Context

Metadata is the cornerstone of Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM) and Digital Humanities (DH) enterprises; permeating data management discourse. Information professionals with metadata knowledge are situated as central players in these types of environments, while those workers lacking such expertise are typically encouraged to acquire it.

Metadata literacy, a term coined by Erik Mitchell, is thus essential for current and nascent information professionals alike (2009).

THE PROBLEM

The authors hypothesize that the types of knowledge and skills specified in metadata job ads have shifted in the last ~4 years, and yet, there has been no well-publicized content analysis detailing these changes.

This lack of research leaves professors of information organization and metadata without a standard for prioritizing the many subjects they could potentially teach in their courses. They are left wondering whether the content they have chosen will adequately prepare their students for the job market.

**Our Study: A CONTENT ANALYSIS**

**PREVIOUS WORK**

In an effort to identify emerging trends in metadata employment and potential deficits in metadata education, the authors extend a study originated by Marcia Zeng, using identical sampling and methodology.

Within-Zeng’s study, a content analysis was performed on five years of AUTOCAT job ads (2007–2012) which were collected manually from the archives and segmented into Excel spreadsheets according to classification (title, skills required, skills desired, etc.). Zeng analyzed trends regarding vocabularies, the presence (or absence) of MARC, various metadata standards, Linked Data, programming language requirements and more.

AUTOCAT is a listserver dedicated to issues related to metadata, cataloging and classification. Because of AUTOCAT’s specialization, employers regularly post job ads seeking LIS professionals with the aforementioned skills.

WHAT WE’VE COMPLETED SO FAR

Since this is a continuation of an earlier study, it was necessary to limit our data to the AUTOCAT list for the sake of continuity. The authors considered including other sources such as LinkedIn and CODE4LIB but concluded that because these sources are directed at different audiences they were unsuitable for their purposes.

We performed word counts of terms in AUTOCAT job ads between 2012–2015, and have begun identifying how job ad skills have changed between Zeng’s period of 2008–2012 and our period of 2012–2015.

**Research Questions and Hypotheses**

**R1:** To what extent can an job ad content analysis be informative about trends in the market?

Hypothesis: Word frequencies will reveal changes in the demand of certain skills, and the appearance of new skills altogether, between 2008-2015.

**R2:** What can a comparison between job ads and syllabi tell us about how we should be educating our LIS students in knowledge organization courses?

Hypothesis: A content analysis of both LIS syllabi and AUTOCAT job ads will reveal if there is a match between what is being taught and what skills and knowledge are being expected in jobs. It might also help determine if teachings in the classroom are keeping up or going beyond what is expected in the job, both theoretically and practically speaking.

**References**


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