

# Cataloging for the Web: Dublin Core and the Resource Description Framework

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## Abstract

Since the rise of the World Wide Web in 1994, libraries and information providers share an Internet Commons. As in a linguistically complex land, the content providers there use a wide variety of incompatible formats and cataloging rules to describe their information. But likewise since 1994, there has been a growing initiative on the part of national libraries, government agencies, publishers, and universities to develop a deliberately simple "pidgin" set of metadata (cataloging) elements that is interoperable with these various systems. This has resulted in the Dublin Core -- a set of fifteen basic categories with well-understood meanings like "Author" and "Title". This two-page standard has already been translated into nine languages. In parallel with the Dublin Core effort, the World-Wide Web community, together with software companies such as Netscape and Microsoft, has developed the Resource Description Framework (RDF) -- a standard format for encoding the metadata of Web documents, library catalogs, and electronic commerce applications. RDF uses XML, the simplified SGML that is positioned to replace HTML and word-processing formats as the standard format for documents on the Web. Together, the Dublin Core and RDF could provide a metadata system that is consistent across a wide range of applications and domains, no more complex than it needs to be, usable by both experts and non-experts, interoperable with existing library catalogs and legacy databases, and coherent across many languages. This tutorial will provide an introduction to the issues, tools, and prospects.