



Versioning Requirements and Proposed Solutions

CM Jones, JE Brace, PL Cave & DR Puplett

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Outline:

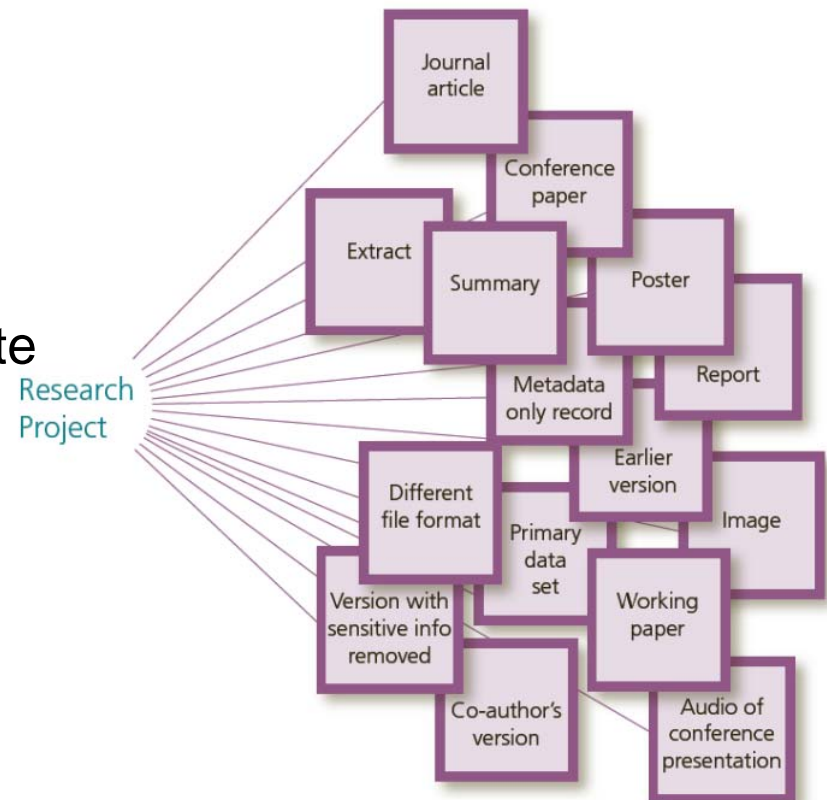
- The VIF project
- Issues in versioning
- Definition
- Key pieces of versioning information
- Top five recommendations for:
 - Repository management
 - Software developers
 - Content creators

VIF Project Background:

- is funded by JISC's Repositories and Preservation Programme
- runs from July 2007 to May 2008
- has produced a framework on the web highlighting the issues about versioning and giving guidance for people involved in repository management, software development and creation of content
- is now promoting the recommendations and guidance and raising awareness of the issue of versioning

Versions – why do they matter?

- Only 5% of academics and 6.5% of information professionals surveyed by VIF found it easy to identify versions of digital objects within institutional repositories. The situation becomes even worse across multiple repositories (1.8% and 1.1% respectively).
- It's a simple problem – one research project can generate many drafts, outputs, edits and formats – most people would call all these versions.



Potential version confusion....

- The audience of the content affects the relationships between objects.

Are a **pre-publication text document** and the **published journal article** versions of each other?

Are a **audio recordings of the same piece of music** played by **different orchestras** at **different times** and in **different places** versions of each other?

Are a **video of an event, a photograph taken at the event** and a **file containing the presentation given at the event** versions of each other?

Are a **digitised 18th century map of Hertfordshire** and a **present day map of the same place** versions of each other?

- Versions are in the eye of the beholder....(or designated community)

