

Appendix 7: Item Fields

An item field contains data applicable to a single physical piece.

Item fields are a belated addition to the MARC Format for Holdings Data, entering with the 1994 update. At least one system at the start of the millennium—Innovative Millennium—has implemented them for some customers, so it's likely that they will be more evident before long.

Item records are of course a part of current systems, and their use pre-dates the MARC holdings format. Even where a MARC holdings record exists, the item record is usually a non-MARC, proprietary segment of the data, linked to the MARC record by a related ID number. Item records contain information needed by the user, including the piece-level information which displays in an OPAC, and which the advanced Z39.50-based search engines are now searching out and combining with holdings information to form part of the report sent in answer to a remote multiple-catalog search.

It should be stated that even with MARC item fields in place, there will still be a system-dependent item record in the local OPAC. This is because the MARC item fields do not include the temporary and transaction-level data that is needed for the tracking and day-to-day management of library holdings. Instead, the new fields are limited to the kind of data that is *permanent or relatively permanent*. Unfortunately, this may exclude some of the crucial data needed by staff and users, particularly that circulation transaction data that will tell the searcher whether the volume is on the shelf or not. This exclusion in the Format means that remote search engines will have to interface to many proprietary database designs in locating and combining availability status data with MARC holdings data for display. However, other data, such as withdrawn and lost status data, may be MARC-coded in the new item fields.

The Format states, "These fields contain item level information about the pieces of the item specified in the holdings record. They contain various data elements that it may be desirable to record for specific items for use in acquisition or circulation applications, among others."

Again, these fields come in a set of three:
876 for Basic bibliographic item,
877 for Supplements,
878 for Indexes.

The indicators of the item field are *undefined*.

In the list of subfields below, several are covered in the SCCTP Serial Holdings Workshop. In systems without item fields, several subfields (\$p, \$t, \$x and \$z) are located in piece holdings fields, 863-865. They may also be found in some 866-868

fields, if the system permits—though the textual holdings fields, being designed for summaries, are normally less likely to contain item-level information than 863-865.

Here is the list of subfields for 876-878 (Item fields):

required for serials (*Encoding level 3 or 4*):

internal item number (\$a) [the item, or piece-level, record ID] , plus ***either***:
 link and sequence no. (\$8)
 Materials specified (\$3)

optional subfields:

piece designation (\$p) [the piece's barcode or accession]
 copy number (\$t)
 cost (\$c)
 date acquired (\$d)

Ex.: 863 41 \$8 1.2 \$a 1993/1994
 876 ## \$8 1.2 \$a AAH8128-1-1 \$t 2 \$c \$41.00 \$d 19940622
 \$p A14802137389

source of acquisition (\$e)
 use restrictions (\$h)

Ex.: 854 10 \$8 1 \$a v. \$b suppl. \$i (year)
 864 41 \$8 1.1 \$a 10 \$b 1 \$o EU Alumni register \$i 1997
 877 ## \$8 1.1 \$a ADX-8900-3 \$e Alumni Assoc. anniversary gift \$h Building use

876 ## \$3 v.5 \$a 0045-2 \$l Social Studies alcove

public/nonpublic notes (\$z/\$x)

Ex.: 863 20 \$8 1.56 \$a 2001
 876 ## \$8 1.56 \$a 2870958a \$t 1 \$z Pocket diskettes (4) \$x Transfer to
 Reference

Items are linked to fields according to some fairly strict rules. *The examples above show the two types of links.*

Subfield \$8 is used to link an item field to a coded 863-865 field. Serial holdings records with items must be encoded, at a minimum, at Level 3. Each part for which an item field

is desired must be input separately. The link and sequence numbers of the 86X and the related 87X must be identical. This means that item fields are compatible with itemized holdings, but not with summaries input in 863-865.

Item fields may be linked to Textual holdings fields, but different restrictions apply. Textual fields may contain ranges of holdings, but only one physical piece in such a statement may be represented by each item field. That piece is enumerated in subfield \$3 of the associated 87X field. If the Textual Holdings field information is not equivalent to a physical piece, the \$3 subfield must contain only the information pertaining to a single piece; and it is not repeatable (each piece needs a separate item field).

Further examples:

\$8, when linking to 863-865

fields must be itemized, linked by identical \$8 subfields

Ex.: 863 41 \$8 1.5 \$a 109 \$b 1-6 \$i 1990 \$j 01-06
876 \$8 1.5 \$a AAA-1334 \$j Lost \$p A0043456788

\$3, when linking to 866-868

Ex.: 866 31 \$8 1 \$a v.55-56 \$z lack v.55:no.4, 56:no.1,4
876 ## \$3 v.55:no.1-3 \$a ACC1322 \$p 00014361655 \$c \$6.00
876 ## \$3 v.56:no.2-3 \$a ACC1323 \$p 00014346345

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