Taxonomies and Governance

Heather Hedden
Taxonomy Consultant
Hedden Information Management

Gilbane Conference, Boston, December 3, 2013
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
Heather Hedden
Hedden Information Management
Carlisle, MA
heather@hedden.net
www.hedden-information.com
www.accidental-taxonomist.blogspot.com
www.linkedin.com/in/hedden
Twitter: @hhedden
978-467-5195