

Dublin Core, CEN AND PBCORE:
AN EVALUATION

Erica Gold
Cine-GT1803: Metadata for Moving Image Collections
November 14, 2014

Creating a crosswalk between three different standards was an instructive exercise. It makes one pause when considering what data standard would be most effective when setting up a new collection at a new institution or changing a standard to more accurately capture the information a collection holds. PBCore, CEN and Dublin Core all present strengths and challenges in terms of describing a moving image item.

The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative (DCMI), an expanded version of Dublin Core, adds many refinements making it easy to find an element to map to each of the listed fields. DCMI is strongest in comparison to CEN and PBCore in the acquisition, legal and preservation areas. Though PBCore is more granular in its elements in terms of acquisition, DCMI acquits itself nicely in the use of elements and refinements dealing with provenance and the method in which the collection was acquired. This standard also covers rights and access restrictions under one element in a simple, straightforward style. It falls short, however, in describing the physical and technical aspects of a moving image, narrowing its elements down to format and physical medium. These elements are not specific enough to describe the wide array of audio-visual formats.

PBCore, on the other hand, picks up the slack in granularity in describing a moving image. Its elements and attributes take every physical aspect of media into consideration including media type, specifics on audio and whether an item is analog or digital. For the majority of elements listed, PBCore has more than one attribute available to describe a specific part of an item. For example, the attributes under `pbcoreCollection` take extra steps in specifying the collection title, the source

of the collection and the date of acquisition. PBCore's weakness occurs in the legal and preservation areas. Though it has four elements and attributes describing access restriction, PBCore has no specific element naming the rights holder. It is also surprising to see that there is also no element pertaining to preservation. PBCore was originally created for cataloging television, a medium that is in a constant state of reformatting and preserving rapidly deteriorating media.

One would have expected CEN 15907 and CEN 15744 to be as granular as PBCore, especially when describing the technical aspects of media. Unfortunately, it only has a format and original format element to describe all physical aspects of the media as well as an extent element and original duration to describe the duration. However, original format and original duration allows the cataloger to refer to the media item's initial manifestation, an important piece of information especially if the original has been re-edited or copied to another form of media. On some levels, CEN is similar to Dublin Core in its simplicity of elements. There are occasions where an element further illustrates an entity, as Agent type does for Agent, but the element can be used to describe both a publisher and a creator. Though CEN has two elements that can be used for describing preservation events, it has no element for provenance, an important part of the preservation puzzle. Another missing element is access restrictions even though an element for a rights holder exists. Unlike PBCore, CEN does not have a generalized annotation element to plug into gaps that would make completing the crosswalk an easier task.

Creating crosswalks between data standards is truly a challenge for any cataloger. It would appear that combining the strengths that each standard has to

offer might well produce a better way to catalog. But until then, it is hoped that each will be a living document, constantly finding ways to improve the way collections are described, archived and preserved for the future.