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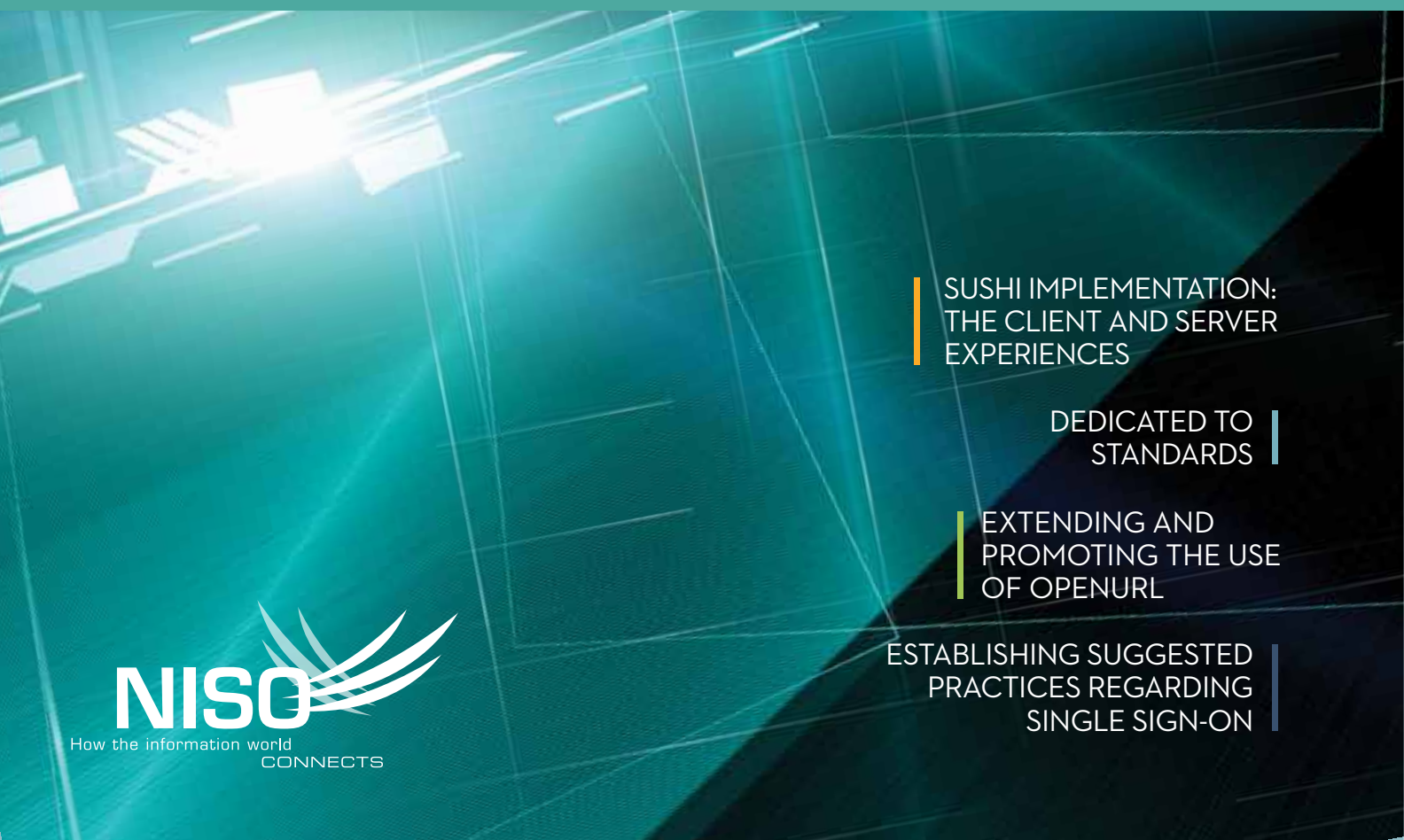

SUSHI IMPLEMENTATION: THE CLIENT AND SERVER EXPERIENCES

DEDICATED TO STANDARDS

EXTENDING AND PROMOTING THE USE OF OPENURL

ESTABLISHING SUGGESTED PRACTICES REGARDING SINGLE SIGN-ON

NISO
How the information world CONNECTS

SP [SPOTLIGHT]

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Linda Beebe
Senior Director, PsycINFO,
at the American Psychological
Association (APA)

"In the publications and database arena, standards are essential to our making our content accessible to all who need it and to providing the best possible service to members and other individuals as well as to our institutional customers."

