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Improving Libraries Visibility and Web Presence using BLUEcloud: A Practical Approach

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Abstract:

Libraries everywhere are excited about the possibilities created by open web accessibility, accomplished through BLUEcloud Visibility. With this leap understandably come expectations about what libraries will see from this momentous change. The goal of this research work is to bring forth a visibility solution which offers catalogue discoverability easy through the use of linked data. Observed facts reveal the transition from MARC to BIBFRAME, their implementation, precedence set for libraries from their adoption, outcomes and difference linked data is making in libraries open web visibility.

Key words: Web visibility, BIBFRAME, BLUEcloud, Linked data.

Introduction:

BLUEcloud visibility is a groundbreaking process that allows libraries to bring their resources to the open web; a revolutionary leap forward in library accessibility. SirsiDynix working in partnership with Zepheria's Library. Link Network, brings this process to fetch ''Best Library User Experience"' to libraries worldwide and push the industry towards more intuitive, state-of-the-art technology **(Breeding, 2016).**

A fraction of searches for content start within the library catalogue, rendering enormous amounts of other library content invisible. BLUEcloud visibility changes all that by transforming MARC data into search engine accessible resources (BIBFRAME) that can be easily discovered, accessed and consumed by web users. This sort

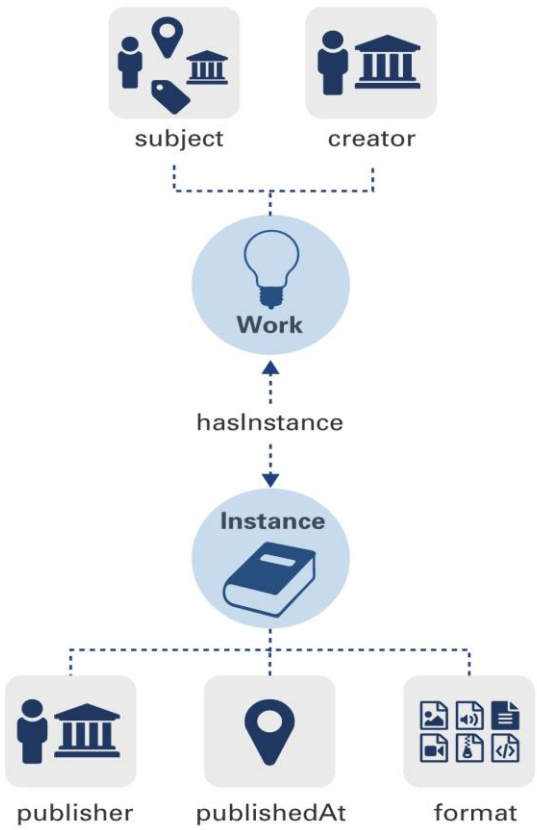
of approach to discovery is that the user does not have to know the URL of the library catalogue or of a portal. When they want to know something –they put it on Google. Additionally, Catalogue data is paired with physical library locations to enable geo-locating, so that patrons searching on the web will see results pointing directly to their local library **(Cooke, 2018).**

This library centric design is an exciting update that meets two paradoxical- Visibility needs and the need for libraries to stay connected at the same time or in other words, it offers the promise of rapidly raising visibility of the whole library, connects catalogues, collections and communities with web users and the services they use.

Where has it come from?

MARC (Machine Readable Catalogue) was developed back in the very early 1970's specifically for computer-based bibliographic systems. It has constantly developed to keep pace with knowledge systems and has worked well for the purposes for which it was designed. With the advent of the internet, however, the rigid structure of MARC was considered not so appropriate. Internet search engines, such as Google, rely far more on links between data and cannot fully exploit a MARC record.

