they started. What they actually found is that the presence of certain fields (Vol. no., ISSN, etc.) are particularly important for success. The group is measuring success not on whether users could retrieve the material at the end, but on whether the item was found in KB.

Afternoon session on PIE-J, ISSN, ISNI, and ORCID by Regina Romano Reynolds

Q14: In ISSN portal, you use only Romanization for the titles. And I see some standardization in the libraries in North America, and I'm assuming that's ISO Romanization.

A14: Yes, it is, or should ISO Romanization. As an international organization, we're all supposed to always use ISO romanization if one exists.

Q15 (follow-up question): We're using Pinyin for Chinese and Hepburn for Japanese and ... for Korean, but ...

A15: OK, I believe that there are some questions about Korean. Is there an ISO for Korean? I'm not sure, but I just suspect there must be ISO? It's not that there is no Korean government organization system making us sure, but I can guess. It's hard to search because we don't know what kind of organization system they are using. Romanization systems need to be standardized.

Q16 (follow-up question): Certainly, but we cannot figure out what kind of system you are using, and I don't know what ISO is using.

A16: If you wanted to send me an email, I could look into that and ask our colleagues in Paris about that. I have a very easy email address: rrey@loc.gov

The ISSN Network is using the following ISO Romanization standards:

- ISO 3602:1989 – Documentation – Romanization of Japanese (Kana script)
- ISO 7098:1991 – Information and documentation – Romanization of Chinese
- ISO/TR 11941:1996 – Information and documentation – Transliteration of Korean script into Latin characters.

Use of vernacular scripts, romanizations, and codes for different languages are topics that are often discussed at meetings of ISSN directors.

Q17 (follow-up question): asked about including original scripts in ISSN records

A17: Within the ISSN Network, use of parallel fields in order to provide certain elements, e.g., title, in the original script is being strongly encouraged. All records will not include original scripts but the inclusion of these scripts should become more common in ISSN records.

Q18: Who can apply for ISSN, only publishers?

A18: Not only publishers. Libraries that are members of the CONSER (cooperative serials cataloging program) of the PCC (Program for Cooperative Cataloging) can apply for ISSN if they have created or updated a record in OCLC WorldCat according to the CONSER standard. The U.S. ISSN Center also undertakes projects with libraries from time to time. For examples, the Center for Research Libraries has a project for agriculture titles which will receive ISSN; the Keepers Registry in the UK is a registry of which agencies and organizations are archiving serial titles. When this project needs an ISSN, we give ISSN to them. Digitizers, aggregators, just about any organization, that has need of ISSN for U.S. titles can apply. We don't encourage private individuals to start applying for ISSN for titles other than their own publications, but definitely more than the publisher can apply for ISSN. Libraries, the U.S. Postal Service, subscription agencies, all receive ISSN from the U.S. ISSN Center.

Q19 (follow-up question): Why I asked this question is because none of North Korean journals has ISSN for obvious reason. So if we ask you to assign ISSN to these journals, information won't be on the printed journals.

A19: I should say, when we assign ISSN at the request of a library or an organization other than the publisher, we send a form letter to the publisher so they know about the ISSN and can print it on their publications. Now, the North Korea question is a challenging one and I suppose that these ISSN would be assigned by the ISSN International Centre in Paris. They assign the ISSN to titles from the countries that don't have ISSN center. How and whether they notify that to NK is something I couldn't answer. In general, if an ISSN is assigned at other than publisher's request, some attempt to notify the publisher will be made. But we can't always guarantee that the letter is going to the right person in publishing organizations, of course. But we try. That is definitely an interesting question.

Q20: How about underground journals?