American Psychological Association: Using Standards to Improve the Dissemination of Knowledge

Linda Beebe, Senior Director, PsycINFO, at the American Psychological Association (APA) and the organization's primary voting representative to NISO responded to the ISQ editor's questions about her organization and their use of standards for this issue's member spotlight.

Q For our readers who aren't familiar with the American Psychological Association, can you briefly explain who you are and what you do?

The American Psychological Association (APA) is a scientific and professional organization that represents psychology in the United States. With 150,000 members, APA is the largest association of psychologists worldwide. Our mission is to advance the creation, communication, and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people's lives.

One of APA's largest programs is the Office of Publications and Databases. The office includes three content producers: APA Books, APA Journals, and the PsycINFO department; the latter currently produces five large databases in additional to other smaller subsets. The premier database PsycINFO® provides comprehensive abstracting and indexing of the psychological literature from the 1800s to the present. In January, we announced the indexing of the 3 millionth record in PsycINFO. We also have full-text databases of APA published journals (PsycARTICLES®) and books (PsycBOOKS®). PsycEXTRA is a bibliographic database of gray literature that includes full text for about 70% of the records. PsycCRITIQUES combines a weekly release of reviews of books and films with a database of previously published reviews back to 1956.

Q How has your organization incorporated standards and best practices into its products and services?

Standards are an important aspect of APA programming. For example, the APA Practice Directorate, under the oversight of the APA Board of Professional Affairs, has developed numerous practice guidelines, such as those for keeping patient records, for practice with various population groups, for evaluating disorders, and

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for incorporating multicultural training and research into practice. Although APA has not, to date, developed clinical treatment guidelines, the organization does offer criteria for evaluating guidelines developed by others. As another example, the APA Commission on Accreditation accredits specific doctoral programs, predoctoral internships, and postdoctoral residencies in professional psychology.

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Reporting standards for scientific research studies facilitate understanding across disciplines and make meta-analyses more efficient. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* is the standard guideline for the structure of scientific articles in psychology, as well as for the citation style used in psychology and associated behavioral science fields. The current 6th edition contains the Journal Article Reporting Standards (JARS), which were formulated based on other standards.

Q What benefits has your organization gained from utilizing standards and incorporating them into its products?

APA produces large databases and an increasing number of other electronic products. Having produced our first electronic database in 1967, we have known for a long time that electronic products must not only contain high quality content and look good, they must work. The user must find the functionality they expect, and it must perform in the way they anticipate. Interoperability is key. APA has practiced the philosophy that we want our databases to be where our customers want to find them. That means our databases are distributed on the platforms of several third-party vendors, and our field structures and other technical specifications must be adaptable to these different platforms. We make recommendations to our vendor partners, but we cannot control how a given database will work on their platform. Therefore, following standards or generally accepted practices for structuring data is an important part of our design for any database. And we're proud of how well these databases work in different environments.

Q What standards are most important to your organization and why?

Perhaps the most easily explained standards are those relating to our own delivery platform, APA PsycNET. As I noted, the products must work—and increasingly they must work with many different connectors. For example, libraries use link resolvers, A-Z Lists, federated search engines, and discovery services. Consequently, our platform must work with the OpenURL standard, and APA was an early adopter.

Libraries need the ability to measure how these large (and sometimes costly) databases are being used in their institutions, and they need to have confidence that they are receiving the same measures from publisher to publisher and product to product. Meeting the COUNTER usage statistics requirements is, therefore, very important to us. When libraries were ready to receive their usage reports automated in XML format, SUSHI (Standardized Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative) became a key standard for us as well.

