

# The mda portal: its aims, users and content



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*Supporting*  
*information management*  
*cultural*

mda



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supporting the  
management & use of  
**COLLECTIONS**



The **purpose** of mda is to benefit all those working with **collections** by providing easy access to **quality-assured** resources, advice and support on collections **management** and **use**

This is **underpinned** by a shared core **value** which holds collections and their **stories** as being one of the key factors contributing to the **well-being** of society.



Collections and  **Creativity**  
The mda Conference 2003

If you work with cultural information you will be interested in watching the development of our **AdviceNet project**.

Do you look after collections? Then you likely use software to manage them which is based on our unique product **SPECTRUM: The UK Museum Documentation Standard**

Or perhaps you will have experienced our work first hand by visiting the world's first national virtual museum, the **24 Hour Museum**

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System Simulation

The aim of **mda** is to benefit all those working with collections, and in turn their national and international publics, by providing easy access to quality assured resources, advice and support on collections management and use.

## Main Features

### What you will find here



Welcome to AdviceNet. What you see here is the outcome of a portal development project which ran from January 2002 to March 2003, showing a key aspect of the mda concept for a collections advisory service.

Site demonstrates how mda's core standards and advice can be delivered

### How does it work?



AdviceNet enables you to try out a range of new features implemented on the portal. We trust it will also inspire you to feedback some of your experiences and take part in its development.

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The mda Conference 2003



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Accessible?  
Valuated?  
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## aim of the site

“for the collection and dissemination of information, opinions and standards relating to information management for collections.”

## The site is for.....

- People who look after collections
- People hoping to work with a collection
- Museum studies students
- Museum studies course organisers
- Regional heritage organisations that provide advice, leadership to the sector

## The site is for.....

- Individuals who advise/train with in the collections community – MDOs, CMOs, curatorial advisers
- Freelance consultants
- mda Approved Providers
- mda staff – Advice Point

## comparison

- visits to BECTa and 24 hour Museum
- similar sites –
  - [www.chin.gc.ca](http://www.chin.gc.ca)
  - [www.cdphheritage.org](http://www.cdphheritage.org)
  - [www.amol.org.au](http://www.amol.org.au)

# www.cdpheritage.org



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### Heritage Colorado



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### Educator Resources



**Tools for Teachers**

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### Digitization Resources

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### About CDP

**About the Colorado Digitization Program**

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### Collection Spotlight



**City of Littleton  
Historical Museum**

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**Funded by:**



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## the process.....

- Content gathering
  - informed by Advice Point
- Policy making
- Collaboration
- Content cataloguing
- Content mediation
- Evaluation

# The content

- mda resources
- external resources

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## Terminology

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Information should be written in a consistent manner to aid indexing both in manual and computer systems. Rules can govern the words used, the order in which they are entered and any punctuation which may be required. This regulation of data entry is known as **terminology control**. The results of this will be better access to cultural information.

Terminological tools such as simple wordlists or complex, hierarchical, thesauri are used to encourage cataloguers and enquirers to use a *preferred term* (such as 'Leonardo da Vinci') and to avoid *non-preferred terms* (such as any of the nearly 40 other spellings of that name).

**mda's** work in this area has been to encourage the use of terminology control in it's *SPECTRUM* standard, and to take part in national and international initiatives for the creation of new terminological tools, and the dissemination of existing ones.

This website features a number of terminological tools for object names and one for materials:

- ◆ [mda Archaeological Objects Thesaurus](#)
- ◆ [mda Waterways Object Name Thesaurus](#)
- ◆ [British Museum Object Names Thesaurus](#)
- ◆ [British Museum Materials Thesaurus](#)
- ◆ [ICOM Costume Committee's Vocabulary of Basic Terms](#)

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## Legal issues

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In caring for a collection and operating a collection-holding organisation you need to be aware of your legal responsibilities. These will change over time and will need to be monitored.

*SPECTRUM: The UK Museum Documentation Standard* defines a number of 'legal and management issues for collections and information'. These are broadly divided into four groups: protecting your information against loss or damage; access to and provision of information; the Data Protection Act and general legal issues common to more than one procedure. You may wish to refer to this SPECTRUM unit directly if you have your own copy.

Areas that **mda** is particularly active in monitoring for museums are:

- ◆ [Freedom of Information](#)
- ◆ [Data Protection](#)
- ◆ [Copyright](#)

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### **Copyright**

**Author:** mda

**Date:** November 2002

**Publisher:** mda

Points to resources on copyright.

mda overview; [text/html](#)

[Full catalogue record](#)

### **Accession Records**

**Author:** mda

**Date:** 2001

**Publisher:** mda

Explains the concept of accessioning, why and when it should be done and who should be responsible. Considers: what policy decisions are needed; what should be done before accessioning an object; transfer of title; copyright; what form accession records should take; old accession registers; and accessioning the object. Offers sources of advice and help and information on how to obtain accession registers and pre-printed transfer of title forms.

fact sheet; [text/html](#)

[Full catalogue record](#)

### **A Guide to Copyright for Museums**

**Author:** Museums Copyright Group

**Publisher:** mda

Reviews the Routledge publication 'A Guide to Copyright for Museums and Galleries', and provides details of cost and how to order.

publication information; [text/html](#)

[Full catalogue record](#)

### **Aims and Achievements**

**Author:** Museums Copyright Group

**Date:** November 2002

**Publisher:** mda

Outlines the aims and achievements of the Museums Copyright Group.

organisation information; [text/html](#)

[Full catalogue record](#)

### **Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS)**

#### **Website**

**Author:** ALCS; Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society Limited

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