



Library Notes

On the fast track to information



Digital Libraries: Resources & Projects

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Digitization of photographs, manuscripts and other materials is becoming more frequent. Declining hardware, software and storage costs have allowed libraries, museums and archives to place a wide variety of local resources onto websites, allowing worldwide access. Digital information is becoming a reality. Where you once had to travel far and search reels of microfilm, you are now able to conduct research from the comfort of your home. An excellent example of a huge digitalization project is the immigration records from Ellis Island (<http://www.ellisland.org/>). This colossal undertaking allows you to search the 22 million records of the immigrants who passed through the Port of New York from 1892 to 1924. Not only can you find the passenger records, but the original ships' manifests have been scanned, showing a wide range of information.

Another digitalization project is Wayne State University's Virtual Motor City Project. (http://www.lib.wayne.edu/resources/special_collections/local/vmcc/)

This pilot project has placed about 500 photographs from the Reuther Library's Detroit News Collection onto the Internet. In 1997, Robert Giles, editor and publisher of the Detroit News, left his position with the paper and donated 800,00 negatives (and their copyright) to the Reuther Library. These negatives date from the late 1800s to the mid 1990s.

Metadata is a finding aid used to locate certain photographs from a collection such as the Virtual Motor City Project. Metadata is descriptive information attached to a resource. Think of it as the subject headings used to find books in a library catalog such as the Mott Library's FALCON system.

If you go to the Virtual Motor City Project site, click on "Search this Collection", choose "Keyword Search" and type in "Mott" you will get 22 hits. The 10th thumbnail on the page; "Reagan, Ronald.." can be clicked on and you will get a larger image. If you then click on "description", you will get the metadata for the image.

There is a metadata standard. It is called the "Dublin Core", named for Dublin, OH, where the elements of the standard were developed. (<http://dublincore.org/>). It is hoped that a metadata standard will allow increased access to resources and navigation between and across resources.

The Mott Library staff hopes to develop a Mott Archives digitalization project. The Mott Archives lends itself to a digitization project and would allow the library to preserve, describe and share resources that are now only available in the Mott Library.



On the Wire

The Making of Modern Michigan

An initiative by the Library of Michigan and Michigan State University that will help Michigan libraries contribute to a digital collection focusing on the history of Michigan. <http://mmm.lib.msu.edu/index.html>

The Dorothea June Grossbart Historic Costume Collection

A demonstration project that has the images of over 400 items from the collection of Wayne State University's College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts. http://www.lib.wayne.edu/resources/special_collections/local/hcc/index.php

Writing the River

A digital collection of 1960s/1970s urban poetry from Detroit and Windsor. The Wayne State University Library System was the main participant in this project. http://www.lib.wayne.edu/resources/special_collections/local/wtr/index.php

The University of Texas System Crash Course in Copyright

Copyright is everything. Before an item is used it is needed to determine if it is protected by copyright or in the public domain. <http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/cprtindx.htm>

Flint Public Library Automotive History Collection

A variety of materials documenting the early days of the automobile business in Flint, MI. <http://www.flint.lib.mi.us/ahc/index.html>