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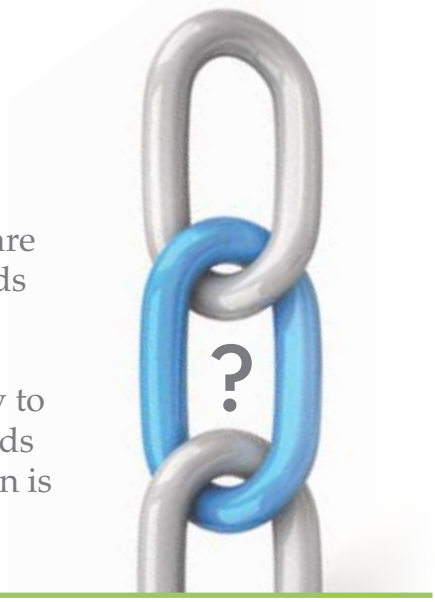

"For some journals, nearly 90% of their research articles are accompanied by supplemental materials. Yet no standards or recommended practices exist for how this material should be selected, edited, linked to (and from), cited, or preserved. Journal constituents do not always know how to find supplemental material because there are no standards for indicating that there is more to the journal article than is contained within the journal framework."

To make the best use of link resolvers and resource management tools, libraries need to know precisely what is contained in each of the databases or content packages they license from APA. Following the NISO/UKSG KBART (Knowledge Base And Related Tools) guidelines enables us to provide that information in a standardized format to customers, our vendor-partners, and link-resolver providers.

We began our transition to the NLM Journal Publishing DTD when it was emerging as a common practice, and we still have a little ways to go. It should come to fruition by the end of the year. Now the NLM journal article schemas and documentation are going through the process of becoming a NISO standard.

Q What standards development has your organization been actively involved in?

Three APA staff are currently involved with the Joint NISO-NFAIS Supplemental Journal Article Materials Working Group. Over the past several years, making additional material related to a journal article available as a supplemental file has become a common practice. For some journals, nearly 90% of their research articles are accompanied by supplemental materials. Yet no standards or recommended practices exist for how this material should be selected, edited, linked to (and from), cited, or preserved. Journal constituents, including librarians and end users, do not always know how to find supplemental material because there are no standards for indicating that there is more to the journal article than is contained within the journal framework. The abstracting and indexing services that generally would provide pointers to such content find it just as difficult to recognize there are materials supplemental to any given article.

Most scholarly journals have formulated explicit criteria for acceptance of manuscripts; however, no clear standards exist for the value supplemental material might be expected to add to the presentation of articles in any given journal. In a world of information and work overload, the task of peer reviewing voluminous supplemental files seems increasingly onerous. Faced with the increasing burden, the *Journal of Neuroscience* last year decided to cease reviewing or accepting supplemental materials. Other journals, such as *Cell*, have set limitations on what will be accepted. The NISO-NFAIS Working Group is crafting a set of Recommended Practices, considering definitions, policies, and best ways of presenting and preserving this content. There are two subgroups: the Business Working Group, which I am co-chairing with Marie McVeigh from Thomson Reuters, and the Technical Working Group, co-chaired by Dave Martinsen from the American Chemical Society and Sasha Schwartzman from the American Geophysical Union. The former is tackling the semantic side of the problem and the latter is working on the syntactical issues. We work in tandem so that we will end up with what we hope will be a cohesive, very useful document. We began last August and hope to finish before the end of 2011.

Our Full-Text Serials Manager, Kathleen Sheedy, is serving on the NISO PIE-J (Presentation and Identification of E-Journals) Working Group. With 77 journals currently in our PsycARTICLES database, we are particularly concerned about recommended practices for title presentations, accurate ISSNs, and citation practices. And we have concerns beyond our own journals because our PsycINFO bibliographic database covers about 2,500 journals.

I participated in the group that developed SERU, the Shared E-Resources Understanding, as a practice that

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can substitute for the use of a license in small contracts between publishers and libraries. I am pleased to see that many publishers and institutions are now using SERU, as I believe doing so will speed up access to content and eliminate burdens on scarce human resources.

APA maintains an active Permissions and Rights program. Here, too, we have been eager to adopt practices that will protect authors, yet increase access to content in a smooth fashion. For example, we are signatories to the *STM Permissions Guidelines* as revised by the International Association of Scientific, Technical, and Medical Publishers in 2009. In accord with these guidelines, we allow authors to use a certain level of content without obtaining written permission, so long as they provide appropriate credit.

