



# **BIC Digital Audiobook Best Practice**

## **Metadata Requirements**

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March 2025 Version 1.1

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This document is one of a set that Book Industry Communication has produced. Together, these provide a detailed standards and best practice overview of the digital audiobook supply chain.

BIC strongly recommends that you download and read the full set of documents. These currently comprise:

1. Supply Chain Diagram
2. Glossary, including
  - a. Terminology
  - b. Organisations
  - c. Roles and Responsibilities
3. Metadata Requirements
4. Good File Management
5. FAQs
6. EDItX Business Case
7. Sustainability Checklist
8. Accessibility Checklist

A single document including all of the above is also available.

## Introduction

The purpose of this document is to offer best practice guidance about what metadata is required to create a viable digital audiobook product record. The document reflects the key differences in the management of digital audiobook metadata compared to physical or digital book products more generally.

The document assumes that ONIX 3.0 or 3.1, the current ONIX controlled vocabularies (code lists) plus the *Thema* subject classification scheme are the standards used to create and communicate the product records for the purposes of best practice. However, we recognise that earlier versions of ONIX and other classification schemes may be in use and may meet current business needs although not considered best practice.

Please be aware that ONIX 2.1 has now been marked 'obsolete' and the BIC Standard Subject Categories Scheme is obsolete as of the end of February 2024.

ONIX is the most widely used standard for capturing and communicating book product information, including digital audiobooks. EDItEUR is responsible for the development and management of this standard as well as *Thema* and EDItX for the global book supply chain. Where 'Resources' refer to ONIX or *Thema*, further information can be found on the EDItEUR website at [www.editeur.org](http://www.editeur.org)

Although ONIX is the preferred format for communicating metadata, we understand that a non-ONIX format, such as a predefined Excel spreadsheet or CSV file may be necessary for managing metadata for some publishers and vendors. The method used to exchange product information needs to be agreed in advance by the sender and recipient of the data. BIC recognises this and provides pragmatic advice for the use of non ONIX formats. Where this is the case, we suggest that the layout should be used in conjunction with the latest version of ONIX's code lists to create an 'ONIX compatible' format. Bear in mind that many ONIX codes begin with a zero and that Excel (or similar software) may by default remove the leading zero, so column formatting will be required to ensure the code is treated as text and the leading zero retained.

It is not our intention to replicate key sources of information on metadata management. However, we have indicated where key resources can be found and highlighted some of the pitfalls of creating digital audiobook records. For example, if a specific piece of metadata does intentionally not exist because it is not relevant to the product, we show you how to express that. Moreover, where the use or otherwise of a specific data element or code in a product record could influence how another supply chain partner responds to that metadata or the corresponding digital audio asset, we have highlighted this. We have also captured those codes that are most relevant to digital audio. Our aim is to be as precise and specific as possible.

ONIX is a live standard and continues to evolve. Two important facets of that evolution to be aware of are Block 3 and Block 8 updates:

**Block 3:** Rich, chapter level metadata carried in the ONIX record for the whole audiobook product. Note that Block 3 does not describe the relationship between chapters and the files which make up the audiobook. It solely concerns chapter names, timings and other chapter specific metadata.

**Block 8:** Carries information about the manufacture and production of audiobook products (also e-books and POD print books). It includes a manifest of the files required to assemble the product. There is no necessary relationship between files and chapters.

Neither block 3 nor 8 is widely adopted yet, but they do play an important role in audiobook metadata best practice and remove (or reduce) the need for sidecar files. While there is no necessary relationship between files and chapters, blocks 3 and 8 together can indicate that relationship. More detailed information on blocks 3 and 8 is available on pages 18 to 20 of this document.

Although many of the core data elements (such as ISBN, author, title) will be available early in the lifecycle of the digital audio product, other elements will only be available (or confirmed) after production of the digital audiobook asset. This includes data elements such as precise duration (run time or extent), the reader and the file format. If these data elements are supplied on a provisional basis, then they should be updated as soon as possible postproduction for accuracy.

In this document, we have defined 'core metadata' as:

ISBN and/or GTIN13, Title, Contributor, Product Form, Language, Subject Classification, Publisher, Imprint, Publication Date and Publishing Status, Sales Embargo Date, Cover Image, Supplier (Vendor), Availability, Sales Rights for the UK and Ireland, UK and Ireland Retail Prices, VAT Detail and Related Products.

