

When it comes to specifically describing moving images, the broad fields of Qualified Dublin Core are clearly the weakest available options in this particular data mapping. Clearly designed to be applicable to any number of media formats, QDC loses any granularity when it comes to movies, particularly lacking in specific fields related to physical or technical description, or in articulated subelements even for descriptive metadata (its strongest area). The fields available for legal and preservation metadata are also only present because this is the Qualified schema – the original DC would not even have had those elements. That said, QDC clearly serves its purpose as a catch-all schema – though it may lack in granularity, every listed general field did map, in broad terms, to a QDC element, without resorting to some sort of free-text note field, as was seen on a few occasions with PBCore and MODS. Its limited number of elements lends QDC significant user-friendliness, even for moving image archivists, as the cataloger immediately has a good sense of where they might be able to place their data.

PBCore keeps this general emphasis on simplicity, while expanding in ways that allow the moving image archivist to be more specific. The descriptive metadata fields, for instance, are generally the same as seen in QDC, but allow the cataloger more control in listing distinct roles under the broad “creator” and “contributor” fields. PBCore also allows for the most detailed physical and technical metadata (unsurprising, considering its origins in broadcast television). This is clearly a more useful system for the archivist more concerned with its moving image materials as physical (or digital) items, rather than general artistic or creative works. However, the schema suffers somewhat beyond the technical details, providing far fewer specific elements in the administrative metadata fields. An archivist needing to keep track of data migration or concerned about licensing their materials might find these areas of PBCore lacking.

Finally, MODS offers the greatest granularity of any of the given schema - while making some corresponding sacrifices in intuitive use. Trying to identify the source material for a copy or derivative file, for instance, might not immediately lead the cataloger to the <relatedItem> field; similarly, the subelement <internetMediaType> does not automatically call to mind digital file formats. The latter is likely because MODS appears slightly outdated when it comes to born-digital moving image materials; its descriptive and administrative metadata is stronger for describing more tangible items. Even then, though, MODS does not have the same specificity in its physical and technical metadata fields as PBCore (although the <physicalDescription> / <form> and <extent> categories certainly offer an improvement on QDC's vague “Format”). Overall, for cinematic materials this seems a schema better suited for formats like film and video than the complexities of digital works.