



Taxonomies and Governance

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About Heather Hedden

- Independent taxonomy consultant, Hedden Information Management
- Continuing education online class instructor, Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science
- Author of *The Accidental Taxonomist* (Information Today, Inc., 2010)
- Previously
 - taxonomy consultant employed by a consulting firm (PPC)
 - taxonomy manager (First Wind)
 - taxonomist for enterprise search tool vendor (Viziant)
 - controlled vocabulary editor at a library database vendor (Information Access Co./Gale Group/Thomson/Cengage Learning)
 - indexer

Taxonomy Governance Key Points

- Governance process begins when taxonomy development begins.
- Each taxonomy is unique and has its own governance policy.
- Governance includes both:
 - Documented editorial policies
 - Taxonomy management procedures and responsibilities
- There are minimal guidelines to a taxonomy when it is started.
- Decisions reached to questions as they come up in the process are documented and eventually become policy.
- Taxonomy policy/guidelines includes both:
 - Taxonomy specifications, style and maintenance
 - Taxonomy usage and indexing/tagging/categorization policy (manual or automated)

Taxonomy Governance Experience

Successful Cases

- Information Access Company:
 - Editorial Standards Dept./Vocabulary & Quality Management Dept.
 - Policies for indexing with unapproved/override terms
- Viziant Corp:
 - Part of documenting software
 - Starter taxonomies for clients to extend
- PPC e-commerce client:
 - Taxonomy redesign and maintenance tasks
 - Transition to in-house taxonomist
- Other consulting projects:
 - Wyndham Hotel Group metadata specification
 - 50 Lessons tagging guidelines

Questions/Contact

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