Some of the metadata is split between 'core' and 'audio specific'. For example, specific elements of Product Properties such as basic digital details of the product are considered 'core', whilst Product Properties such as the audio file format are considered 'audio specific'.

'Audio specific metadata' is defined as:

Elements of Contributor, (Reader, Voice Actor, Performer, Narrator etc.), elements of Product Properties, elements of Product Form such as file type and accessibility details, elements of Description, Chapter Level Metadata, Product Manifest and Work Identifier. (A 'work' is a chunk of intellectual property or 'content' in its most abstract form. It is best practice to provide a list of alternative formats of the same work to establish the relationship between the audiobook and any (grand) parent work).

We also strongly recommend including related product data as many platforms and retailers rely on this.

Where metadata is incomplete, inaccurate or supplied late, it may fail validation and quality assurance checks by the recipient digital distributor, vendor, platform or retailer. This will impact discoverability, availability and sales.

The Metadata Requirements table overleaf may look familiar to some readers. It has been adapted from BIC's Metadata Excellence Award Scheme (MEA) documentation (formerly the Product Data Excellence Awards), which uses BIC Basic to define the absolute minimum metadata required to create a viable product record. BIC Basic comprises 21 key pieces of product information which are either considered mandatory, conditional or recommended depending on the circumstances.

There are some key differences to MEA to be aware of. This document considers the following data elements to be mandatory for the purposes of digital audiobook metadata. These are conditional in the MEA document.

- Contributor – or a positive indication that there are no named contributors
- Edition – identifies the product as abridged or unabridged
- Product Form Detail – identifies the audio file type
- Product Properties – including Duration and Language (the latter for accessibility purposes)
- Publisher, Imprint, Lifecycle Dates and Status – Publishing Status

- Work Identifier – referencing the work that formed the basis of an abridgement or adaptation (assuming there is one and that this is communicated in the relevant metadata records)
- Chapter Level Metadata – specific relevance to audiobooks

Other than forming the basis for this document, neither BIC Basic nor the Metadata Excellence Award Scheme has any further role to play in this document.

Where specific codes are cited, these provide examples of codes that may be relevant to a specific data element. They are not meant to be an exhaustive list of codes that could be used. For that, please refer to the specific code list referenced, for example via <https://ns.editeur.org/onix>.

[continued overleaf]