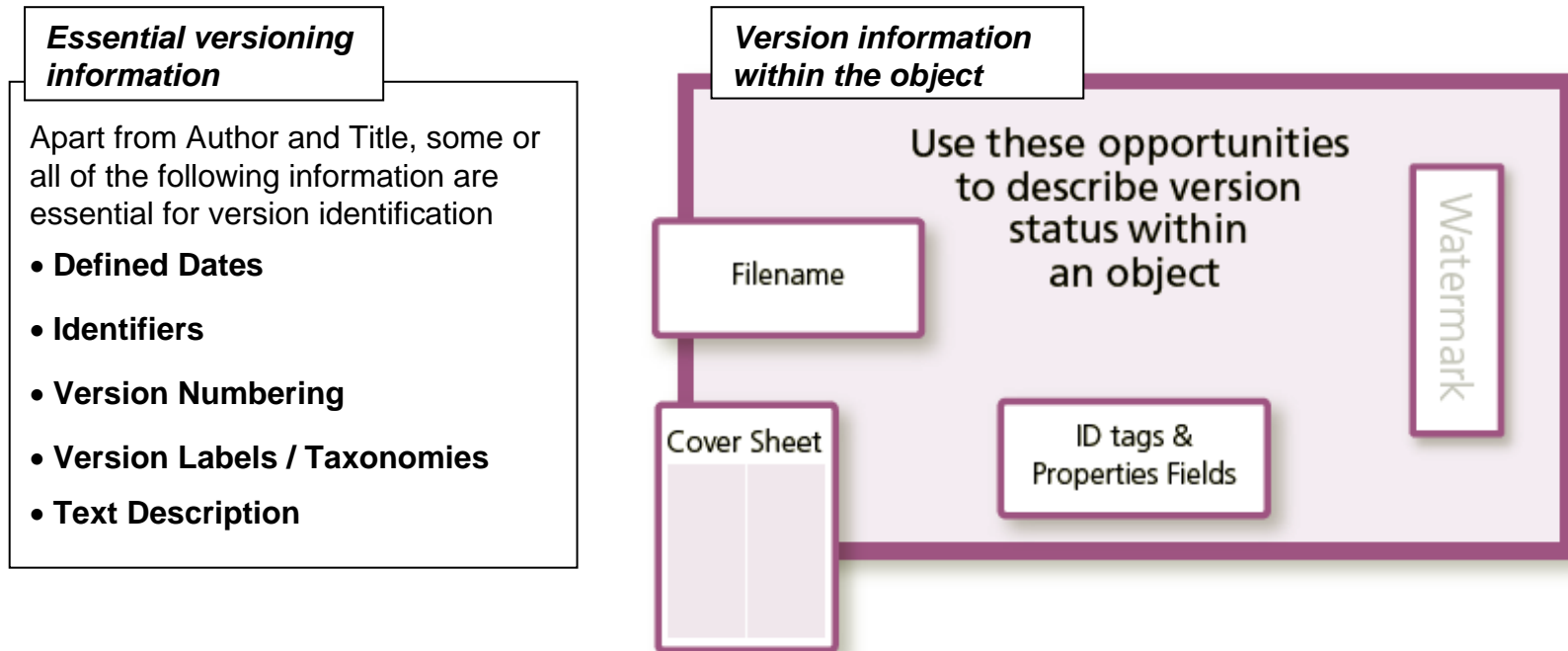
Defining a 'version'

- The framework has been developed with a broad audience of content creators, library staff of varying technical knowledge and influence and software developers of repository software.
- We therefore needed a deliberately wide understanding of what constituted a version for all involved. We needed to encompass anything that anyone might consider to be a version:

“A 'version' is a digital object (in whatever format) that exists in time and place and has a context within a larger body of work”

Solving the versioning issue:

Make the right information transparent, either within the object itself...



Or elsewhere, such as within the metadata...

Recommendations for repositories:

1. Be clear about what the repository is for and clarify the versioning requirements within software (upgrading software if necessary)
2. Formulate wider strategy; set and promote clear policies
3. Think about how to manage different types of object and ensure at least one object solution is embedded consistently within the repository
4. Include some version information in metadata as a minimum although use full DC application profiles if possible
5. Ensure versioning is part of the ingest process

Recommendations for Software Development:

1. Ensure the system can cope with and link more than one version
2. Use a FRBRised structure – it is consistent with application profiles and also allows the end user to understand relationships between versions
3. Enhance deposit workflow to assist in upfront capture of versioning information
4. Facilitate searching for similar titles within the local repository and other external repositories to prevent duplication
5. Support the harvest/export of richer metadata using DC application profiles

Recommendations for Content Creators:

1. Ensure all versions of work state the author, title and date last changed
2. Keep track of which versions have been made publicly available and where
3. Ensure filename is meaningful and relevant to version
4. Consider using version numbering
5. Make use of any opportunity to record version information within the object



Project Manager:

Jenny Brace, LSE Library, j.e.brace@lse.ac.uk, tel: 020 7955 6130.

Project and Communications Officer:

Dave Puplett, LSE Library, d.puplett@lse.ac.uk, tel: 020 7955 7943.

Project Officer:

Paul Cave, University of Leeds, p.i.cave@leeds.ac.uk, tel: 0113 34337783 or 0113 3435502.

Project Officer:

Catherine Jones, Science and Technology Facilities Council, c.m.jones@rl.ac.uk, tel: 01235 445402.



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