

The Accidental Taxonomist

Heather Hedden

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"From the novice taxonomist to the experienced professional, all will find helpful, practical advice in *The Accidental Taxonomist*."

—Trish Yancey, COO, Synaptica, LLC

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Heather Hedden : The Accidental Taxonomist before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Accidental Taxonomist:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Broad topic coverage but does not adequately address the human factors in taxonomy design and managementBy R. OrdowichIn the business world classifications are created with little regard to their logic, coherence or usability. These classification schemes are used in ERP systems for configuration, in databases for searching and selection and reference data throughout systems and applications. This book provides a good overview of taxonomy principles and is a good book to read, but when trying to manage taxonomies in the

business world, various human factors impact taxonomy design and management. Typically taxonomy design is left to IT who lack the training and skills. They are directed by various departments to create classifications and use terms that only a small group of people understand and even they create ambiguous, duplicative, overlapping and frequently incoherent taxonomies. With the increasing proliferation of data and our dependencies on data, we need some practical tools and techniques for business organizations to use when designing taxonomies. For example how to select facets and validate facets. This book does not provide this. Those creating taxonomies lack Data Literacy and as a result we continue to create code lists, reference data and classifications that are random, temporal and biased.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Excellent primer on building taxonomies. By George D. Everitt This very readable book starts with a nice story of how the author became a taxonomist, and then dives right in to the technical details. Well, not too deep - but certainly deep enough for aspiring taxonomists to get a great overview of the skills and techniques required to build, maintain and apply good taxonomies. The Accidental Taxonomist contains life lessons and practical advice about taxonomies, ontologies, vocabularies, entities, relationships and all manner of other semantic tools. The thing about taxonomies is that they really are simple for humans to understand. We all think in terms of hierarchies of knowledge whether we are conscious of it or not. The human cerebral cortex is even organized physically as a hierarchy of layers. Along with pattern matching and the four F's - feeding, fighting, fleeing and reproduction - implicit taxonomies inform how we perceive just about every object and concept around us. This book makes these concepts accessible as either a primer or a refresher for seasoned readers. As CEO of a company that makes taxonomy software (not featured in this edition of the book, lest you smell some astroturf), I can tell you that it really represents much of our philosophy of the best way to use taxonomies in the enterprise.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful Resource for the Classroom and Practice By Chris Kiess I currently teach an online version of an information organization and representation course (knowledge and information management) for Indiana University's School of Library and Information Science and am using this book as an assigned text this semester (Summer 2011). This is an excellent resource for library science students and really helps provide a practical example in the classroom of how Librarians' skills can be used beyond the classroom. However, as a practicing information architect, I also keep a copy close at hand for professional use as well. There is not a plethora of resources such as this in the field and this text helps provide both a good overview as well as offering additional resources for practitioners and students alike. In a field where corporations are still struggling to manage both their information and knowledge, this book is not only a wonderful addition, but a necessity for IA's in the field.

The Accidental Taxonomist is the most comprehensive guide available to the art and science of building information taxonomies. Heather Hedden one of today's leading writers, instructors, and consultants on indexing and taxonomy topics walks readers through the process, displaying her trademark ability to present highly technical information in straightforward, comprehensible English. Drawing on numerous real-world examples, Hedden explains how to create terms and relationships, select taxonomy management software, design taxonomies for human versus automated indexing, manage enterprise taxonomy projects, and adapt taxonomies to various user interfaces. The result is a practical and essential guide for information professionals who need to effectively create or manage taxonomies, controlled vocabularies, and thesauri.

Clearly details the conceptual and practical notions of controlled vocabularies. ... provides a crash course for newcomers and offers experienced practitioners a common frame of reference. A valuable book. --Christine Connors, TriviumRLG LLC From the novice taxonomist to the experienced professional, all will find helpful, practical advice in The Accidental Taxonomist. --Trish Yancey, TCOO, Synaptica, LLC