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Product Identifier	Must provide ISBN13 or GTIN13. Where an ISBN has been assigned, it is best practice to provide both, even if they are the same number.	Mandatory	Use separate columns/ fields for ISBNs and GTIN13s in spreadsheet formats. The ISBN and GTIN13 must include digits only. Do not include hyphens or spaces.		16 weeks
Product Form	Must supply basic digital details of product ('format').	Mandatory	Multiple codes are not acceptable.	ONIX Code List 150, Product Form. Consider audio codes: AC (red book CD-Audio), AE (yellow book CD-ROM containing mp3 files), AJ (Downloadable Audio File), and AN (Downloadable and Online Audio File). Online audio is streamed AND online.	16 weeks
Product Form (cont.)	Supply relevant audio file format details <ProductFormDetail> where this is necessary to understand the nature of the product.	Mandatory	Multiple codes are allowed but not recommended in this context, since the product will almost certainly have only a single file format. However, other properties might require further repeats of <ProductFormDetail> codes.	ONIX Code List 175, Product Form Detail.  Consider codes: A101 (CD Standard Audio Format), A103 (mp3 Format), A107 (AAC), A109 (Audible), A110 (FLAC), or A112 (ALAC).	3 weeks
Product Form (cont.)	Supply recording detail (mono, stereo).	Recommended	Use ONIX <ProductFormDetail>.  In general, single reader audiobooks are mono, dramatised performances are stereo.	ONIX Code List 175, Product Form Detail. Consider codes A410 (mono) and A420 (stereo).	3 weeks
Product Properties	The types of content in the product must be specified using <PrimaryContent> and optionally one or more <ProductContent> elements.	Mandatory	For digital audio files it is important to describe the type of content – also used for accessibility information – to clearly indicate that the product is all audio. The accessible properties of audiobooks should be included in the metadata.	ONIX Code List 81, Product Content Type.  ONIX Code List 196, E-Publication Accessibility Details.	3 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Collection Information	Must supply the title of any Collection (formerly Set or Series).	Conditional	Conditional on the product being part of a collection. Ideally, any definite or indefinite article (A, The) should be in a separate column/ field. Data must be supplied in a consistent manner.		16 weeks
Collection Information (cont.)	Where appropriate, must provide collection (set or series) numbering in a separate column/ field (as an Arabic or Roman number, not as text).	Recommended	<p>Conditional on the product being part of a collection. The data must be supplied in a consistent manner.</p> <p>The &lt;NoCollection/&gt; flag should be used where the record contains neither a &lt;Collection&gt; composite nor collection description. This provides a positive indication that the product is not part of a collection.</p> <p>In spreadsheets, where there is no collection information, this MUST be indicated in the record using the No Collection field. Use a column titled "No Collection" and fill in "TRUE", while leaving the column blank for products where there IS Collection information.</p>		16 weeks
Collection Identifier	Where an identifier has been assigned to the 'collection as a whole' (e.g., where the entire collection is available as a 'set') must provide ISBN or GTIN13. Where an ISBN has been assigned, it is best practice to provide both, even if they are the same number.	Recommended	Where an identifier exists for the whole collection, it is good practice to use it to easily link the individual component parts.		16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Title Information	Must supply the text of the title and any subtitle (as listed on the title page of the book) in separate columns/ fields.	Mandatory	Ideally any definite or indefinite article (A, The) should be in another separate column/ field. Do not use the title or subtitle field to carry marketing or promotional text.		16 weeks
Contributor	Must supply one or multiple contributor names and roles where they exist.	Mandatory	<p>Contributor Name in Surname, First Name order. Inversion is not required for a Corporate Name. The requirement for a positive 'No Contributor' indicator makes this rule mandatory. Provide EITHER one or more names OR a No Contributor indicator. With the expected growth of audiobooks 'read by' synthetic voices, the &lt;UnnamedPersons&gt; tag should be used with a normal role code and an Unnamed Persons code for a synthesised voice.</p> <p>In spreadsheets, provide names in separate role, given, family name columns/ fields OR as separate role, inverted name columns/ fields. Corporate contributors are permitted. Where there is no attributable contributor, this MUST be indicated in the record using the No Contributor field. Use a column titled "No Contributors" and fill in "TRUE", while leaving the column blank for products where there ARE contributors.</p>	<p>ONIX Code List 17, Contributor Role Code (this includes corporate contributors).</p> <p>ONIX Code List 19, Unnamed Persons (this includes codes for synthetic voices).</p> <p>The ONIX Best Practice Guide and Code Lists cover synthetic voices.</p> <p>Synthetic voices sometimes have names. Mark these as an alternative name to the synthetic voice.</p>	16 weeks
Contributor (cont.)	For audiobooks (including e-audio) with a credited reader, supply the name in <Contributor> with role E07 (Read By).	Mandatory	In practice there is no maximum number of contributor codes in ONIX. When supplying data in a spreadsheet, confirm the maximum number allowed. Suggest that the spreadsheet needs to cope with at least 3 or 4 contributor codes.	<p>ONIX Code List 17, Contributor Role Code.</p> <p>Consider E01 (Actor), E03 (Narrator in a dramatised production), E09 (Speaker) or E99 (Performed By).</p>	3 weeks



Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Contributor (cont.)	Should provide <BiographicalNote> for each named contributor.	Recommended			16 weeks
Edition Information	Must supply any edition number (as an Arabic number (and Roman if the audiobook has Roman numerals)) where the product has an edition number.	Conditional	Conditional on there being an edition number: 'Two', '2nd', etc are not valid.		16 weeks
Edition Information (cont.)	Must supply any edition type (e.g., 'adapted', 'digital original') as an ONIX edition type code, or as text where no suitable code is available - e.g., 'Centenary' - in separate column/ field where appropriate.	Conditional	Conditional on there being an edition type (other than 'abridged' and 'unabridged').  Use text (in an <EditionStatement> field or separate column) where edition number and type do not sufficiently describe the product.	ONIX Code List 21, Edition Type.  Consider in particular: ADP (Adapted), CMD (Combined Volume), DGO (Digital Original), ENH (Enhanced, where there is also an 'unenhanced' basic edition), MDT (Media Tie-In) and NED (New Edition).	16 weeks
Edition Information (cont.)	For all audiobooks (including e-audio), include either ABR or UBR for 'Abridged' or 'Unabridged' as a minimum.	Mandatory	Multiple codes are acceptable. There is no maximum number of Edition Type codes in ONIX. For spreadsheets, confirm the maximum number allowed. Spreadsheets need to cope with at least 3 or 4 Edition Type Codes. Be aware that some vendors won't accept abridged versions. This will impact whether a platform will sell/ distribute a title.		16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Product Properties	The language should be supplied. For products in translation, the original language should be supplied in a separate field/ column.	Mandatory	Mandatory even if in English. Language is needed for audio accessibility requirements. Regional variations like US English would be considered conditional. From an accessibility viewpoint, it is useful to know the accent of the reader.	ONIX Code List 74, Language.  ONIX Code List 91, Country. Used in conjunction with Code List 74.	16 weeks
Product Properties (cont.)	Must supply duration in minutes as an integer (i.e., whole numbers of minutes), in separate fields/ columns.	Mandatory	Accurate audio duration will only be available after the production of the audio asset. Ensure that any metadata estimating the runtime is updated. If more than minute precision is desired, a decimal number can be provided (e.g., 179.75 minutes).		3 weeks
Subject	Must supply appropriate main <i>Thema</i> subject and qualifier code(s) in separate columns/ fields. (NB, where there are multiple <i>Thema</i> subject codes, exactly ONE must be marked as the main subject (for that scheme). Qualifiers count separately – you can have a ‘main’ place qualifier and a ‘main’ time period qualifier too.	Mandatory	The BIC Standard Subject Categories Scheme (BSSC) is being made obsolete by the end of February 2024. Use of <i>Thema</i> is required for all new subject category classification exercises. BSSC may be provided as well as <i>Thema</i> . All <i>Thema</i> codes are relevant to audiobooks. They are independent of format, so guidelines apply to audiobooks exactly like they do to text based books.	<a href="https://www.editeur.org/151/Thema/">https://www.editeur.org/151/Thema/</a> for information and downloadable documentation.  <a href="https://ns.editeur.org/thema/en">https://ns.editeur.org/thema/en</a> for the interactive code browser.	16 weeks
Subject (cont.)	Should support multiple subsidiary <i>Thema</i> subject codes and qualifiers in separate columns/ fields.	Recommended	As above. All qualifiers are relevant.		16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Subject (cont.)	Supply of keywords in a single semicolon-separated list in <SubjectHeadingText> with <SubjectSchemeIdentifier> 20, is recommended.	Recommended	The semicolon separator applies to keyword phrases too. The maximum recommended number of characters for a list of keywords is 250.		16 weeks
Subject (cont.)	Should supply The Publishers Association Children's Book Marketing Categories (CBMC) in a separate field/ column for all Children's books.	Recommended	There is currently no type/ format indicating 'digital audiobook'. Pending follow up by BIC with the PA, use code 'F', 'electronic format'.	<a href="https://bic.org.uk/resources/childrens-books-marketing-classifications/">https://bic.org.uk/resources/childrens-books-marketing-classifications/</a>	16 weeks
Audience	Must supply audience code.	Mandatory		ONIX Code List 28, Audience Type. Note that there can be multiple audiences for a product.  Consider 02 (Children), 03 (Teenage), 04 (Primary and Secondary Education). For books that are not Children's or Education, use 01 for adult.	16 weeks
Audience (cont.)	For all children's and educational books, supply lower and upper target interest ages (in separate fields/ columns). Be consistent with The Publishers Association guidance.	Conditional	For all children's and educational books, recommended to supply <AudienceRange> composite with exact or lower (and upper where applicable) reading ages, interest ages and/or school grades.	ONIX Code List 30, Audience Range Qualifier.  Consider 16 (Interest Age, Months), 17 (Interest Age, Years) or 18 (Reading Age, Years).	16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Audience (cont.)	For all general/ adult (code value 01) books, supply an adult audience rating to provide a warning about content that might offend parts of the adult audience.	Conditional	Use <Audience> composite with <AudienceCodeType> 22 (this includes using code 00 for books as yet unrated, and 01 where the rating is 'suitable for any adult audience'). For books that are not Children's, Teen or Education use 01 (Adult).  For users with visual impairments, a clear indication of the audience is important, especially if it is very adult.	ONIX Code List 29, Audience Code Type.  Consider 22 (ONIX Adult Audience Rating). See below.  ONIX Code List 203, ONIX Adult Audience Rating. Different codes detail different content warnings.	16 weeks
Description	Should supply a short description for marketing purposes.	Recommended	350 characters or fewer of plain text (this is about 45 – 50 words). In ONIX, this text can also include XHTML markup (e.g., for bold, italics, multiple paragraphs).		16 weeks
