Assessing Our Digital Asset Management System (CONTENTdm) from the Undergraduate Patron Perspective

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Assessing Our Digital Asset Management System (CONTENTdm) from the Undergraduate Patron Perspective

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BYU and CONTENTdm

- First collection, "Overland Trails" live in 2002:
BYU and CONTENTdm

• Today: 2,770,000+ digital items
• 150+ collections*
• Harvested by our discovery layer and MWDL/DPLA via OAI-PMH
• Many landing pages
BYU’s Undergraduates

- 33,633: the largest undergraduate enrollment of any private US university
- 95% American
- 50-50 male-female ratio
- 8% first-generation college students
- Majority are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
The Study

- Holistic study design with a combination of data collection methods

- 10 User tasks:
  - “Please find and download a journal or diary written by Alice Louise Reynolds."
  - “Please find a copy of the Woman’s Exponent newspaper from May 1882."

- After, student researchers interviewed them about their experiences.
  - "How efficient did you feel you were in the completion of the tasks?"
  - "In the future, if you needed to find x item, what process would you use to find it on your own?"
The Study

- Initial Coding & Summary of Data by student researchers
- Secondary Coding & Summary of Data by library staff
- Analysis of Data
Undergraduate Behaviors
Undergraduate Behaviors

- Wide range of information literacy and experience with primary sources
- Limited experience with our digital collections

Figure 1: Participants’ Use of CONTENTdm before the Study
Undergraduate Behaviors

Reading handwriting

- Immediate disinterest
- Transcriptions missed

"What?! I cannot read any of that! I think if I knew how to read this I could tell you if I found it or not."
Undergraduate Behaviors

• VERY quick to give up on search strategy or try a new method if they don't see pertinent results above the fold

• Not afraid of searching but too many options stops them up

Scrolls past most of the info on the page. Does not choose to click on anything. Says, "I give up"
Undergraduate Behaviors

- Digital object navigation
Undergraduate Behaviors

• Student preference for familiar functionality
  
  • Highlighted search terms

"I will say what's really strange, obviously the search engine found it somehow, but it doesn’t highlight what it found. Normally if you search something on google and it finds it in the article and you click on the article it will skip right to what you searched and it will be highlighted or bolded."

• Relevance ranking of results

"Sort by relevance? What?! Did I need to specify that?!"
Undergraduate Behaviors

- The experience of CONTENTdm at home is impacted by extra logins, internet speed, and type of device.

"Okay, don't know why it's not loading..."
CONTENTdm Interface
CONTENTdm Interface

• Progressive searching is very difficult within CONTENTdm.
  • Collection selection was more a hindrance than a help

"I don’t really know what baden-powell is so we can just leave it."
CONTENTdm Interface

• Progressive searching is very difficult within CONTENTdm.
  • Collection selection was more a hindrance than a help
  • Filter facets were difficult to use
  • Most resorting to inefficient hunt and peck browsing across pages of results:
CONTENTdm Interface

• Advanced search was inconsistent
  • Best if they searched “across all fields” (but still not efficient).

• Two date search methods:

[reentering the date three times before she understood the yyyy-mm-dd format requirement]: "Oh. They’re picky..."
CONTENTdm Interface

• Breadcrumb trail was helpful:
CONTENTdm

- Breadcrumb trail was helpful.
- Transcriptions were too hidden:
Integration into lib.byu.edu
Integration into lib.byu.edu

- When told to find a digital item in Digital Collections, found Collections > Digital Collections
- When found, landing pages were useful
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- Confusion about when they were leaving the library website
- Discovery layer's advanced search facets can be misleading
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- Confusion about when they were leaving the library website
- Discovery layer's advanced search facets can be misleading
Integration into lib.byu.edu

- Thumbnails were not links which frustrated them
- Used the subject headings to assess what something is about
CONTENTdm Metadata
## Metadata – standards application

- Inconsistent metadata standards over time

### Metadata Application Profile

**Version 3 (2019)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element Label</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>The topic of the resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describes</td>
<td>Original resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeatable</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Use</td>
<td>Describe what the resource content is about, expressed in keywords,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>phrases, names, subject headings, or classification codes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refines/Refinement</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Strongly recommend use of established controlled vocabularies such as:
  - [Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)](https://id.loc.gov/authorities/subjects/
  - [Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/)
Metadata – field labels

• Too many fields (Advanced Search *and* Object Description)
  • Sheer volume of fields overwhelms user
  • Confusing to user what some field labels mean
    • Scope vs. Description vs. Caption
    • Type vs. Format vs. Genre
    • Contributing Institution vs. Digital Publisher
    • Difference between multiple types of dates unclear (some could be hidden)
  • Many are not useful to the user
    • Metadata Entry Date/Tool, SIRSI ID

• Jargony field labels .. change to natural language terms
  • Example: Source should change to Cite as
Metadata – object description

- Object description orients the user within compound objects.
- Students expect to see more information about page contents, dates, etc.
- Hyperlinks in metadata are useful.

"Based on everything it gives me in the object description, it gives me a pretty good idea of exactly what this is, instead of just looking at the actual photos because the handwriting is hard to read."
Metadata – controlled vocab

- Controlled vocabulary should probably be sorted alphabetically, not by prevalence

- Date filters should sort chronologically

- Filter facets varied in specificity
Metadata – describing images

Who are these guys?
Where are they?
What are they doing?
Future Directions
Future Directions

- Considering data from the interviews:
  - Very picky about search tool now
  - Perhaps create 1-minute use tutorials
  - Posit the digital collections as a boon to faculty/generate awareness
Future Directions

• Take better advantage of the way digital content is different than physical
  • Collection Selection – blow it up
  • Rearrange the landing pages to provide multiple entry points: browse by century, format, author, subject
Future Directions

- Interface:
  - Scale back amount of fields displayed (64 fields)
Future Directions

- Interface:
  - Scale back amount of fields displayed (64 fields)
  - Put transcriptions next to item
Future Directions

- Interface:
  - Scale back amount of fields displayed (64 fields)
  - Put transcriptions next to item
    - Also, MORE transcriptions!!
  - Highlight search terms a little better?
  - Fix collection restrictions or make them more obvious?
Future Directions

• High-value collections should be targeted for greater subject analysis

• Interoperability with ArchivesSpace, Rosetta, ILS

• Searching for a new DAM: recommendations and perspectives welcomed!!!
Study Design Improvements
Things to do better next time

• Design
  • Two-part questions

• Prompt subjects to speak aloud during each task

Think it... Say it...
Things to do better next time

• Training
  • When to intervene...
  • Rushing to complete tasks...
  • Demonstrate successful task completion
  • Ensure shared terminology
Questions?