



# The Evolution of Technical Services (LIRM) at Western Libraries

# Overview

- TS skills and the new information environment
- Short term changes (next 5 years):
  - RDA implementation
  - Improving the OPAC
  - Digitization projects
- Long term changes (5+ years):
  - Automating workflows
  - MARC21 superseded
  - Replacing the ILS



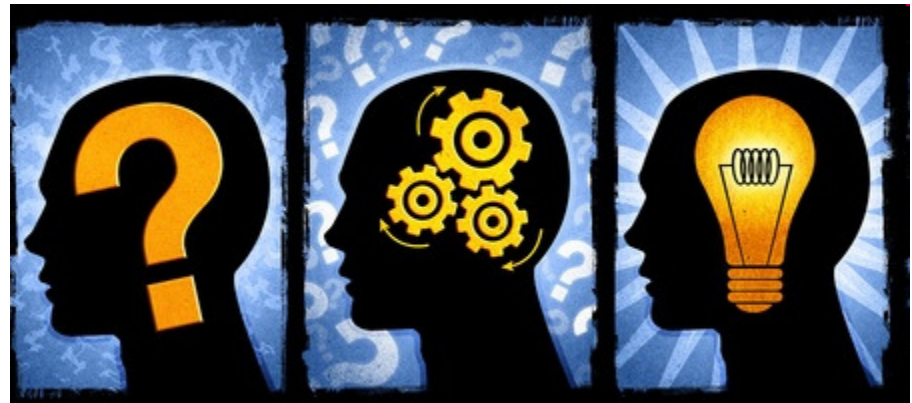
# Organizational Change

*Western Libraries' "organizational structure needs to be dynamic and flexible"*

- New technologies, stretched resources, new workflow models
- Imperative to be “pragmatic, responsive, versatile, and technologically proficient”
- “Flattening” of the department

# The Cataloguer Skill Set

- Analytical and critical thinking
- Problem and puzzle solving
- Research skills
- Attention to detail
- Reluctant to accept “good enough”



# Managing Change

*“Re-emphasizing the importance of staff development to refresh or learn new skills relating to technology”*

- How not to restructure: Harvard Libraries
- Codification of staff knowledge
- Continuous learning and participation
- Revise job descriptions to reflect new competencies

# RDA Implementation

- A content standard to replace AACR2
- Makes favourable changes:
  - Increased author access
  - Elimination of abbreviations and Latin phrases
  - New display of carrier, media, & content type
  - “FRBRizing” the catalogue with entity linkages
  - Extensible for new resource and metadata types



# RDA in Practice

- Declared “DOA” by critics:
  - Unclear language
  - Retains legacy practices
  - Relies on local display to accommodate changes
  - “...destined to please neither the traditionalists nor the revolutionaries”
- Change visible at different levels
- Anticipated adoption in 2013





# Training at Western Libraries

- FRBR, RDA, & RDA Toolkit training
- Prepare ILS and OPAC
- Collaboratively make local policy decisions
- RDA practice period
- Brief library-wide presentation upon rollout
- Regular meetings among cataloguers
- Postmortem and ongoing analysis



# Improving the OPAC

*“Seamless and customizable”*

*“Barrier free access”*

- Disintermediation of OPAC from patron information seeking behaviour
- Remove clicks to full-text access
- Improve readability of records
- RDA lays groundwork for improvement, but does not change display in itself

# Digitization Projects

*“Establishing appropriate digitization, preservation, and data curation programs”*

- Prioritizing unique collections
  - “Showcase and present [our] unique information resources and one-of-a-kind collections to the world”
- Need for cataloguer expertise with specialized information
- Evaluate projects on a case-by-case basis

# Automating Workflows

- Surrogate records largely generated by text-recognition from scanned pages
- Capital investment or off-site contract
- Still requires human intervention for accuracy





# Replacing the ILS

- Anachronistic in its replication of the card catalogue
- Two possible scenarios:
  - OCLC WorldCat Local
  - The semantic web

Subject	Predicate	Object
<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Nabokov">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Nabokov</a>	<a href="http://rdvocab.info/roles/authorWork">http://rdvocab.info/roles/authorWork</a>	<a href="http://lccn.loc.gov/56024827">http://lccn.loc.gov/56024827</a>

**Table 3**

Nabokov statement with URIs.

- Labour of record and authority work shared between participants

# Conclusion

*“The 21st Century academic library”*

- Challenge of financial and personnel constraints
- Bleak view of the future from many authors
- False dichotomy of metadata versus cataloguing specialists
- Specialized skills will serve technical services staff well into the future

## Questions?

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