A20: They certainly would be eligible for ISSN, and if the publisher applies for it, they get an ISSN. If a library were acquiring one of these journals and asking for one, we would also assign the ISSN, the only thing we probably refuse is if there would be something illegal about it. For example, child pornography, we're not going to assign ISSN to that. But anything that is legally acceptable, it doesn't have to be scholarly, doesn't have to be a big publisher, it could be by a private individual. Once in a while we get something that we refuse because it is not really a published serial. For example, once upon a time, a dad is going abroad, and he started a newsletter for his three children, and he applied for ISSN, and the title was "Sad Dad". And we had to make sad dad even sadder because we decided this newsletter wasn't eligible for ISSN because it was not really published and distributed except to his three children. But we will assign an ISSN to a blog that's on a specific topic. We won't assign an ISSN to a personal blog that is just a persona diary that might include an

entry like this: “I woke up this morning, had some breakfast and then applied for an ISSN, etc.” Personal diaries, personal webpages, personal communications are out of scope for ISSN.

Q21: I got the question about the same thing. Many Chinese and Japanese articles have no ISSN. So I am cataloging a number of articles like that, and if that’s the case, the publishers have to apply for ISSN and not us, right?

A21: First, I should clarify that ISSN are assigned to journals, not individual articles. We prefer that the publisher apply for the ISSN so they can understand what it is and how to use it. I think that the most effective way to get an ISSN printed on a journal that does not appear to have one is for the library or customers who have purchased it to contact the publisher and ask them to apply for an ISSN. You can say we need an ISSN and for your publication to be catalogued. And if the publication is from the U.S., just give them a link to the U.S. ISSN Center’s web page and application form: www.loc.gov/issn. If a publication is Chinese or Japanese, they have their own ISSN centers. If you go to www.issn.org, there is a map of the world and it will tell you if the country has ISSN center or not. If there is a center, give the address of the national center in the country of publication to the publisher. If you are unsure which center should be responsible, you can contact the ISSN International Centre in Paris and they can determine the right ISSN center and they will refer the request to that center. I do believe that the best way to have ISSN assigned to publications that need an ISSN is to communicate to the publisher, if it’s still being published, or communicate with the appropriate ISSN center if the publication has ceased. Every year, there is a campaign within the ISSN Network to assign ISSN to the most important e-journals that lack ISSN. The U.S. ISSN Center gets a long list of titles that are covered by indexing services or are part of packages of e-journals that libraries subscribe to. In this way the ISSN Network is trying to keep up with assigning ISSN to the most important e-Journals.

Q22: Can ISNI replace ISBN for books or not driving out other traditional carriers, or is it designed only to be used digitally?

A22: OK, thinking about identifiers, first of all, I remember a statement someone from OCLC made a long time ago, when asked whether one identifier would drive out another, and he said something like, “let a thousand identifiers bloom,” and I think we’ve seen this. I don’t see any one identifier driving out any other necessarily, but ISBN is an identifier of book titles, ISSN is an identifier for the continuing resources, ISNI is for the names of people and organizations. So, ISNI will definitely not replace ISBN. They both identify different things. So is your question about whether these identifiers in the print world will go away when we are more concerned with the online world? I don’t think so because it seems that most of identifier systems are attempting to deal with both print and online. ISBN is being applied to e-books, and ISSN has been applied for many years to e-resources such as e-journals. Identifiers for people probably are going to operate mostly in the digital environment, because these personal identifiers will likely operate in a linked data environment or other

digital files. I don't expect that the authors' names on print books will be followed by their ISNI in parenthesis or anything like that.

Q23: First of all, does it cost money to apply for ISSN number? And secondly, I heard that it is difficult to get ISSN numbers in China for many continuing publications, so instead many of them get ISBN numbers to be able to get published. And here, when we catalog them, we choose serials to catalog/categorize them. And we don't record ISBN numbers.