Description (cont.)	It is recommended that long description, promotional headline, endorsement, table of contents, reviews, combined contributor biography and other text content types are supplied wherever appropriate. Individual contributor biographies should be within <contributor>.	Recommended	Use <TextTypeCode>. Text formatting may be included using XHTML or HTML tags (and requires the textformat attribute on the <Text> element).  A description is vital for accessibility in audio. The audio description needs to make sense to a potential listener who has little or no vision. It should make sense if you only hear the description.	ONIX Code List 153, Text Type.  Consider 03 (Long Description, more than 350 characters), 06 (Review Quote, for this book), 09 (Endorsement), 30 (Abstract), 04 (Table of Contents), 07 (Review Quote, previous edition), 08 (Review Quote: previous work), 10 (Promotional Headline)	3 weeks
Chapter Level Metadata	Rich, chapter level metadata.	Mandatory	Made up of chapters, the audiobook may also include an introduction or credits (or both). Like chapters, these separate the audiobook into more manageable parts.	See pages 16 to 18 of this document.	3 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates	Supply Imprint Name, the 'brand' under which the product is sold (even when it is the same as Publisher Name). This data must be supplied accurately and in a consistent manner.	Mandatory			16 weeks
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates (cont.)	Supply Publisher Name (name of the legal entity responsible for publication). This data must be supplied accurately and in a consistent manner.	Mandatory			16 weeks
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates (cont.)	Should supply City of Publication in a separate field/ column.	Recommended			16 weeks
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates (cont.)	Provide Publishing Status.	Mandatory	If not published by a UK publisher, also provide <MarketPublishingStatus> for the UK market.	ONIX Code List 64, Publishing Status.  Consider: 01 (Cancelled), 02 (Forthcoming), 04 (Active), 16 (Temporarily Withdrawn from Sale), 17 (Permanently Withdrawn from Sale).	16 weeks
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates (cont.)	Except for products that are abandoned or postponed indefinitely, provide Publication Date - or for non-UK publications - the date of availability in the UK. This is sometimes termed "market publication date".	Conditional	All books have a Publication Date, some have a Sales Embargo Date. Format YYYYMMDD.		16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates (cont.)	When a Permanently Withdrawn from Sale (PWfS) date has been set, this should be provided as YYYYMMDD in a separate column/ field.	Recommended	'PWfS' is defined in ONIX as 'effectively synonymous with OP' (Out of Print), but for digital products, where no stock remains in the supply chain.		16 weeks
Publisher, Imprint and Lifecycle Dates (cont.)	For products with a sales embargo, must provide the Sales Embargo Date (YYYYMMDD) in a separate column/field.	Conditional			16 weeks
Sales Rights	Must supply sales rights as they apply to the UK and ROI (GB, IM, GG, JE, IE).	Mandatory	ONIX 3.0 requires comprehensive rights, not JUST GB, IM etc.	ONIX Code List 46, Sales Rights Type.  Consider code 01 (for sale, based on exclusive publishing rights in specified countries or territories), 02 (for sale, based on non-exclusive publishing rights in specified countries or territories) or 03 (not for sale).	16 weeks
Sales Rights (cont.)	Should provide comprehensive global sales rights information.	Recommended	The recommended method is to include a list of country codes to which each of the three sales rights types apply (in three separate columns). A fourth column can specify which of the types of sales rights apply to countries not listed explicitly.	ONIX Code List 46, Sales Rights Type.  ONIX Code List 49, Region.  ONIX Code List 91, Country. Consider 01, 02, 03 and 00 ("unknown") as per List 46.	16 weeks
Sales Rights (cont.)	Ideally, should support retailer exclusives where appropriate, using <SalesRestriction>.	Recommended		ONIX Code List 71, Sales Restriction Type.	16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Work Identifier	<p>A 'work' is a chunk of intellectual property or 'content' in its most abstract form. It is independent of the way it is manifested as a product.</p> <p>Works may be identified using the ISBN of the first manifestation of the work or using a proprietary work identifier. Where a work identifier is used, it should be on all manifestations of the work, not just the audio product.</p>	Mandatory	The 'normal' relationship between a product and its 'parent' work is code 01. For abridged audio, use code 02 to link the abridged product to its unabridged grandparent. For unabridged audio use 01, manifestation of original work.	ONIX Code List 164, Work Relation.	16 weeks
Relationship Between Products	Use ONIX <RelatedProduct> to provide ISBNs of related products.	Recommended	If other forms exist, use relation code 06 (Alternative Format) to link audio to a textual version of the same content, and vice versa (e.g., when a title is available as PB, EB and Audio).		16 weeks
Related Products	Must provide ISBN and/ or GTIN13 of any predecessor/ successor products in separate columns/ fields (e.g., earlier or later editions of the same work).	Conditional	Use <RelatedProduct> with product relation code.	<p>ONIX Code List 51, Product Relation.</p> <p>Consider: 03 (Replaces), 05 (Replaced By). See the code list for other relationships.</p>	16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Product Manifest	Information about the manufacture and production of the audiobook product, including a manifest of the files required to assemble the product.	Mandatory	The separate chapters and other component parts of the audiobook that make up the rich, chapter level metadata are simply digital audio files in a specific file format for the purposes of the Product Manifest. One chapter (or component part) does not equal one file. There can be multiple files per chapter and multiple chapters per file.	See pages 16 to 18 of this document.	3 weeks
Platform, Retailer, Wholesaler or Digital Distributor	Provide at least one name (platform, retailer, wholesaler or digital distributor) in a consistent manner, and/or SAN or GLN of a supplier from which the UK retail trade may obtain the product.	Mandatory	If providing more than one name, use separate columns/ fields. Data supplied must be accurate and consistent.		16 weeks
Platform, Retailer, Wholesaler or Digital Distributor (cont.)	Should provide multiple <SupplyDetail> composites where product is available via multiple suppliers / channels.	Recommended			16 weeks
Platform, Retailer, Wholesaler or Digital Distributor (cont.)	Provide availability (per platform, retailer, wholesaler or digital distributor).	Mandatory		ONIX Code List 65, Product Availability.  Consider: 01 (Cancelled), 10 (Not Yet Available), 20 (Available), and 34 (Temporarily Withdrawn from Sale).	16 weeks



Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Supply Date	Expected Availability Date.	Conditional	This is when the publisher will distribute the master files to retail platforms.		16 weeks
Pricing	Provide UK price in <Price> composite with <PriceType> 02 or 42, with <PriceAmount> and <Tax>, or <UnpricedItemType>. Use <Territory> to indicate the price is valid in the UK (GB, IM etc.) unless that particular price is valid throughout the entire market or the entire sales rights territory. Specify the currency of the price using <CurrencyCode>. Note <PriceAmount> of zero is not valid (use <UnpricedItemType>)	Mandatory	In ONIX, state tax rates (standard, reduced, zero-rated) and percentages, price before tax and amount of tax within <Tax>. Note current VAT status of digital audio. VAT on audiobooks still at the standard rate.	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/zero-rate-of-vat-for-electronic-publications#items-that-are-not-entitled-to-the-vat-zero-rate">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/zero-rate-of-vat-for-electronic-publications#items-that-are-not-entitled-to-the-vat-zero-rate</a>  ONIX Code List 96, Currency Code.	16 weeks
Pricing (cont.)	For products for sale in Ireland, provide the relevant Irish price (either inclusive of Irish VAT using <PriceType> 02 or 42, or exclusive of Irish VAT using price type code 01 or 41, in Euros) in a separate <Price> composite. Recommendations relating to <Tax> as for UK prices.	Conditional	Irish VAT currently applies to audiobooks.	<a href="https://www.revenue.ie/en/vat/vat-on-services/electronic-services/electronic-publications/index.aspx#">https://www.revenue.ie/en/vat/vat-on-services/electronic-services/electronic-publications/index.aspx#</a>  ONIX Code List 96, Currency Code.	16 weeks
Pricing (cont.)	Free of charge products.	Conditional	Provide a positive indication that the product is free, rather than a zero or a blank in the two price fields.		16 weeks

