FAST

UND's application of authorized headings

Why FAST?

• At the time of our first test database, not that many libraries were using ContentDM
• The default vocabulary was not suitable to our project
• I am on the ALA ALCTS SAC Subcommittee on FAST, which is an advisory group for OCLC developing FAST.
• To evaluate it, OCLC needed actual users
I decided to use it because:

- The goal of FAST was to design a vocabulary that is easy to use for digital content.
- The goal was to design a vocabulary that didn’t require extensive training to assign.
- Also, it should be able to be used by non-librarians or people with no training in LCSH subject assignment. [Manual p.6]

- My library has no extra financial resources to create digital metadata. Only student or non-professional staff was available to add on top of regular work.
- Our committee agreed that authorized headings needed to be used whenever possible.
• All FAST headings are authorized.
• We use Name Authorities.
• When adequate information is available we create NACO records and have submitted a number of SACO records.

What’s different

• http://www.oclc.org/info/research/wip/fast/
• FAST is a controlled vocabulary based on the terminology of *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH), but applied with a different syntax. It takes a faceted approach by categorizing headings according to their functions. It seeks to retain the richness of the LCSH vocabulary while supplying simpler application syntax.
A major principle governing FAST is that all elements contained in a mainheading/subdivision combination must belong to the same facet.

NOTE: This makes it quite different from LCSH.

You have in LCSH - Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson, +c Baron, +d 1809-1892 +x Homes and haunts.

You have in FAST because you can’t mix facets:
- 100 1 Tennyson, Alfred Tennyson, +c Baron, +d 1809-1892 [personal]
- 150 Authors, American $x Homes and haunts [topical]
• In retrieval, FAST represents a hybrid of pre-coordination and post-coordination. FAST headings that contain multiple concepts in a string with a main heading and one or more subdivisions in the same facet are, by nature, pre-coordinated.

• Complex subjects for which no heading has been established are assigned multiple headings to be post-coordinated at the point of retrieval. Furthermore, headings from different facets are always assigned separately and post-coordinated. [Manual p. 6-7]
Advantages

- Uses simple syntax
- Is enumerated
- Provides a tiered approach to allow different levels of subject representation
- Accommodates different retrieval models
- Is able to accommodate both precoordinate and postcoordinate indexing and retrieval
- Is more amenable to computer-assisted indexing
- Facilitates computer-assisted authority control
- Is easier and more economical to maintain than a highly enumerated vocabulary
- Facilitates mapping of subject data and cross-domain searching

Faceting

- The following facets are defined in FAST:
  - Subject facets:
    - Topic
    - Place
    - Time
    - Persons
    - Corporate Bodies
    - Titles of work
  - Form/Genre facet
Qualifiers are common

• (1) resolving ambiguity when a particular term has two or more meanings:
  • Rings (Algebra)
  • Rings (Gymnastics)
• (2) providing context for obscure or technical terms:
  • Boundary layer (Meteorology)
  • Open plan (Building)
  • Spectral theory (Mathematics)

Another example:

• (8) distinguishing between and provide context for events with generic names:
  • Civil War (Congo : 1997)
  • Coup d’état (Peru : 1968)
  • Siege of Turin (Italy : 1706)
Subjects

- In FAST, subject facets include topic, place, time, personal name, corporate name, and titles of works as subjects. They can be categorized according to the FRBR concepts: concepts, objects, events.
- Many form/genre headings such as Periodicals and Archives may be used as either form headings (representing what the work “is”) or topical headings (representing what the work is “about”).

- Headings for named animals are topical. [Manual p. 11]
- Headings for fictitious persons, imaginary organizations, legendary and mythological characters are also topical. These headings will always be qualified to distinguish them from real people, places, or organizations. [Manual p. 11]
Geographic

• Names of geologic periods are treated as topical headings, with the year ranges assigned as chronological headings. This means 2 headings are assigned.
• FAST geographic headings fall into two categories: jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional.
• Geographic headings are linked to GACs.

Geographic - 2

• Geographic names for local places are established and applied in indirect order. The structure of geographic names is hierarchical and consists of a first-level name and may contain up to two additional levels.
• Example:
  • United States—Yellowstone National Park
  • Minnesota—Minneapolis—Loring Park
Chronological

- There are five different syntaxes for FAST chronological headings:
  - 1. Single date (1975) 2001 (September 11)
  - 2. An open date (Since 1951)
  - 3. An ending date (To 1856)
  - 4. A date range (1939 – 1945)
  - 5. Geologic period (From 140 to 190 million years ago)

Titles

- FAST headings for titles as subjects are derived from the LC name authority records. All
- FAST headings for uniform titles begin with the title rather than author—authors’ names are used as qualifiers and are tagged as x30. [Manual p. 19]
- Format: Title of work (Name of creator)
- Example: Hamlet (Shakespeare, William)
Testing FAST

If Brigham Young University agreed to the test, the FAST file will be loaded in a test database and used by PRIMO. The committee will evaluate whether FAST facets better than LCSH in that type of environment.

Terminologies service

- It is planned to included FAST
- It will be available to system designers to use in the background as a subject vocabulary. It could be used as tag clouds.
- In the Terminologies service, it is will be searchable with other vocabularies in a web environment, ready to copy to a document with a click.
Issues:

- Sometimes we can’t find a heading. We then assign a heading based on FAST philosophy or LCSH.
- As OCLC and the Subcommittee have worked on the vocabulary and the manual, we have changed the approach on certain headings and ours in the first collection are different that what is used in newer collections.
• Example: Grand Forks (N.D.) we started using as Grand Forks and also entered North Dakota if it seemed appropriate. Geographics hadn’t been determined yet. Now it is: 151 North Dakota $z Grand Forks with a 751 of Grand Forks (N.D.)