Reflect on how metadata relates to electronic records and electronic record-keeping. Discuss the importance of metadata standards.

Gilliland (2011) and Wilson (2010) both talked about the importance of metadata, its challenges in preserving digital records, and how it helps the recordkeeping management community. Daulby (2015) describes metadata as structured and essential information which describes, locates, and manage electronic records. Gilliland (2011) mentions how metadata help record managers in managing electronic records, “in such digital settings, metadata are increasingly recognized as key infrastructural components and knowledge management tools that encompass far more than the descriptive information that is created by archivists or other information and heritage professionals” (p. 105). And Wilson (2010) states that “metadata is the key to being able to provide such assurance whether the object in question is a software program, a digital record, a digital still image or a large database” (p. 211).

I like how Wilson (2010) states that a recordkeeping metadata has to be reliable, authentic, and usable in order to for it to be trusted now and in the future; otherwise its integrity is at stake. “Given proof of reliability, usability, and integrity, a digital resource can be considered authentic since satisfying these three characteristics means that its identity and integrity can be trusted” (Wilson, 2010, p. 209). I majored in Journalism as an undergrad so a lot of what Wilson (2010) is stating in his article runs parallel for journalists. A good example would be the recent scandals surrounding NBC news anchor Brian Williams. Like a recordkeeping metadata, a news story has to be reliable, authentic, and usable in order for people to accept the story. If a news story turns out to be exaggerated or fake, then the integrity of the reporter and the news media organization is in danger. There’s a lot of trust that people place in the news, much like how there’s a lot of trust record managers put in a digital record.

Also, view one of these metadata standards samples and provide a BRIEF synopsis and commentary on the standard for your fellow learners.

The Electronic Recordkeeping Metadata Standards of New Zealand is a couple of years old but it gives requirements and guidance on creating and managing recordkeeping metadata. The organization presents two forms of recordkeeping metadata: (Archives New Zealand, 2008)

**Point of Capture Metadata** The initial context of a record’s creation is documented in the metadata and captured at the time a record is ingested/registered into a system which manages it. This metadata is ‘fixed’, and should not be altered once the record is captured.

**Recordkeeping Process Metadata** Metadata about the processes of managing the record, including the creation of the record, must be documented to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the record so that alterations, linkages, and uses of the record can be authoritatively tracked over time.

The organization also goes into the benefits of having a good recordkeeping program and lists four principles that have to be taken to account when defining and managing recordkeeping: Recordkeeping Metadata Management Framework; Recordkeeping Metadata Creation; Recordkeeping Metadata Maintenance; and Recordkeeping Metadata Disposal. The
principles are similar to what we learned last week about eight Generally Accepted 
Recordkeeping Principles.

I was a bit surprised when I saw how similar or how much they were parallel to each other, 
although the General Accepted Recordkeeping Principles did come from ARMA International, 
so it makes sense that there is some cohesiveness there.

References

http://archives.govt.nz

University, San Jose CA.


Wilson, A. (2010). How much is enough: Metadata for preserving digital data. *Journal of 
Library Metadata, 10* (2/3), 205-217.