

## Content Type, Media Type, and Carrier Type Fields

Three relatively new MARC fields are the 336, 337, and 338 fields, which are used for content type, media type, and carrier type. These three fields work together to describe what type of item is being cataloged.

The 33X fields, as they are called, replace the General Material Designation (GMD), which you will find in older records. The GMD was a term that appeared in brackets after the title.

Content type refers to the general type of material represented by an item being cataloged, regardless of its physical carrier. For example, print books and e-books both have a content type of “text,” even though they are physically quite different.

Media type is more specific than content type in that it refers specifically to the way in which people interact with the content of a particular item. It still doesn’t refer to the physical carrier of the item. For example, a DVD and a streaming video will both have the media type “video” because people watch the content visually.

Carrier type is the most specific of these three terms, and it does refer to a specific physical object. To go back to our previous example, a DVD will have the carrier type of “videodisc”, but a streaming video will have a carrier type of “online resource”.

For all three of these fields, subfield a is used for a term to describe a particular type of resources. These terms must be chosen from already-established lists; you don’t get to create them on your own.

The lists of terms can be accessed through the RDA Toolkit for people who subscribe to that product. They can also be accessed for free on the Library of Congress website, at these pages:

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacontent.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdamedia.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacarrier.html>

For a book, here is how the subfield a of each of these fields should look:

336 \_\_ \$a text

337 \_\_ \$a unmediated

338 \_\_ \$a volume

Here is how the subfield a of each field should look for a DVD:

336 \_\_ \$a two-dimensional moving image

337 \_\_ \$a video

338 \_\_ \$a videodisc

For all three of these fields, subfield b is used for a code that represents the term in subfield a. These codes are optional, as they are not meant to be read by humans, but some libraries are including them because they can be manipulated by computers.

The codes are available on the Library of Congress website as well, on the same pages mentioned earlier:

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacontent.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdamedia.html>

<http://www.loc.gov/standards/valuelist/rdacarrier.html>

For a book, here is how the subfield a and subfield b of each of these fields should look:

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt

337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n

338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc

Here is how the subfield a and subfield b of each field should look for a DVD:

336 \_\_ \$a two-dimensional moving image \$b tdi

337 \_\_ \$a video \$b v

338 \_\_ \$a videodisc \$b vd

For each of these fields, subfield 2 is used to specify the source of the terms used in subfield a. This source will be the same regardless of type of item, so the subfield 2 looks the same for both a book and a DVD:

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent

337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n \$2 rdamedia

338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc \$2 rdacarrier

336 \_\_ \$a two-dimensional moving image \$b tdi \$2 rdacontent

337 \_\_ \$a video \$b v \$2 rdamedia

338 \_\_ \$a videodisc \$b vd \$2 rdacarrier

For an item with more than one component (like a book with an accompanying CD-ROM), the 336, 337, and 338 fields can be repeated within a record.

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent

337 \_\_ \$a unmediated \$b n \$2 rdamedia

338 \_\_ \$a volume \$b nc \$2 rdacarrier

336 \_\_ \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent

337 \_\_ \$a computer \$b c \$2 rdamedia

338 \_\_ \$a computer disc \$b cd \$2 rdacarrier

If you would like to specify which of these fields goes with which item, you can add a subfield 3 to each field.

336 \_\_ \$3 book \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent

337 \_\_ \$3 book \$a unmediated \$b n \$2 rdamedia

338 \_\_ \$3 book \$a volume \$b nc \$2 rdacarrier

336 \_\_ \$3 CD-ROM \$a text \$b txt \$2 rdacontent

337 \_\_ \$3 CD-ROM \$a computer \$b c \$2 rdamedia

338 \_\_ \$3 CD-ROM \$a computer disc \$b cd \$2 rdacarrier

The terms in subfield 3 do not have to come from a particular list; you can use whichever terms you choose. This has the added benefit of getting language in the record that is easier for patrons to understand (CD-ROM instead of computer disc, for example).