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Title: „Expb. ODA 1976 el.“ – **Sustainable use of abbreviations, symbols and numerical codes in documentation**, Author: Dietrich Maurer

The advantages of abbreviations, numbering systems and symbols are basically evident.

But what should be kept in mind while using them in the field of documentation?

In my presentation I would like to discuss primarily the problems associated with their use in the object documentation, also on the basis of examples from the Deutsches Museum. As a kind of conclusion I'd like to derive some recommendations or golden rules from my experiences.

Seen from the historical distance it is obvious, that the terms used to simplify work and improve clarity make the documentation more difficult than easier for future generations.

Obsolete, no longer common abbreviations represent thereby the smallest problem. More difficult to decode are institution-specific abbreviations, which has been used only in a single Museum.

Even more problematic are individual shortcuts of individual employees in the accession register, on index cards, in databases and other documents.

Also not effective is the use of numbers without explanatory additions. For example, we have three-digit numbers behind the deaccession notes in the accession register. Unfortunately, the meaning of these numbers is no longer apparent to any employee in the house. Most likely it is the number of a revision list.

The accession register contains undated and therefore mostly worthless revision symbols (hooks and crosses in different colors).

To turn all these historically used abbreviations and numerical codes again in useful, sustainable information, I am currently trying to decipher them.