Work has been done for a number of years to define a new bibliographic record format that search engines can exploit. In 1998, IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) recommended restructuring catalogue databases to reflect the conceptual structure of resources, an initiative known as Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records or FRBR. There are now a few standards based on this model, one is RDA- Resource Description & Access and another one BIBFRAME- Bibliographic Framework (Initiated by the Library of Congress) **(Jin, Hahn, & Croll, 2016).**



BIBFRAME serves as a general model for expressing and connecting library bibliographic data via the web. It focuses on four main classes: Work, Instance, Authority and Annotation. Creative Work – resource reflecting conceptual essence of the cataloguing item i.e. content portion of bibliographic description. Instance – resource reflecting an individual, material embodiment of the Work (describes the carrier). Authority – resource reflecting key authority concepts that have defined relationships reflected in the Work and Instance, for e.g. people, places, topics, organizations, etc. Annotation – resource that decorates other BIBFRAME resources with additional information, for e.g. library holdings information, cover art and reviews **(Day, 2016).**

Figure 1: Graphic showing BIBFRAME model

Moreover, BIBFRAME provides HTML links to connect different pieces of information or resources to create a linked environment. MARC on the other hand, duplicates information across multiple records such as: MARC records contain the same author's name, a repetition that is not a part of BIBFRAME. Some of the relationships BIBFRAME holds include work to work, work to instance, instance to instance, work to authority relationships **(Jin, Hahn, & Croll, 2016).**

Literature Review:

To further refine the work, a number of studies has been carried out on the topic under study;

Paper published by **Godby and Denenberg (2015)**, annotate that OCLC is primarily focused on improved visibility on the web through the launch of BIBFRAME as an initiative to develop a linked data alternative to MARC, where BIBFRAME aims to address the long-term curation needs of libraries. **Miller et.al (2012)** in their document states that the new proposed BIBFRAME model is more than a replacement for the library community's current model/format, MARC. It is the foundation for the future of bibliographic description that happens on, in, and as part of the web and the networked world we live in. MARC has always been an arcane standard, in one of the much-cited, paper **Tennant (2002)**, wrote that 'MARC must die.' In his bluntly titled work, Tennant states MARC has outlived its usefulness and can no longer serve our users well. According to **Enis (2016)**, Library. Link Network promises to make relevant information about libraries, library events, and library collections prominent in search engine results. The service aims to address a long standing problem. **Rollitt (2014)** states in her paper that BIBFRAME might change libraries in a profound way. It will link bibliographic data and will move bibliographic data to the web for access and management, which could generate new types of library services.

Implementation:

The implementation of BLUEcloud Visibility involves two major steps.

1. Publishing of library data. How?
   Library. Link Network converts MARC records to BIBFRAME records
   BIBFRAME records are then published to the Library. Link Network.
2. After your data is published the web steps in. Each of your converted MARC records is represented by an individual web page. The search engines web crawlers harvest the data from these pages and index the harvest data to be searched on the open web. Initial indexing requires at least two weeks; for subsequent indexing, search engines will continue to index large amounts of records over the coming weeks and months **(SirsiDynix, 2016)**

Now when a user geographically types a title into Google, Library. Link hits is high on the list. For example, if a user searches for novel ‘’Rivers of London ’’, one can see the first hit on the list by putting WCC, RBKC or LBHF following the search term as shown in the screenshot below:

