

## Authorized Access Points, Authority Records, and the User

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What is an authorized access point (AAP)? According to the *Resource Description & Access (RDA)* glossary, it is “A standardized access point representing an entity.” AAPs used to be “headings,” and before computers they were simple text strings. In the best of all possible worlds, each AAP was a unique string of text that differentiated it from all other AAPs. Today, our AAPs look much like they did in the card catalog. Personal names are inverted (assuming left-anchored searches), and *RDA* currently preserves the preference of using a person’s birth and/or death dates over qualifiers like profession or occupation. Should we be moving beyond this?

When we think about what is most useful to users, let us think about two possible search results for Terry Jones.

1. Jones, Terry, 1942-
2. Terry Jones. Born February 1, 1942 in Colwyn Bay, Wales. Actor, director, author, comedian. Member of: Monty Python (Comedy troupe).

Unfortunately, most of the software used in libraries today would return the first result rather than the second. This is doubly sad because there is no need to wait for a replacement for MARC to achieve the second result. With robust authority records populated correctly with relevant data, the second result is possible, even with MARC. Currently, in the name authority file there are nine “Jones, Terry,” all differentiated by birth dates (another one was also born in 1942).

This example illustrates why we must move beyond thinking of access “points” as a single string of text. Furthermore, we must move beyond authority records consisting of two lines of information. Authority records are now the storehouses of machine-actionable data pertaining to the entities they represent. In the past, many catalogers considered the job of creating an authority record complete so long as the AAP was unique and there was a brief citation of where it came from. Moving forward, we owe it to ourselves and our users to do more. If we take the long view, doing this work up front will save everyone time later.

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THE INTERNET

## The Marrakesh Treaty for the Blind Enters into Force

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The Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities (Marrakesh Treaty) addresses copyright as a barrier to accessibility. A treaty to ensure copyright law does not interfere with accessibility has been more than a decade in the making. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) initially adopted the Marrakesh Treaty in 2013. This June, the twentieth country ratified the treaty, and the treaty entered into force on September 30, 2016.

### History

As books and other print materials are increasingly published electronically, digital rights management (DRM) is often used to lock down content. The goal of DRM is to prevent copying, and jurisdictions can use copyright law as an additional layer to impose penalties for breaking DRM or providing software for copying. The WIPO Copyright Treaty was adopted in 1996 and entered into force in 2002. That treaty includes a requirement to “provide adequate legal protection and effective legal remedies against the circumvention of effective technological measures that are used by authors in connection with [copyright].” In the United States, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) implements treaty provisions prohibiting anti circumvention of DRM.

Electronic text is inherently more accessible than printed books. Think of a blind person in a physical library—black ink on a white page requires the ability to see to read it. The only way for a blind person to read that information would be to

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have it transcribed or read out loud, which is labor intensive and hence expensive. Now, think of a text file. It is possible to send that text to a braille display or use text-to-speech software to read it out loud. It is possible to search across electronic text files using a braille- or sound-based interface. Compared to paper and ink, text files are wide open to the blind. But, DRM can restrict those uses. Prohibiting accessibility wasn't the goal, but it happened, just as the Internet was picking up.

Beginning in 2004, WIPO examined access to print works for the blind, and a series of discussions over the next decade led to the Marrakesh Treaty in June 2013. This treaty requires its contracting parties to adopt exceptions to their copyright laws to allow making, distributing, exporting, and importing copies in accessible formats. The treaty limits who countries must allow to make the accessible copies (nonprofits and government bodies) and on who they must allow to access the copies (visually impaired persons).

**The U.S. signed the treaty in 2013, but it has not yet ratified the treaty.**

The treaty became effective after 20 countries ratified it. In June 2016, Canada became the twentieth country to ratify, joining India, El Salvador, United Arab Emirates, Mali, Uruguay, Paraguay, Singapore, Argentina, Mexico, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, Australia, Brazil, Peru, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Israel, Chile, Ecuador, and Guatemala.

**What the treaty means for U.S. law libraries**

The U.S. hasn't yet ratified the treaty, but 17 U.S.C. § 121 allows some exceptions to copyright protection for purposes of accessibility. The U.S. could ratify the treaty with only very narrow changes to existing law. U.S. law is not likely to change drastically as a result of this treaty.

The biggest change coming may be that, as people create accessible copies, they can share them across borders. A WIPO study leading up to the Marrakesh Treaty estimated that only about five percent of published books are available in an accessible format. For the rest, if the book is to be read, someone must convert it into an accessible format. When people can share accessible copies across borders and between organizations, that means the cost and effort to convert something to an accessible format is less likely to be duplicated globally. One library can invest the time and effort to reformat a work for a visually impaired patron, and then it can share the accessible copy with other libraries serving visually impaired persons. The Marrakesh Treaty was slow in the making, but countries ratified it at a fast clip. As countries change their laws to allow making accessible format copies of works, this will allow the conversion of a greater portion of works to accessible formats.

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## LIBRARY METRICS

### Visualize This: Best Practices for Effective Story Telling Using Qualitative and Quantitative Data

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While working with Marcia Burris on our recent *Spectrum* contribution, "Using Metrics to Communicate and Deliver Value" (<http://epubs.aallnet.org/i/741285-aall-spectrum-november-december-2016-volume-21-number-2>), one of our focuses was providing a variety of tangible examples of metric usage in real-life library situations. When reviewing current literature on the topic and spreading our net across colleagues and polling them for ideas, best practices, and anecdotes, it became clear that when it comes to using metrics to prove your value to leadership in libraries, sometimes it's more about the presentation of these metrics than the tables of numbers. Providing relevant qualitative and quantitative information to leadership that speaks directly to their own goals and initiatives in both a language and format they can understand is imperative, but pages and pages of raw data and summary counts of things like gate traffic and LibGuide hits fall short when telling our stories of value. Your audience doesn't care about the data, per se—what they really care about is the narrative.

In this respect, visualizations and infographics can be leveraged as powerful story-telling tools, increasing rapid perception by readers and aiding in a variety of things ranging from idea illustration and idea generation to visual discovery and communicating statistics. Both visually appealing and traditionally more concise than tables, visualizations and infographics are some of the best ways to discern information and make decisions. One can easily use visualizations to illustrate library spending, usage statistics for databases, comparative availability of resources, cost recovery, and more. They have even begun cropping up within legal research tools alongside some big names, with both Westlaw and Lexis Advance getting in on the action.