Editorial

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Welcome to Volume 6, Issue 5. This is a special issue of *JDAM* solely focused on the theme of metadata and taxonomies; data about data, but yet, so much more! Metadata and taxonomies are an integral component of Digital Asset Management (DAM) and this issue celebrates some of the most prominent thought leaders and evangelists and their insight into metadata and taxonomies. We know you will love this issue and find new value in DAM.

Tom Bachmann, metadata strategist and partner with SEW Consulting, provides a fantastic article on ‘Video Metadata Modeling for DAM Systems’. Bachmann argues that video content managers using a DAM to provide access to thousands or even millions of hours of digital footage will require a well-structured metadata architecture. Beyond basic search and retrieval, video metadata for a fully operational DAM must support a wide range of functions: from tagging and ingesting to transcoding and distributing derivative formats. Crafting a sound video metadata strategy depends on the development of a metadata schema, on documentation of a data dictionary and on the establishment of standards for inbound and outbound A/V formats. This detailed review of these areas aims to assist DAM teams to develop solutions that provide lasting value to their organizations and to avoid committing crucial mistakes that may take years to recover from.

Frank Chagoya, Executive Digital Asset Manager for Leo Burnett’s Print Management department, presents on Metadata: Principles, Practical Application, Best Practices, Optimization and Workflow. DAM systems are continually impacting production and archiving processes. Post development of taxonomy and metadata schemas as well as sourcing data from various workflow documentation and even data embedded in certain file types, both pre and post ingestion have generated a new impact that is now being realized. Chagoya argues that there

is a growing need to standardize how and, more importantly, where we source our metadata. Searchability and ease of use is greatly impacted in a DAM if the taxonomy and metadata schema implemented is too confusing to use or too cumbersome to apply. Only the most commonly used details about an asset should be used as its metadata.

In his article, ‘Cost Benefits Analysis: Integrating an Enterprise Taxonomy into a SharePoint Environment’, Mike Doane, Content Strategist at Ascentium, argues that for many enterprises, the need exists to thoroughly integrate a corporate-wide taxonomy or taxonomies into every aspect of the search experience on a corporate portal where documents are regularly created, maintained and retired. Doane’s article examines how a cost-benefits analysis was performed to determine the costs and benefits of enabling a division-centric taxonomy that was developed specifically for the Google Search Appliance to be integrated into a SharePoint platform used by multiple other divisions, thus enabling those SharePoint users the benefit of a significantly improved way to discover tagged digital assets in SharePoint search results.

Heather Hedden, Taxonomy Manager at First Wind Energy LLC, provides a fascinating look at ‘Taxonomies & Controlled Vocabularies Best Practices for Metadata’. Taxonomies or controlled vocabularies are used in descriptive metadata fields to support consistent, accurate, and quick indexing and retrieval of digital asset content. Designing metadata and controlled vocabularies is an integrated process that takes into consideration which and how many metadata fields will make use of controlled vocabularies. Synonyms (non-preferred terms) and hierarchies are methods to help users find the right term within a large controlled vocabulary. Best practices for creating non-preferred terms and hierarchies are explained.

Marko Hurst, consultant, author and speaker in the fields of Search, Measurement, Content Strategy and User Experience, presents an excellent article on, 'Search Relevancy Got You Down? Learn How Metadata Will Boost the Relevancy of Your Results In No Time'. Hurst posits that when it comes to search, an information retrieval (IR) system, within DAM systems the burden is often placed upon the users who are expected to solve the problem of irrelevant search results. Why? The biggest contributor to this problem is simply an over-reliance on algorithms alone to deliver relevant results, when it is a human linguistic issue. Machine understandable information, semantic, algorithms will not be advanced enough for many years, if ever, to properly understand and interpret the nuances of 'natural language'. To deliver the most relevant results possible today you need more than algorithms, you need a human understanding of language. You need someone who understands content modeling and structure, your audience's natural language and your business vernacular in the form of metadata: taxonomies, ontologies and metadata schemas.

Expert DAM consultant, Ron Roszkiewicz enriches us with a captivating article on 'Enterprise Metadata Management: How Consolidation Simplifies Control'. Metadata has become a pesky fact of life for many businesses. In fact, one of the reasons many companies adopt DAM systems is to consolidate what are called silos of information into one controllable repository. The same is true of metadata. There exist relationships and dependencies between disparate systems that also call out for consolidation into a corporate taxonomy.

Madi Solomon, Director of Content Standards at Pearson Pic, provides a

thought-provoking article, 'Metamedia, or, *How I gave up control and learned to love the sandbox*'. In this article, Solomon explores the proliferation of metadata, its many roles, and how to approach a transformative DAM strategy. When speed to market is the top priority in most businesses, the luxury of deep research and fully flushed methodologies are usually compromised. In fact, content architecture strategies are more akin to laying the tracks down in front of a fast-moving train. By the time businesses concede that some kind of cohesive plan is needed for managing digital assets, the train has usually long since left the station. Adding to this complexity is the ever-shifting digital landscape.

Lori Lindberg, Professor at the School of Library and Information Science, San Jose State University, San Jose, California reviews Heather Hedden's latest book *The Accidental Taxonomist* (Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2010). The full range of history, explication, design and implementation of taxonomies is the subject of this informative, plain-spoken and timely book by Hedden, a freelance taxonomist and owner of Hedden Information Management. Hedden has written a book that can become a standard text for introductory courses in this area and provides sound, practical information and direction on this topic without unnecessary theorizing. As an introductory text or a basic reference guide for novice taxonomists and students, *The Accidental Taxonomist* is a concise and easily digestible resource worthy of the attention of beginners and professors of introductory information organization and retrieval courses and workshops.

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