The "Standard Metadata Interchange" is a collection of XML files, including data, XSLT, and perhaps Schema (or DTD) for verification of compliance of data files to standard, within each participating MN State government entity. Periodically, an XSL processor program translates new systems' metadata files to the entity's standard (and to HTML as desired) and to the next level's (in this case, MN State) standard; thus its "Data Dictionary" is published. This enables resource discovery among the entity's systems and with other entities through the State hub, using only world standards, free software, and few resources. XML is both human- and machine-readable, providing interactive browsing for people, and supporting automated data interchange among disparate systems, as permitted by the system owners. The MN WWW view, using the common vocabulary, can be browsed or queried by other agencies and the public for location and characteristics of resources. The data this metadata describes can then be requested for collaborative work without copying it, using distributed computing or human assistance.

Notes: 1. Only major systems and interfaces are shown. 2. This example is from MN DOT, but the idea should be applicable to most government entities of moderate to large size or complexity. 3. Metadata: a. DBMS keeps as routine (date, time of update etc.) b. designed into the data/app (e.g. accuracy, use, source). 4. This is (or is fed by) the Agency "official" database of employees, org. units, vendors, customers, etc., probably in Lightweight Directory Access Protocol. 5. Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, MS 13, Official Records MS 15.17, MR 1205 and others, comparable to the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and others. For more info, please contact jim.harris@state.mn.us, 651-297-3493.