The Cataloging Lab.pdf

Lisa Romano

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authorized users to produce content using mobile devices, upload media (photos, audio, and video) to any Mukurtu CMS-powered community archive, and add metadata and access restrictions. The app is particularly beneficial for rural or impoverished communities with cellular-dependent Internet access.

With its emphasis on person-based permissions and indigenous community norms, Mukurtu delivers an intriguing cultural contrast to Western notions of open access, in which everyone gets access to everything, and copyright law, in which reproduction and reuse are restricted for the commercial gain of rightsholders. In Mukurtu, item-level access and reuse permissions are based on TK Labels, with icons reminiscent of Creative Commons licenses and displayed alongside each item. Rather than copyright status, TK Labels are visual cues to community protocols, flagging each item as “restricted to women,” “sacred,” or “verified” among others. TK Labels are described at https://localcontexts.org/tk-labels/. The Plateau Peoples’ Web Portal (https://plateauportal.libraries.wsu.edu/) showcases Mukurtu’s mobile-friendly, visually appealing user interface in the context of the Portal’s rich digital collections, including TK Labels, drawn from the tribes of the Pacific Northwest.

Empowering indigenous communities to reclaim control over their cultural heritage, Mukurtu is a system that centers these communities in their own narratives. Mukurtu CMS forms an extraordinary effort to build diversity, inclusion, and decolonization into the infrastructure of archives and special collections. Mukurtu merits greater investment and adoption. It also furnishes a benchmark for future initiatives.

Rating: 4.5 out of 5

References

Michael Rodriguez
University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut,
✉️ michael.a.rodriguez@uconn.edu

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The Cataloging Lab

http://cataloginglab.org/

The Cataloging Lab is a website designed to allow library staff to develop Library of Congress Subject Headings. The site is designed as a wiki for users to collaborate on these headings and prepare them for submission to the Library of Congress.

When first accessing the site, the Cataloging Lab logo fills the screen and users need to scroll down to find the rest of the information on the Home page. The site might be easier to navigate and use with a smaller logo. On a mobile device, this logo is cut off. Also, a brief explanation of the site upfront would be helpful.

As users scroll down, the other information on the Home page moves over the logo. Currently, there are topics for subjects, personal & corporate names, Latin American and
Indigenous Peoples of the Americas (LAIPA) funnel, and classification. Underneath these topics are the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for the site. These FAQs should be more prominently displayed as they explain the purpose of the site and how to use it. Additionally, they should be reordered to have the introductory FAQs first.

Some of the descriptions for the topics are not very specific. The subject topic description only states “subjects headings,” while classification contains “LCC (class numbers).” There does not appear to be further explanation of these topics on the site. The FAQs give more information on the LAIPA funnel, but there are no details of why this funnel is included or if other funnels will be added in the future. Each topic lists the number of headings.

Clicking on a topic displays the list of related subjects, the five most recent headings, site search box, and Meta area. Users can click on a subject to show the proposed heading and post a comment. However, the list of the five most recent headings is across all topics and may not include any in the topic the user is viewing. In fact, a couple of the headings appear to be only the beginnings of someone working on them. On these topic pages, part of the Cataloging Lab logo displays at the top of the page. This is somewhat distracting, and the new page should instead fill the screen. A breadcrumb trail appears on most pages, but the Home page is listed as KB Home, which is unclear that it means Knowledge Base.

After performing a site search, the results appear on a new page. Also included on this results page are recent posts, recent comments, archives, and categories. Other parts of the site would be benefit from these areas. The categories area is unclear as all searches attempted are “Uncategorized.” The results page lacks the breadcrumb trail.

In the Meta area, there are links to register, log in, Rich Site Summary feeds for entries and comments, and a link to the WordPress site. To fully use the site, users must register and log in. After logging in, the Cataloging Lab dashboard shows a glance of site activity. On the left side, there are links to Knowledge Base and KB FAQ. The FAQs contain some of the same FAQs as the Home page, but they do not give detailed instructions on using the dashboard.

Clicking Knowledge Base displays a list of the headings, their associated topic, tags, views, like/dislikes, feedback, author, date, and comments. However, most headings do not have tags, plus like/dislikes, and feedback currently have not been used. Hovering over a heading shows Edit, Quick Edit, Trash, and View/Preview links. Edit allows a user to edit all fields in the heading, while Quick Edit allows editing a few select fields. The site offers no explanation of these two types of edits, and it is unclear if all users can delete a heading.

Under Knowledge Base on the left, Add new displays a form to enter a new heading, but some parts of the form lack instructions. Topics let users add new ones to the site, while Tags allow new entries for the status of proposals. Unfortunately, neither the Topics or Tags page presents clear instructions on adding new entries to the site.

Cataloging Lab is a little confusing to use and would benefit from a short tutorial and more detailed online help. Users need to be familiar with proposing subject headings to properly contribute to the site. Cataloging Lab is new and still appears to be under construction.