Abstract: The University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC) Libraries, recipient of a 2009 two-year Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant, is building the socially constructed Grateful Dead Archive Online (GDAO) website using Omeka open source software. The Grateful Dead Archive (GDA) represents one of the most significant popular culture collections of the 20th Century and documents the band’s activity and influence in contemporary music from 1965 to 1995. Donated to the UCSC Library in 2008, the GDA contains over 600 linear feet of material including business records, photographs, posters, fan envelopes, tickets, video, audio (oral histories and interviews) and 3-d objects such as stage props and band merchandise. With the release of GDAO in July 2012 www.gdao.org, the Archive will actively collect artifacts from an enthusiastic community of Grateful Dead fans. This presentation will discuss the donation of the collection to UCSC; the challenges of merging a traditional archive with a socially constructed one; rights clearances issues and our intellectual property strategy; crawling and harvesting strategies employed for collecting web resources; plugins and workflows supporting data exchange between CONTENTdm and Omeka; and integrating “the crowd” in the curation of user-submitted content preserved by the California Digital Library’s Merritt repository. Future directions, such as the integration/development of better curation tools and what we hope to learn from opening the archive to contributions from a large community of fans, will also be discussed.
Collection: The GDA is one of the most significant popular culture collections of the 20th Century. Featuring works by famous “rock” photographers and artists of the era including Herb Green, Stanley Mouse, Wes Wilson and Susana Millman, the over 600 linear foot collection includes business correspondence and financial records, photographs, posters, fan envelopes, fanzines, tickets, T-shirts, video documentaries & performances, radio interviews, and 3-d objects. During their 30-year career, the band played over 2,000 shows, never playing the same set-list twice or a given song in the same way. The band promoted a sense of community among their fans, and it was a natural progression to seek to build a socially constructed collection leveraging social media tools to tag, comment, upload and share digital files, memories, and knowledge.

Technical Highlights: GDAO integrates multiple technical systems to deliver and preserve digital content. GDAO leverages Omeka to support blogs, exhibits and social media tools as well as the integration of multiple browsing mechanisms leveraging subject, geolocation and date metadata to access digital objects via topic facets, Google Maps and a timeline. CONTENTdm provides the digital object metadata and OCR authoring tool for GDAO. Integrated into GDAO’s digital object view, Kaltura streams audio and video content. The Djakota open source web image server supports GDAO with the creation of custom image sizes and efficient image processing workflows to access and preserve image files in multiple repositories including Omeka, CONTENTdm and the California Digital Library’s (CDL) Merritt Preservation Repository. In addition, GDAO leverages other CDL services including the EZID ARK (http://www.cdlib.org/uc3/ezid) minting service to create and resolve persistent identifiers and the Web Archiving Service (WAS) (http://webarchives.cdlib.org) to crawl and preserve web resources documenting the Grateful Dead. There are several significant project outcomes. GDAO has developed and tested several workflows to grab metadata from the CONTENTdm API for inclusion in Omeka. GDAO has implemented a curatorial review process encouraging the user community to add value to user submissions. This has resulted in the creation of several tools for community use including Omeka plugins to routinely assign ARKs to User Submissions and plugins to export METS, MODS and PREMIS metadata for inclusion in a service or repository as well as a PHP METS library for use with the Omeka plugin.

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