Playing With "Matches" … and More: Recent Changes to Create Lists
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Richard V. Jackson, Huntington Library

This presentation is an update of one I've given at IUG several times over the years. The need for a fresh look was triggered by the adoption, in Sierra 4.1, of the POSIX standard for its regex engine, replacing the previous egrep-based standard. While much remains unchanged, taking full advantage of regular expressions now requires understanding two different "flavors" of regex: Basic Regular Expressions (BRE) and Extended Regular Expressions (ERE). In addition, the possibility of case-sensitive searches (in Sierra 5.0+) using the "matches (exact)" operator has implications for how regexes are constructed. Most of these changes have not been covered in the online Sierra documentation.

Outline of the presentation

- o What are regular expressions?
- o A brief history of regular expressions in Create Lists
- o The POSIX standard
  - ▪ Basic regular expressions (BRE)
  - ▪ Extended regular expressions (ERE)
- o A digression: case-sensitive searches in Create Lists
- o Overview of RE syntax
  - ▪ Character classes
  - ▪ Quantifiers
  - ▪ Grouping
  - ▪ Position indicators
  - ▪ "Escaping" metacharacters
  - ▪ Alternation
  - ▪ POSIX character classes
- o How MARC data appears to Create Lists queries
- o Further examples
- o Conclusion

More program materials, including a detailed handout and the presentation slides, will be made available prior to the conference.