LINKED HERITAGE: ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

by Antonella Fresa

Linked Heritage is a Best Practice Network which includes ministries, responsible government agencies, content providers and aggregators, leading research centres, publishers and SMEs from 20 EU countries, together with Israel and Russia. The activities are delivered through the work of 7 Work Packages, led by different partners, with the support of 4 European Thematic Working Groups as well as a number of Interdisciplinary National Working Groups.

Linked Heritage www.linkedheritage.eu is a Best Practice Network which includes ministries, responsible government agencies, content providers and aggregators, leading research centres, publishers and SMEs from 20 EU countries, together with Israel and Russia. Its main focus is on the one hand the provision of large quantities of new content (3 million) to Europeana www.europeana.eu, from both the public and private sectors, and on the other hand the enhancement of the quality of both new and existing Europeana content, in terms of its metadata richness, its re-use potential and its uniqueness.

The activities are delivered through the work of 7 Work Packages, led by different partners, with the support of 4 European Thematic Working Groups as well as a number of Interdisciplinary National Working Groups, which address the following issues:

1. The use of linked data to support more expressive semantic processing within Europeana, as well as making Europeana information available to third parties.
2. Persistent identifiers and their use for preventing duplicate records and broken links
3. Metadata and standards to improve the richness of content and the alignment with the Europeana data models (particularly from non-library sources)
4. Multilingual and cross-domain combination of terminologies to improve semantic-web-based-access and retrieval of cultural objects within Europeana.
5. Engagement with the private sector (especially publishers) and remediation of their metadata via Europeana.

During the first half of the project, which ended with a very successful review by the European Commission, the following main results were achieved.
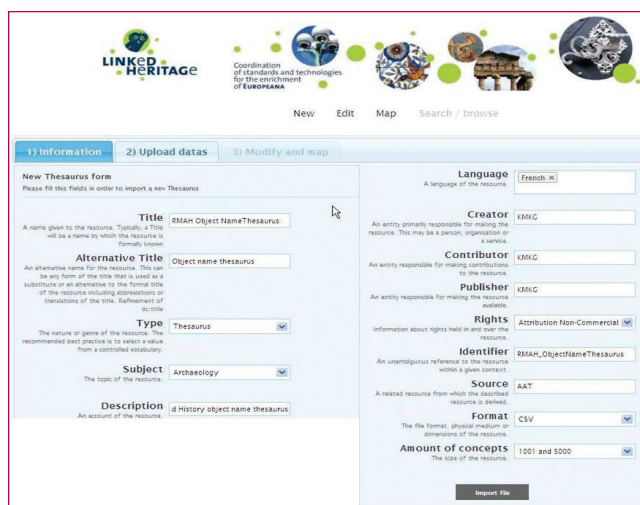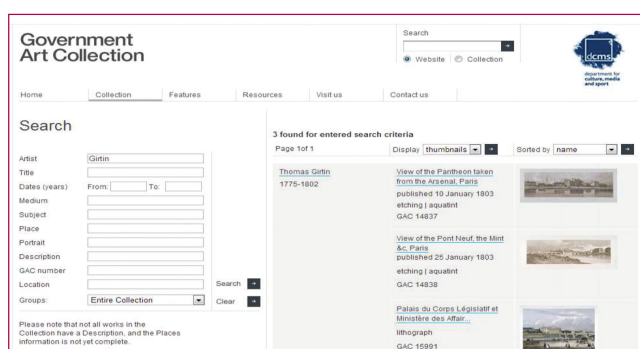
The state of the art in linked data, its applications and potential was explored through the publication of a Best practice report on cultural heritage linked data and metadata standards, that identifies the most appropriate models, processes and technologies for the deployment of cultural heritage information repositories as linked data; this work constitutes the basis for the experimentation on open data in the Europeana context that can be performed through a demonstrator that has been developed in the scope of the project.

The identification of the most appropriate approach to persistent identification of digital resources that has been analysed too, and the results of this analysis have been published in a State of the art report on persistent identifier standards and management tools.

A Terminology Management Platform has been developed to demonstrate how it is possible to create and update a net-

work of multilingual cross-domain thesauri and controlled vocabularies in a collaborative way. It hereby aims to reduce the large gap between the actual state of terminology management in cultural institutions, and the skills and means necessary to deliver these vocabularies in a standardised format.

The results of the work on Terminologies & Multilingualism have been published in a Booklet which contains recommendations for the design and management of terminologies to help people working in European museums, experts or non-experts in Information Engineering and/or Linguistics, to improve the future retrievability of their digital collections online.

The work carried out by the Working Group on Public Private Partnerships (PPP) focused on the exploration of metadata management practices in the private sector, including the analysis of the metadata models in use across multiple media sectors (books, music, photography, film), identity management, controlled vocabularies and IPR related issues. The results have been published in a Best Practice Report on PPP.

All these topics and even more are part of the comprehensive training programme designed and implemented by the University of Padua. The learning objects are tailored for an entry-level target audience and are made available through a Virtual Library Environment which was recently presented at the Linked Heritage Training and Dissemination Event (held in Padova on March 6th-8th, 2013). Final important appointment of the project is the conference in Dublin, on 17th June 2013 under the aegis of the Irish Presidency of the European Union.

To enhance dissemination and web-presence, Linked Heritage has a dedicated showcase inside the communication and cooperation platform www.digitalmeetsculture.net.

The showcase presents the project with general information, link to each partner's website, contacts, useful links and files to download, auto-refreshing news via RSS that rebound the news appeared in the Linked Heritage website, and related articles with focus on the project's progress and achievements.

Digitalmeetsculture.net is an interactive online magazine where digital technology and culture collide. Articles, information and events about the projects and initiatives in the field of digital cultural heritage, on a truly glo-

bal scale, make digitalmeetsculture.net both a valuable information tool and an advertising showcase with a uniquely sharp focus on a very selected and high-profile audience.

This showcase aims at supporting the dissemination activities of the project and enhances the web traffic towards the official Linked Heritage website.

The portal is becoming quite known among the community of digital cultural heritage: the visibility that the portal offers to Linked Heritage towards a selected and interested audience is an added value in terms of dissemination and advertising.
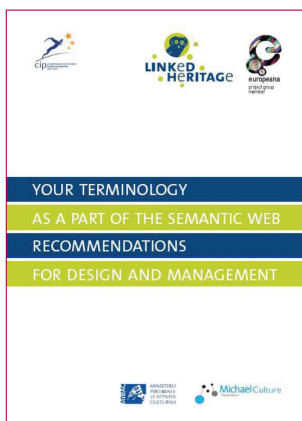
Abstract

Linked Heritage is a network which includes ministries, government agencies, content providers and aggregators, leading publishers and research centers from 20 countries of the European Union, Israel and Russia. Its main purpose is on the one hand the supply a large amounts of new content to Europeana by the public and private sector, and on the other improving the quality of existing content to Europeana, in terms of richness of metadata, its potential reuse and its uniqueness.

Keywords

LINKED DATA; METADATA; EUROPEANA; LINKED HERITAGE

Authors

Antonella Fresa
fresa@promoter.it
PROMOTER S.R.L.