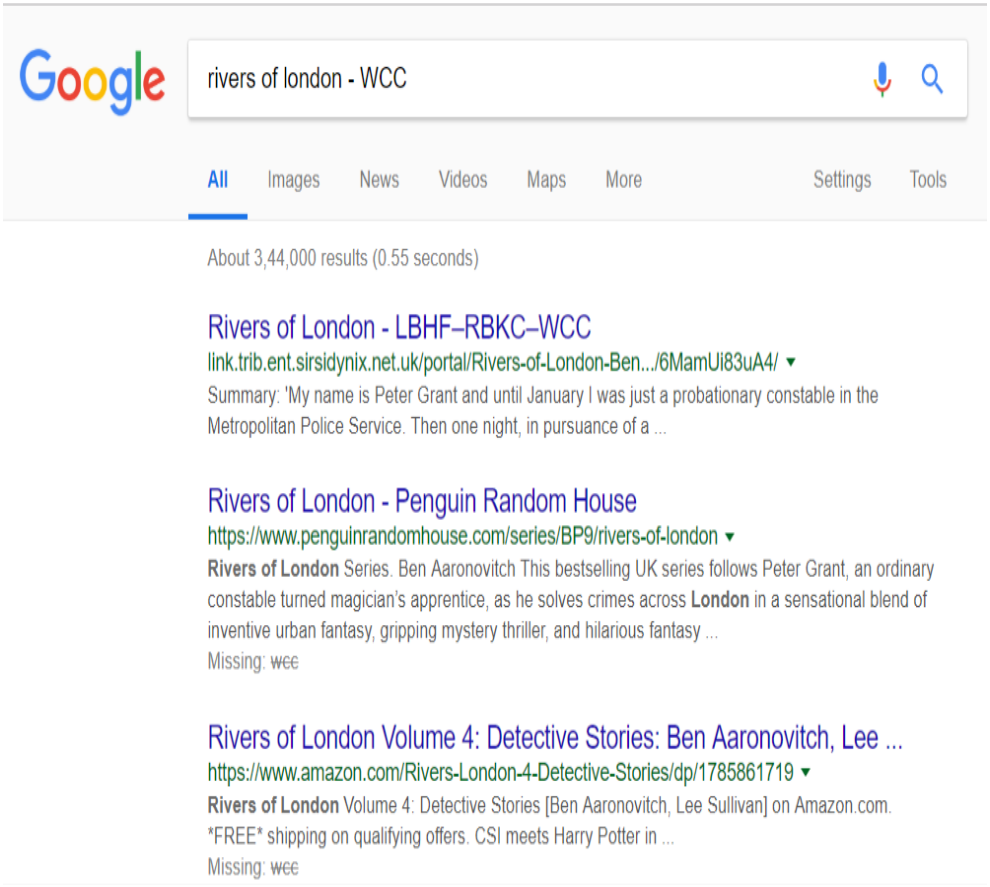


Figure 2: Screenshot showing library catalogue entry appearing in a Google search result

Following that link, the library link page will be displayed.

