Title: What’s In Your Digital Content Toolkit? Exploring Options for Online Exhibitions

Abstract:
Most university libraries have in place a digital content management system that provides good longer-term archival storage and supports search and discovery of digital assets. But do these systems also support the shorter-term needs of special curated projects and librarian/curators? For instance, can individual librarians and curators collate digital objects, enhance them with didactic narratives, organize them into a logical story, and present them to a far-reaching online community with ease and limited support from already busy IT departments and within a presumably very limited budget?

At the Marriott Library, University of Utah, librarians and curators found that the current CONTENTdm system did not fully support their curatorial needs. And when their concerns about this issue and requests to acquire a new curatorial tool were presented, the Marriott librarians and curators encountered serious challenges – challenges primarily founded on differences of culture and practice between themselves and the library’s IT department. Clearly, these distinctions (i.e., public service v. systems support; big-picture, longer-term management v. detailed, singular, shorter-term projects) had to be bridged before positive progress could be made. To this end, the Digital Library Council of the Marriott Library charged a task force with researching and analyzing various options and tools and ultimately offering a recommendation for enhancing the library’s digital content toolkit.

This proposed poster session will present the task force’s experience, communication and evaluation strategies, and conclusions as a case study for other institutions and organizations who find themselves in similar situations. Some of the tools that will be discussed include Omeka, dmBridge, CONTENTdm version 6, OmniUpdate, Pachyderm, and Fedora.

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