The metadata challenge: Promoting discovery, access, and usability for online books

[BooksOnline’10 Keynote Talk - Extended Abstract]

John Mark Ockerbloom
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, PA
ockerblo@pobox.upenn.edu

Categories and Subject Descriptors
H.3.7 [Information Storage and Retrieval]: Digital Libraries

General Terms
Design, Standardization

Keywords
Digital books, Metadata

There is much ongoing work harnessing metadata to improve online book discovery, access, and usability. Online book discovery is being enhanced with concept-oriented catalogs of various kinds, including browsable maps relating millions of subjects and associated books. Copyright metadata is starting to open access to many books that had been needlessly withheld from the public, while also reducing the risk of inadvertent infringement. Structural and relational metadata and annotations are making complex works much more usable than they were when they were represented as a mishmash of volumes.

Using metadata effectively in multi-million-volume collections poses special problems of scale. Solving these problems requires considered application of both library science and computer science. It also requires harnessing the collective intelligence of readers, writers, librarians, and publishers. Wise metadata management policies, including open data sharing, can promote the effective aggregation of human and machine intelligence at the scale we will need. This talk will demonstrate and describe ways in which we can meet the metadata challenges of large-scale online libraries both now and in the future.

Material from this presentation is available at http://everybodyslibraries.com/the-metadata-challenge/.

Copyright is held by the author/owner(s).

BooksOnline'10, October 26, 2010, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
ACM 978-1-4503-0377-4/10/10.