Field	Description	Requirement	Comment	Resources	Timeline
Pricing (cont.)	Price changes.	Recommended	Provide advance notification of a future price change using 'date until' on older price and 'date effective' on newer price (both YYYYMMDD) in separate columns/ fields.		16 weeks
Cover	Provide the cover image as a JPEG, ideally RGB or with embedded ICC colour profile, correct aspect ratio, typically but not required to be under 2MB file size. The image must be 2D, not 3D, although an additional 3D image may be sent.	Mandatory	The field or column should contain the filename or full URL. The image must be supplied alongside the data file or be available for direct download at the exact URL given. The URL should be the URL of the downloadable image itself.		16 weeks

## The role of Blocks 3 and 8 in ONIX

With thanks to Graham Bell at EDItEUR for his input to this summary of the role of blocks 3 and 8 in ONIX, and also for the graphics used to illustrate the overview.

The relationship between files and chapters in digital audiobooks is not clearcut. An audiobook recording can be split into multiple files for production, operational or supply chain purposes. Another term for splitting files is ‘chunking’. It means that one file does not always equal one chapter. Indeed, there can be many files per chapter, or many chapters per file.

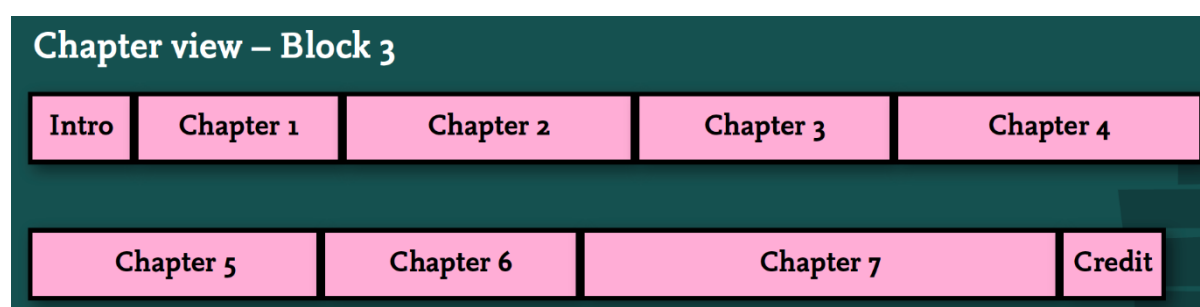
Similarly, split files can be combined. If they were previously split, they won’t necessarily be recombined in the same way. Like splitting, there are other ways of describing the combining of files, including ‘concatenating’, ‘joining’ or ‘splicing’. This can be done to meet a specific platform’s requirements to deliver an audiobook in a single, very large file, or conversely, as several smaller, more manageable files.

In ONIX, or when following ONIX conventions to create viable digital audiobook product records, these two ONIX blocks are critical to understanding the relationship between audiobook chapters and audiobook files:

**Block 3:** Rich, chapter level metadata for the whole audiobook product. Block 3 does not describe the relationship between the chapters and the files which make up the audiobook. It solely concerns chapter names, timings and other chapter specific metadata.

**Block 8:** Carries information about the manufacture and production of the audiobook product. It includes a manifest of the files required to assemble the product. There is no necessary relationship between files and chapters.

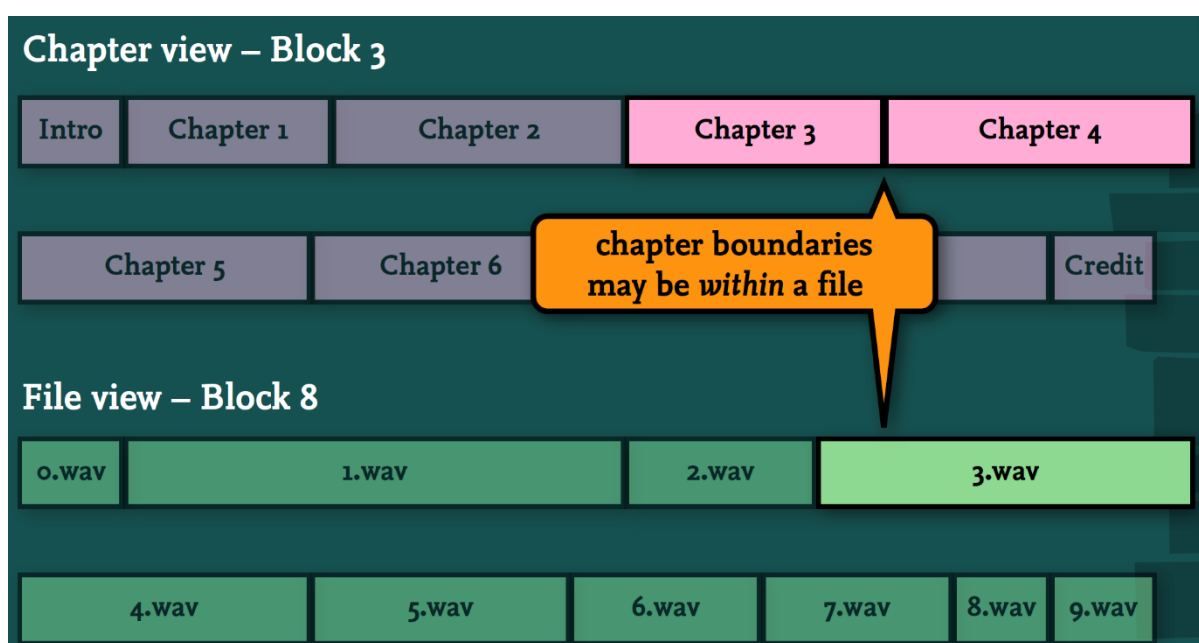
From a Block 3 perspective, an audiobook is made up of chapters. There may also be an introduction or credits (or both). In ONIX, each of these is a ‘content item’ separating the audiobook into more manageable parts, corresponding to the chapters, parts or sections in the print or e-book. Block 3 forms a table of contents of the audiobook, using times instead of page numbers. The number of chapters may or may not align one-to-one with the number of audio files comprising the product. In the simplest case of an audiobook with seven chapters as well as an introduction and end credits, chapter seven may actually be content item number eight in a sequence of nine.



