



DESCHUTES PUBLIC LIBRARY

Work Towards Decolonizing An Authority File



Project Scope

Deschutes Public Library has been working over the years to improve discoverability in their catalog with various term mappings, and most recently, decided to incorporate changes to Indigenous peoples terms from Backstage's peer-reviewed local authority file. Deschutes had an additional request - adding "Native American" as another subject term. 8,619 Indigenous headings were changed in addition to 3,363 new "Native American" headings being added.



Workflow

The Indigenous authority file has been in development since May of 2021 and has required a precise automation approach. Deschutes' file of approximately 300k records was sampled against the existing 3,677 terms in Backstage's Indigenous authority file. The results of sampling were checked thoroughly before the process was finalized and completed, incorporating feedback and adding additional parameters to get the best fit possible.

“ The Deschutes Public Library has made it a priority to take actionable steps towards a more equitable and inclusive library catalog. Through the years of 2020-2021 a significant amount of time had been dedicated to reviewing the words and language used in our library catalog, and to make choices that align with our District's equity, diversity and inclusivity goals. Through this work, it became clear that for ongoing and continued progress, we would require the ability to maximize the automation options and tools available to us. Backstage has been a pivotal partner in making this happen. As a District, we already knew that Backstage was able to provide customized bibliographic enhancements and through conversations, collaborations and some creative problem-solving, their tools were the exact solution we needed to be able to continue to expand our impact on sensitivity within our catalog without undue impact and strain on our cataloging staff. ”

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Special Touches

Deschutes opted to include Homosaurus conversion processing in addition to the Indigenous authority file changes. 16% of the bibliographic catalog was enhanced with these terms which added nearly 90k new headings.



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