Introduction to the Metadata Services Department

The Metadata Services Department (MSD) is responsible for creating and managing records for the UC San Diego Libraries' collections, including both physical materials and digital resources.

We do this in two ways, by providing metadata for:
- the more traditional discovery tool: the online catalog, and
- newer tools that provide access to digitized primary source materials

Metadata is structured data, more concise and consistent than full text, which allows for the discovery and management of research and information resources.

The Roger online catalog is the UC San Diego Libraries' online catalog and is our official database.[1] The metadata, and an accurate, up-to-date database, give library users consistent and dependable access to the resources of the UC San Diego Libraries' collections. We are also responsible for keeping Roger synchronized with other library databases, such as San Diego Circuit[2], Melvyl[3], and WorldCat[4].

We catalog materials in a wide variety of formats (not just books!), including maps, microforms, DVDs, CDs, serials, and software. We catalog in a wide variety of languages, including Chinese and Japanese. We catalog for all of the campus libraries except for two: the Mandeville Special Collections Library and the digital image collection in the Arts Library.

The Libraries are in the process of developing a public access system for its digital collections, which is expected to be released in Summer 2009. MSD provides backend services for this effort, such as making the metadata more consistent across various collections, and providing specifications for software development.

Prior to July 2005, we were called the Catalog Department. And in the really old days, this department typed and filed cards into card catalogs, manual authority files, and the Official Shelflist.

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[1] Roger is our local name for a commercial Integrated Library System (ILS) called Millennium, developed by a company called Innovative Interfaces Inc.
[2] A catalog that includes UCSD, San Diego State University, the University of San Diego, California State University, San Marcos, and the San Diego County Library system.
[3] The union catalog for the ten-campus University of California system.
[4] A very large database shared by libraries internationally, developed by a company named OCLC