Also early in 2009, the NFAIS Board of Directors approved *Best Practices for Publishing Journal Articles*, which was produced by a working group I chaired in 2008. The working group came together to address the problems abstracting and indexing services were seeing with early publication articles, those generally not associated with a volume or an issue and often released immediately after acceptance. As they evolved, the practices addressed a variety of issues related to publishing any journal articles electronically.

Q What benefits does your organization gain from active involvement in standards development?

Aside from the fact that we have an opportunity to influence the final outcome of a standard or best practice (far beyond simply voting or commenting on them), it is a tremendous learning opportunity. In every group I or one of our staff has participated in, the breadth of publishing knowledge and experience in the group has elevated our own overall knowledge of publishing. And working groups reach out to other parties as well to ensure that they incorporate the recommendations from across the community. The camaraderie that comes from taking on thorny issues and working through recommendations for solving the problems is another benefit.

Q What problem areas have you encountered that would benefit from further standards or best practices development?

Shifting journal titles are a constant problem. With the journals in PsycINFO, we find that journal publishers are not always consistent in presenting the titles of their journals. The title may be presented one way on the front cover, another on running heads, sometimes yet another on instructions to authors. Journal titles sometimes change when the ownership changes, but sometimes a title changes from issue to issue. Finding accurate journal titles in abstracting and indexing records is very important to our users, so we spend staff time trying to pin down the correct one. We also need historically accurate and complete journal titles for automated parsing of cited references. Many systems, such as CrossRef, PubMed, and our software supplier, use the ISSN database as their reference; unfortunately, that database does not track title changes at the level of precision that we are looking for. For example, modifying, adding, or removing a subtitle is considered a minor title change that does not require the assignment of a new ISSN. To publishers and end users, however, subtitles *are* significant. Having a standard for tracking all journal

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title changes would be of enormous benefit to APA—and, we would think, to other publishers as well. I am confident that the NISO PIE-J working group will resolve at least some of the problems, but there may be more to do.

We currently deliver electronic books primarily in our PsycBOOKS database and annual collections, and we have some titles in Kindle and Mobipocket formats. As we look more and more at mobile delivery and other forms of delivering books, standards will become more important in those areas.

Q What else would you like NISO *ISQ* readers to know about your organization?

APA is a non-profit, discipline-based publisher. We are somewhat unusual in that we publish both primary and secondary literature. We are a large enough publisher to have a sophisticated blend of products (which means we encounter a wide range of issues in producing them), but we are small enough that we are in touch across departments and aware of what is happening in all of them. Although the revenues from our products support other APA scientific and educational programs, our mission is very much knowledge dissemination. So, our publishing decisions are made on the basis of good science.

Another area where standards are important to APA is psychological tests and measures. The APA Science Directorate's Testing and Assessment department works full time on these issues, and APA is one of three national organizations that developed the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. In 2011 PsycINFO will release a 6th database, PsycTESTS. This new database will include bibliographic records for both unpublished and commercially available tests, as well as full text for the unpublished tests we own rights for or can obtain permission to deliver.

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RELEVANT LINKS

American Psychological Association
www.apa.org

Best Practices for Publishing Journal Articles (NFAIS)
www.nfais.org/files/file/Best_Practices_Final_Public.pdf

COUNTER Code of Practice
www.projectcounter.org/code_practice.html

KBART website
www.niso.org/workrooms/kbart

NFAIS Best Practices for Publishing Journal Articles
www.nfais.org/files/file/Best_Practices_Final_Public.pdf

NLM Journal Archiving and Interchange Tag Suite
dtd.nlm.nih.gov/

OpenURL standard (ANSI/NISO Z39.88)
www.niso.org/standards/z39-88-2004/

PIE-J working group
www.niso.org/workrooms/piej

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association
www.apastyle.org/manual/index.aspx

SERU website
www.niso.org/workrooms/seru

Standardized Markup for Journal Articles working group
www.niso.org/workrooms/journalmarkup

Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing
www.apa.org/science/programs/testing/standards.aspx

STM Permissions Guidelines
www.stm-assoc.org/2010_10_22_STM_Permissions_Guidelines.pdf

Supplemental Journal Article Materials working group
www.niso.org/workrooms/supplemental

SUSHI website
www.niso.org/workrooms/sushi