However, Block 8 looks at things differently. The separate chapters and other component parts of the audiobook (such as introduction and credits) are simply digital audio files in a specific file format (such as .wav), and in a specific order.

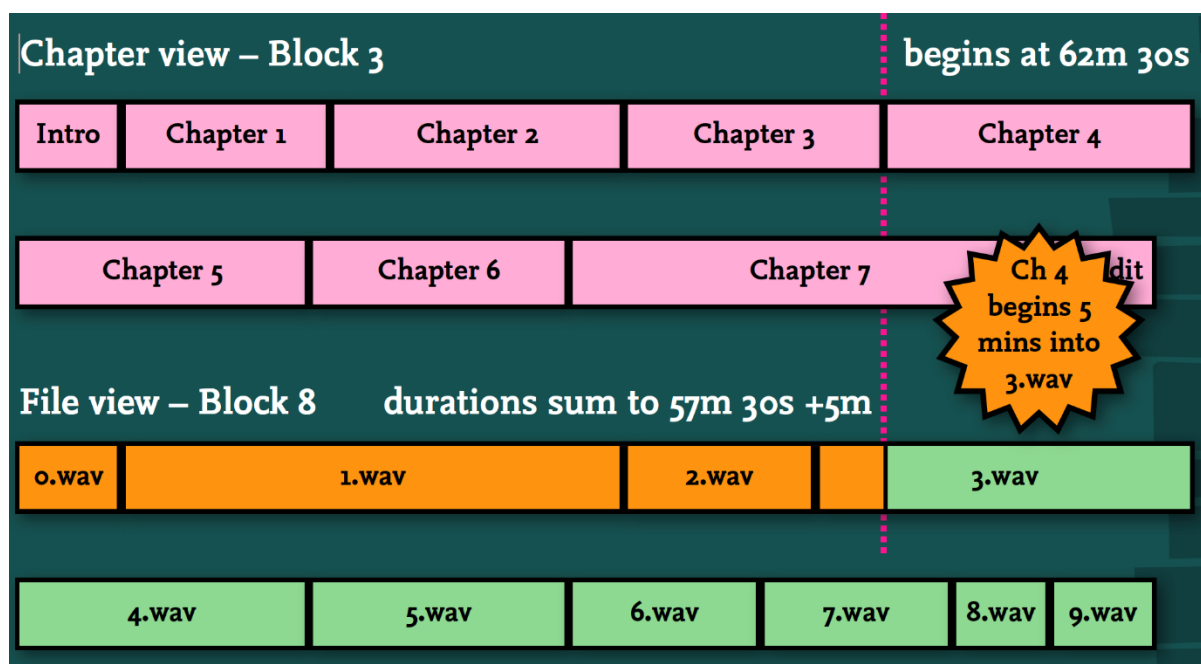


Because one chapter (or content item) does not necessarily equal one file, in the current example, the 9 content items in block 3 are represented by 10 files in block 8, with multiple files per chapter and multiple chapters per file. An end of chapter boundary in a block 3 content item may be part way through (i.e., within) a file in block 8, or a content item may be contained in more than one file.



Moreover, blocks 3 and 8 both measure time (duration) differently. Block 3 calculates the total elapsed time from the start of the audiobook to a given point in the book, whereas block 8 may give an explicit duration for each of the files individually.

[continued overleaf]



This ensures that block 3 metadata does not need to change if the files are combined or split as they pass along the supply chain.