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Network Devt. & MARC Standards Office

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The Application/MARC Content-type

Status of this Memo

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Abstract

This memorandum provides a mechanism for representing objects which are files of Machine-Readable Cataloging records (MARC). The MARC formats are standards for the representation and communication of bibliographic and related information. A MARC record contains metadata for an information resource following MARC format specifications.

1. Introduction

The MARC formats are sets of codes and content designators defined for encoding metadata for five types of data: bibliographic, holdings, authority, classification, and community information. The structure of MARC records is an implementation of national and international standards, ANSI Z39.2 (Information Interchange Format) and ISO 2709 (Format for Information Interchange). Codes and conventions in the formats identify and characterize data elements within a record and support the manipulation of those data.

MARC formats are communication formats, primarily designed to provide specification for the exchange of bibliographic and related information between systems. They are widely used in a variety of exchange and processing environments. They do not mandate internal storage or display formats to be used by different systems.

2. Definition

Since there are different flavors of MARC which would be processed by different applications, this content-type/subtype refers to the harmonized USMARC/CANMARC specification. Additional content-types/subtypes may be defined in the future (e.g. application/unimarc).

MARC records involve three elements: the record structure, content designation, and data content. Only those records that contain all three elements according to the standard would use this content-type/subtype, i.e. content extracted from the structure would not. Since MARC does not mandate an internal storage format, parameters have not been assigned to specific implementations (e.g. OCLC-MARC, LC-MARC, etc.). In addition, parameters have not been defined for the specific type of MARC format (e.g. bibliographic, authority, holdings), since the information is contained in the Leader portion of the record.

3. Registration Information

To: ietf-types@iana.org

Media type name: application

Media subtype name: marc

Required parameters: None

Optional parameters: None

Encoding considerations: MARC records may contain long lines and/or arbitrary octet values. The base64 content-transfer-encoding is recommended for transmission of MARC over electronic mail.

4. Security Considerations

There are no known security risks associated with the use or viewing of MARC data. A MARC record may have security classification associated with the document it describes or metadata in that record. Although this does not present any security risk to the user of MARC data, it may provide an opportunity for a security breach for the source of classified MARC data.

5. Interoperability Considerations

MARC is a communication format and is designed for interoperability between different systems that may store data in local formats internally.

6. Published Specification

"USMARC Format for Bibliographic Data"; "USMARC Format for Authority Data"; "USMARC Format for Holdings Data"; "USMARC Format for Classification Data"; "USMARC Format for Community Information".

Additional information:
File extension: .mrc
OID: 1.2.840.10003.5.10

Person & email address to contact for further information:
Network Development & MARC Standards Office <ndmso@loc.gov>
101 Independence Ave. SE
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20540-4102 U.S.A.

7. References

Library of Congress, Network Development and MARC Standards Office, "USMARC Format for Bibliographic Data", 1994- .

"USMARC Format for Authority Data", 1993- .

"USMARC Format for Holdings Data", 1989- .

"USMARC Format for Classification Data", 1991- .

"USMARC Format for Community Information", 1993- .

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