



Walk This Way: Benefits and Challenges of Crosswalking Metadata



Project Overview:

Western Libraries is using MarcEdit for a project to extract metadata from our institutional repository and cross-walk it to import the data into library catalogue records. The data is exported from the IR into spreadsheet software where extraneous data is removed and the remaining data is organized and refined. The data is mapped to MARC fields using MarcEdit and imported into the ILS where final changes are made as necessary. This is an important project because it helps to highlight a collection that is unique to Western University and make it more accessible, while leveraging the subject expertise and knowledge of the author. Ultimately, there were many challenges and benefits to automating this process besides the obvious time savings.

Benefits:

1. Efficiency

Records are used multiple times with no re-keying of data. Once established, process takes ≥90% less staff time.

2. Authority Control

User input means staff do not need to decide if a name is first/last/middle, user also provides analytics and subject analysis.

3. Accuracy

Less chance of human error due to no re-keying of data, fewer spelling mistakes.

4. Discoverability

By cross-indexing theses from the IR into the catalogue we increase visibility of this collection.

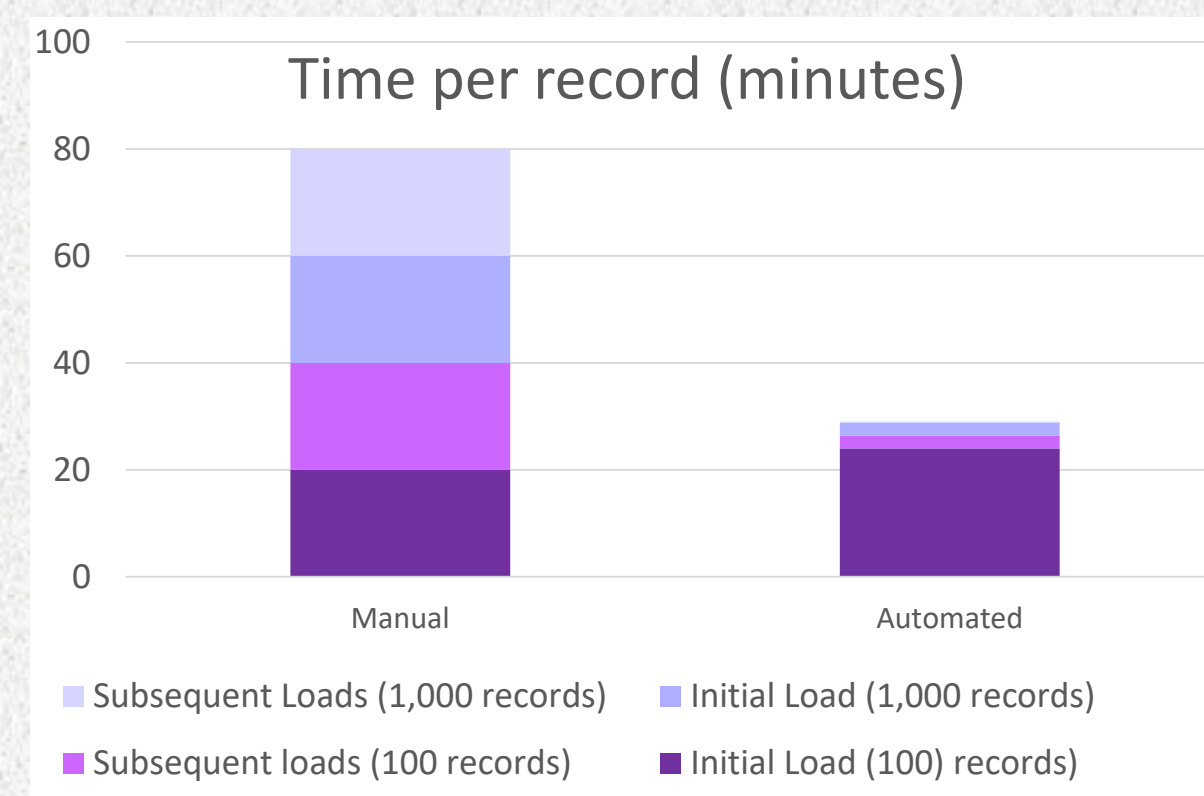


Image Source: Flickr, user Dirk Houbrechts

Challenges:

1. Refining data

The nature of data can be messy and inconsistent. The most challenging step in this project is organizing the data and transforming the information provided to populate the catalogue record correctly.

2. Dublin core formatting and user input

The data is cross-walked from Dublin core to MARC coding. The ease of this transition is dependant upon users entering complete and correct information.

3. Program interoperability

The process uses 4 different pieces of software with 2 sets of coding (Dublin Core & MARC), from the IR, to the spreadsheet, to MarcEdit, and finally the ILS.

4. Large learning curve

Learning MarcEdit in itself is a challenge!