A23: Wow. Alright, let me take the EASY questions first. It does not cost anything to get an ISSN. I like to say, "Your tax dollars at work." So, that's the easy question. As far as the China ISSN center, I visited them in 2008 when they hosted the annual meeting of directors of ISSN centers. I believe, and it's just an impression, that it may be not so much as the problem of getting ISSN from the Chinese Center, as it might be; there might be the need to complete some kind application for a permit to publish in this country. I believe that in many countries publishing is not as freely done as it is in the United States, and I'm guessing that because the ISSN agency is located in the National Library of China, it may be that only those things have the appropriate permission to get published, and therefore are eligible to come to the attention of the National Library to ISSN. I'm guessing, so don't quote me, but I'm aware that this is the case in some countries. So what you should do is note the fact that ISBN is what is being used, that's the very big problem. I think it could be that the ISBN agency needs to be contacted because that's really a misuse of ISBN. If you're going to give an ISBN to a serial, each issue needs its own ISBN, because ISBN does not apply to ongoing resources. So, as far as cataloging, obviously you won't put anything in the 022 (ISSN) field of a MARC record. I don't know how to advise you about what to do with the ISBN. I suppose you could put that ISBN into the ISBN field for retrievability, or into the field for an invalid ISBN. It's a problem. I really don't have any solution. It's tricky.

Q24: You emphasized that the ISSN number is a dumb number, so are there any ways to make ISSN smarter or more intelligent, because, as you say, the ISSN Portal has the most accurate information, if that information can be repurposed, so maybe most of the community is wondering, how to make the number even more useful, so I wonder if you have any plan of how to use it in the future?

A24: OK, as far as being a dumb number, we all understand that of course what is meant by that statement is that there is no meaning in the Number itself. But if I understand your question correctly, are you asking can ISSN be used in smarter way or what is its vision for the future? And yes, so as I mentioned, there is a new director of the ISSN International Centre and I think having someone new in charge of organization as well as taking advantage of all the wisdom and experience of the former director and existing staff that has been accumulated will be very valuable. Sometimes fresh eyes are also useful, and when the new director of the international center visited recently, we had a lot of time to talk, and one of the things we talked about is my concern about the inaccuracy of ISSN in so many databases around the world. And she was listening very carefully and taking notes.

And I think she even wanted more information and may need to see if any articles that talk about this. So I tried to suggest that maybe the accuracy of ISSN information should be a stronger goal of the ISSN network. So that is certainly something that I would like to hope to see. I also think that an important goal might be to provide more ISSN information for free. Some years ago, I wrote a paper for the ISSN Network: "Does ISSN Want to be Free?" And my answer of course is yes, and generally everyone in the network agreed but the challenge is revenue. The ISSN International Center has many responsibilities which cost money to carry out. They run the whole database, they help new ISSN centers get established and trained they work on the documentation such as the ISSN Manual. They have a staff of 12 to 15 people. They have to pay their salaries, they get a third of their money from sales of the products that contain ISSN information. So one of the issues is: can we come up with the business model that allows basic ISSN metadata be free while keeping the revenue needed to run the Network? My hope, yet again personal hope, is that some kind of business model can come about where basic aspect of metadata be free in which case I think the accuracy will improve. So having this information of (using) freely, I think there are other goals of improving the accuracy, and improving our ability to publicize, how to get ISSN, where to get ISSN and accuracy. So those are two thoughts that I have. Does this sound smarter?

Q25: May I ask two small questions? Thanks for your presentation; my specialty is China.

Could you go back to the slide please? Here, I think that you showed this slide, and before this session we checked your file about the speaker, you didn't mention the fact you're an artist or photographer, and again in your current slide of Identifier in Action, you're identified so and it seems you feel good about being identified as an artist. You may not be the artist that we normally think? In the identifying, is your personal choice for artists, not necessarily researchers? The identifying standards didn't identify you as an artist.

A25: [This is the slide that shows how information about a researcher could also point people to other aspects of their work, such as art.] Sure, it [linking from one aspect of a person's creation to another] could be anything. I just meant are – is about my photography. So that's what I meant, but yes, it could be for researchers, for different aspects of the person's creativity [that can be linked together in a linked data environment using identifiers]

Q26: I think in the major identifying standards, someone should have identified you as a photographer. You used the example of the ISSN application rejection for travelling "Sad Dad" newsletter. My second question is: on what ground you reject this occasion? Now, President Obama is visiting Europe, his wife and daughters are visiting China, imagine "Sad Dad" Obama applies for ISSN, are you going to reject?