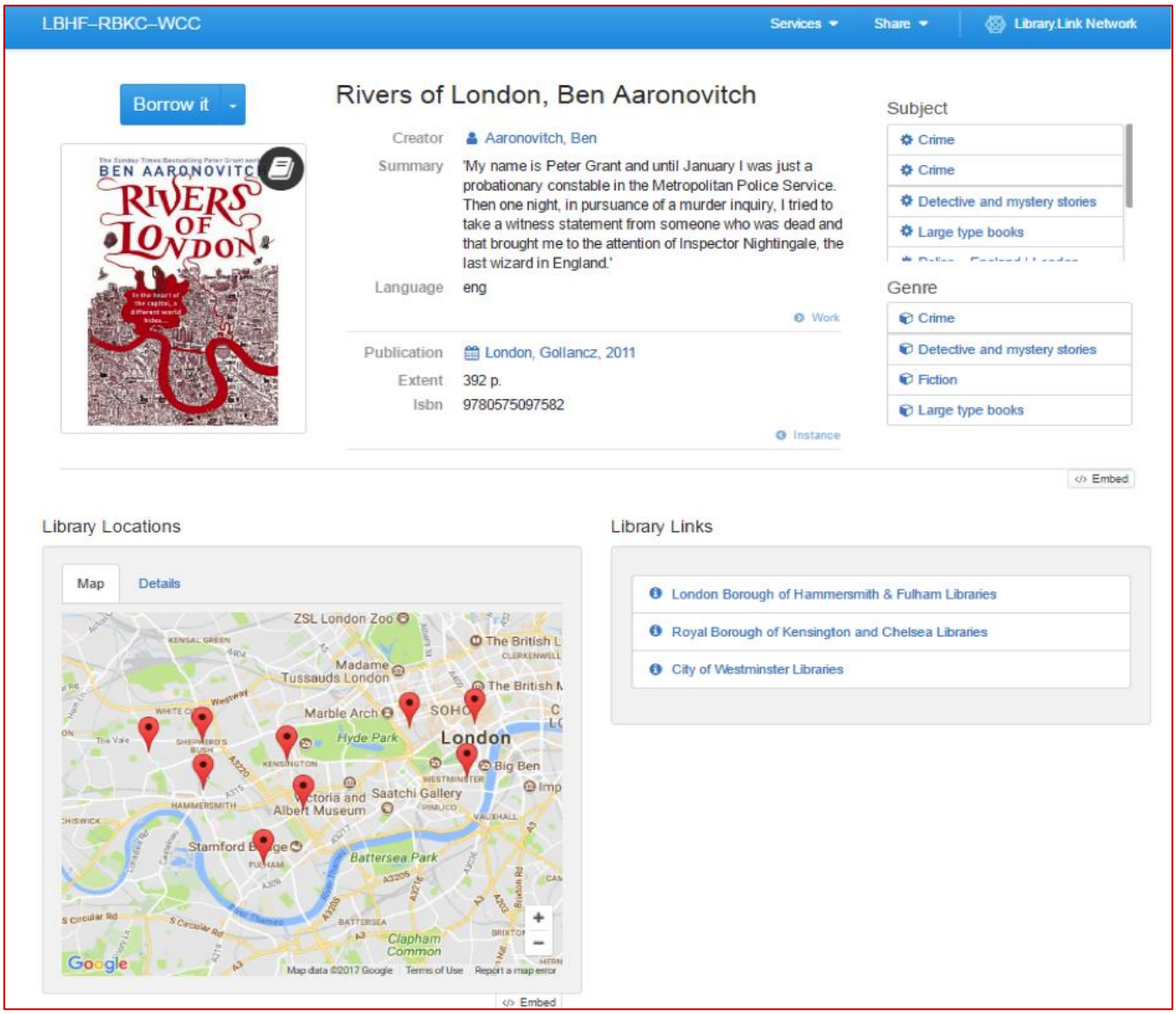


Figure 3: Screenshot of Library link page

From here, a user can click 'Borrow it' or use the 'drop down' to select a specific library and be taken to its respective catalogue or follow links for the author or subject and genre terms, all of which route user to find more books or entries for books by and about a person.

