

Metadata Crosswalk Analysis

PB Core

Based on the items I had in mind for a cataloging (a VHS tape or DVD), PB Core was the clear winner in terms of specificity in describing the technical details of those items. Unfortunately, PB Core seemed surprisingly unwieldy for handling moving image material with multiple subtitles and audio options. I suspect this has to do with its focus on broadcast media in the US. It also seems better equipped to handle born-digital media as opposed to physical media. It lacks robust preservation metadata, but has an element called `<instantiationExtension>` which allows a user to pipe in metadata from an external source. This element could be of great value for organizations that use other systems to record preservation metadata.

VRA Core

Though VRA Core has enough fields to provide some descriptive metadata for a moving image item, the standard proved to be the most frustrating one when trying to express technical metadata for the items. Some moving image technical metadata could be added if there were more types for the `<description>` element, such as “condition.” I resorted to using `<technique>` to describe things like television standards, but I don’t think this is what the creators of VRA Core intended. Perhaps VRA Core could include different technique types such as “television_standard.”

One strength of VRA core lies in its simplicity. It contains the least number of metadata elements of the three standards, but it seems inadequate in providing even a basic amount of physical information about a recorded moving image item like a VHS or DVD. However, VRA Core could be useful for experimental or art films that use unconventional materials on a piece of film stock and where many different film elements (for example, various prints or just individual pieces of film) exist. The global “extent” attribute could be useful to describe those elements separately. However, the “extent” attribute may not map well to other standards. I think VRA Core would be less useful for video art for the reasons described above.

MODS

MODS seems very extensible so lots of technical and even preservation metadata can be expressed about a moving image item in one way or another. A user can create different note types for physical characteristics as well as employ elements from other XML schemas to express copyright information. Often MODS gets a lot more granular in its descriptive metadata than the other standards, for example, in the `<subject>` element, which would probably make it useful for higher-budget movies where this metadata is more available. The weakness of MODS lies in its granularity—in many areas metadata will be lost when mapping to other standards.