A26: You think this is a simple and small question? [laughs] [The question is why we rejected the "Sad Dad" ISSN request. We rejected it on the grounds that it was ineligible because it

was a personal resource, and we do not assign ISSN to personal publication, and that was quite a personal publication.

Q27 (follow-up question): This is a typical type of materials, can often be seen in archival/special publications, which 30 years later, they are going to get ISSN approved. If the “dad” turned out to be president of the U.S., would we then assign this personal publication an ISSN if not now?

A27: Yes, I understand. It could happen. We cannot rule that out. But there is also a really practical aspect too. The U.S. ISSN Center has limited staff and more publications than we can handle – in order to make some kind of limitation, we focus on assigning ISSN to titles that are published and distributed but we can always make exceptions, and I think if Obama’s secretary applies for an ISSN for his family news letter , we would make an exception. How does that sound?

Q28: To supplement what you said about China, I think radio and T.V. stations, and serials as well, are all part of the ideology field and political domain, are closely controlled by the Chinese government. That is why ISSN cannot be easily given out, because you can use an ISSN to publish continuously; ISBN as the one-time publishing thing is given to serials. While you travel to ISSN meetings in Paris or Tokyo in the future you might not be able to give ISSN to North Korean serials or underground publications as the extreme cases mentioned earlier. But for cases in between, you may be able to push for better ISSN practices in Cuba, China and other half open countries if I may.

A28: Yes, exactly, and we do have some issues in that there are various issues in international networks, and I do enjoy international aspect of ISSN so much. It’s very good world education hearing about the various publishing situations in various countries. The U.S. has such an enormous amount of publishing that it is very difficult to have ISSN be exhaustive in assigning ISSN to all of its continuing resources. I also have to tell you that sometimes I can be jealous of very small countries like Lithuania. They can assign ISSN to all of their online resources, while we cannot. I do want to say something that is important about using these standards to help improve the presentation and identification and cataloguing and accesses. And that is sometimes librarians’ are not the best customers because we don’t give enough feedback to the vendors from whom we purchase resources of access to resources. We are paying for resources, and so if the publishers or providers of those resources make it difficult for users to find what they need, we should communicate this to the vendors and publishers. We can now communicate better because of best practices like PIE-J, and guidance such as KBART. We now have some tools to share with the publishers and vendors. And PIE-J has a standing committee, a group in which I participate that works to publicize PIE-J. We have developed a [form letter](#), located on the PIE-J portion of the NISO website. These URLs are on your handouts. If a library is encountering a problem with presentation, identification or access to content, librarians can take this form letter and fill out the titles, description of the problem, and send it to publishers and vendors. The letter

recommends that the publisher or vendor follow [PIE-J recommended practices](#) (17:10). The letter tells the publisher that there is information available, that can give you guidance of how you do this [present your publication and its metadata] better. So I highly encourage anyone to share the information from PIE-J with the vendors and publishers, share information about K-BART as well. This is why best practices and standards are developed. Instead of just saying, "I don't like what you are doing", you can say "you're not following the recommended practices would really help us to serve our users better." This will result in a win, win, and win. You [the publisher or vendor] will win, because your customers will be happier and you will have better markets. Libraries will win because we look better when people can find things and in the end the user will win by finding needed content. So I encourage you all to share this information that we provided to you today with the people that you pay money to for goods and services.

Q29: I just wanted to share something. Actually I am from CNKI. We assign ISNI number to each scholar as key points for each researcher or authors. With our 10 years of work, we have huge database. But we found out it was difficult as so many authors and institutes match the same names. Can we put authors on a website to ask them to identify which names belong to them?

A29: Both ISNI and ORCID allow the individual to say if their identities are wrong or are associated to someone else. The metadata associated with the identifier can also include key words, and citations to articles, so that your profile can be extended and disambiguated from someone else's. Your system sounds like a good system, and maybe at some point the database that you talk about can be joined up with ISNI, because it sounds like a valuable source of information.