Why Open Access to Bibliographic Metadata Matters, for Libraries and for the World

Open Access and the Changing Role of Libraries, 2010-08-09

Anders Söderbäck, National Library of Sweden
Establishing open access as a worthwhile procedure ideally requires the active commitment of each and every individual producer of scientific knowledge and holder of cultural heritage. Open access contributions include original scientific research results, raw data and metadata, source materials, digital representations of pictorial and graphical materials and scholarly multimedia material.

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Drivers for Open Access

- Idealistic (access, research, innovation...)
- Materialistic (law, economy...)

Information wants to be free, because the cost of getting it out is getting lower and lower all the time.

- Stewart Brand
Information wants to be expensive, because it’s so valuable. The right information in the right place just changes your life.

- Stewart Brand
1968

Henriette Avram invents the MARC-record...
LIBRIS – Union Catalogue for Swedish Research Libraries

- Since 1970
- Cooperation
- Currently maintained and developed by the National Library
- Public financed
- Voluntary participation
LIBRIS – Union Catalogue for Swedish Research Libraries

- 180 libraries
- 6.5 million bibliographic records
- 20 million holdings
- Online Public Access (for humans) since 1997
- Open (or semi-open) bibliographic records since 1997

- No circulation!
- Several methods for exporting data to libraries
1989

Tim Berners-Lee invents the World Wide Web...
LIBRIS – web interface 2008
Design a thing by considering it in its next largest context - a chair in a room, a room in a house, a house in an environment, environment in a city plan.

- Eliel Saarinen
A library catalog must be designed by considering its context of the Web.
2008 – New agreement between the National Library and LIBRIS participants

• The National Library owns the database...
2008 – New agreement between the National Library and LIBRIS participants

• The National Library owns the database...

• ...but makes it freely available.
SwePub – aggregation of Swedish publication databases 2009
University essays from Sweden

Essays.se is a digital resource which enables you to search and download thousands of English-language university essays from Sweden.

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More info about Essays.se

Essays.se gives non-Swedish speakers access to essays published at Swedish universities.

Essays.se is the English language version of the website Uppsatser.se. (*Uppsatser*, incidentally, means "essays" in Swedish.)

At the main site Uppsatser.se there are more than 50,000 essays and final theses, but most of these are written Swedish. Therefore, at Essays.se you will only find the English-language essays.

At the moment you will find 16391 essays through this website, but more are added each week - as soon as they are finished by the students and submitted by the Swedish universities.

More info about Essays.se
That goes back to a major theme of web 2.0 that people haven't yet tweaked to. It's really about data and who owns and controls, or gives the best access to, a class of data. ...A lot of people still think, "Oh, it's about social networking. It's about blogging. It's about wikis." I think it's about the data that's created by those mechanisms, and the businesses that that data will make possible.

Idealistic reasons for open bibliographic data

- Enable use of bibliographic data (in libraries and elsewhere)
- Make library material visible on the WWW
- Connect library technology with the rest of the world
- Cooperation (among libraries and with other parties)
- Open up for innovative, unexpected use
Current trends in (library) technology

- Knowledge bases
- Mega-aggregates
- Software/Data as a Service
- Webscale/Universal Management
- Cloud computing
- Subscription based services
- Convergence of media and system
- ...
The cloud is currently a question, not an answer.

- Lorcan Dempsey, OCLC
The Internet business ecosystem can thus be seen as a competition to establish monopolies over various classes of data. ... [Y]ou have to make sure that public data remains public!

Materialistic reasons for open bibliographic data

- Avoid monopolies on aggregation
- Avoid legal gridlocks
- Enable the materialistic reasons for open bibliographic data
- May eggs can be put in many baskets
Closing questions

- Who will be the owner of library infrastructure?
- What about non OA-resources?
- Is the big question legal, economical, technical or organizational? Or all of this at the same time?
- Do we risk a "system crisis"?
Don’t let the capitalists rip off your culture and sell it back to you!

- Old Hippie Saying
Thanks!

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