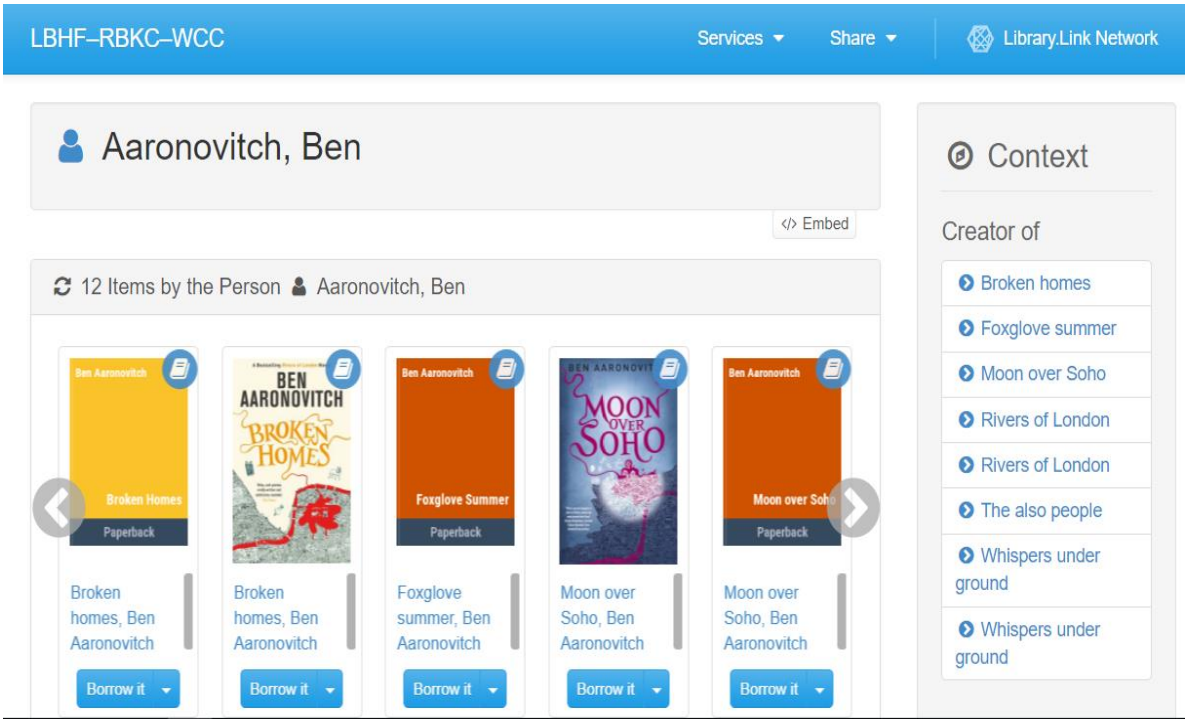


Figure 4: Screenshot illustrating entries for books by, and about, a person

If the author is both a creator and a contributor to other titles, those relationships will be made clear.

BLUEcloud Visibility Adopters:

SirsiDynix had a number of libraries who adopted BLUEcloud Visibility early on. Pioneering the process of web visibility are three very different SirsiDynix libraries:

- Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC)
- The Resource Sharing Alliance NFP Consortium (RSA) and
- Garland County Library (GCL)

These early adopters have laid the foundation of libraries entry into Linked Data, building relevance for others in the network and those yet to join. These libraries share similar goals of hoping to make their resources increasingly visible and want to make it ubiquitous for its patrons.

ERDC following implementation, the number of sessions per month steadily increased. In February 2016 the ERDC library catalogue and repository had its largest number of sessions per month with 5,068, a 44% increase over their former average.

RSA-NFP Executive Director **Kendal Orrison**, expressed a hope that Linked Data will evolve to create more powerful levels of interconnectivity and return more sophisticated search results.

Moreover, Google Analytics has shown that 5% of traffic to GCL's Enterprise is routed through the Library. Link Network with a total of 1,800 new users to the catalogue—a substantial gain for a community of 98,000 **(SirsiDynix, 2016).**

By the Numbers:

A look into the numbers BLUEcloud visibility has accrued so far:

1. BLUEcloud visibility has been purchased by more than 60 customers (a customer can be a single library, a few libraries or a large consortium).
2. More than 50 BLUEcloud visibility customers at over 1,000 locations are live and published on Library. Links, which serve over 18,000,000 patrons.
3. BLUEcloud visibility analytics have tracked 7, 000,000 impressions, 200,000 clicks, 47,000 referrals to catalogue and 39, 000 new users to catalogue.
4. More than 120, 000,000 MARC records have been transformed into BIBFRAME resources so far. **(Christiansen, 2016)**.

Discussion:

The journey from MARC to BIBFRAME till indexing has been one of the key contributors in re-focussing cataloguing efforts from 'string to things'. This document outlines a model for the interchange of data in a Linked Data environment based on the analysis and synthesis of related activities. The potential impact this work may have on library community is enormous and brings forth some observations:

Visibility: Libraries 'Web Relevance' begins with visibility; more links to an element, the more relevant it will be deemed, in other words 'Collective linking scale' boosts relevance. It gets library on Google with the records in search results, attracts attention and brings users to the library without any extra effort.

Connections: Libraries exist to know and serve communities globally. Through these connections everyone else can gain access to improved and free facilities which have been too long hidden away i.e.; if they are looking for the latest bestsellers or scholars searching for special collection, Library. Link Network will do the part.

Fulfilment: Happy users are valued above everything else. Users can view library hours, address, location, resources directly from the search engine, no confusion or extra clicks.

Conclusion:

BLUEcloud Visibility connects and illuminates all parts of the library. Moreover, we live in a connected world where future holds change for libraries and their data. The big advantage is its approach to discovery i.e.;

user does not have to know the URL of library catalogue or of any site, once can approach the page by just putting it into Google. Conclusively this project brings together libraries to tell the web localized, comprehensive and connection rich stories by seeding the web with library locations, services and content.

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