



STANDING COMMITTEE ON AUTOMATION

Quarterly Report
Q1, 2005

Midwinter Meeting

The committee met as usual at ALA Midwinter. During the meeting, the final report of the Task Group on Linking Entries (see below) was discussed and approved. In addition, the issue of “NACO normalization” was raised; it was agreed that a group would be established to work on this task (see below). The minutes of the meeting may be found at: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/sca/sca05m.html> .

Task Group on Linking Entries

In its final report, this task group examined the way that various integrated library systems handle the display of linking entry information, noting that how well such information is displayed in a particular library may be more a function of that library’s implementation of a system than of the capabilities of the system itself.

The task group presented three recommendations:

1. Integrated library systems should provide for the intelligible display of linking entry information in the form of notes. For the most part, the major systems already do this.
2. Integrated library systems should provide for hot links from linking entry fields to enable users of the OPAC to find related records easily and without re-keying. The task group noted that there are some problems with existing catalog records (including CONSER records) that hinder an optimal attainment of this objective.
3. The potential of “alternate displays” of the relationships among records/titles should continue to be explored.

The task group’s full report is at: <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/sca/tglnkentr-rpt05.pdf> . It will be discussed during the CONSER portion of the upcoming Operations meeting in May.

Monographic Aggregator Task Group

This task group has submitted an interim report. It “hopes that the questions raised ... will be discussed within the PCC Standing Committee on Automation (SCA) and with others within the electronic resource cataloging community.” A significant portion of the report, which takes a pragmatic approach to the issues involved, consists of what the task group calls “FREVR – Functional Requirements for Electronic Vendor Records.” The report has been distributed to the Standing Committee on Automation for preliminary comment and discussion prior to being submitted to the PCC.

Task Group on Normalization

Following up on discussion at Midwinter, SCA member Gary Strawn drafted a charge for a new Task Group on Normalization “to investigate the normalization issue in all of its aspects,” and agreed to chair the task group after it is organized. The PCC Steering Committee has reviewed the draft and has approved it in principle. The specific deliverables of the task group will be as follows:

1. An identification of the various purposes to which normalization has been or may be used in library systems and the kind of normalization appropriate to each.
2. A detailed normalization scheme (intended to supplant the existing NACO scheme) for the core portion of the MARC character set.
3. An extension of the normalization scheme for the core MARC character set to Arabic, Cyrillic, Greek and Hebrew characters.
4. Principles for the extension of the normalization scheme for other alphabetic scripts.
5. Principles for the extension of the normalization scheme to other scripts.

The assignment to this task group involves a considerable amount of work, and therefore it may have a final deadline as much as thirty months out, with one or two shorter deadlines for interim products.

The proposed membership of the task group has been identified. After all of the proposed members have been contacted to verify their willingness to serve, and after the draft charge has been reviewed by the full SCA, it will be submitted to PoCo for final approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Charbonneau, chair
Apr. 20, 2005