Old Wine in New Bottles

Reframing Digital Initiatives at
The Ohio State University Libraries

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BACKGROUND

• OSU Libraries digital projects – a long history
  o Knowledge Bank (DSpace)
  o Billy Ireland Cartoon Library image database (PastPerfect)
  o Many other projects

• However, much work was project-driven resulting in:
  o a fragmented digital environment for users
  o a difficult infrastructure to support and grow
PREPARING FOR CHANGE

• 2011 – New Libraries Strategic Plan
• 2013 – Re-envisioning the Digital Initiatives environment: approach and architecture
  o Programmatic vs. project-driven approach to planning
  o Services platform vs. individualized software components
• 2013 – IT Division restructured and grown
  o Infrastructure Support (7 staff)
  o Applications Development & Support (8 staff)
  o Digital Initiatives (1 faculty)
• 2013 – New Head, Digital Initiatives hired
PREPARING FOR CHANGE

• 2013/14 – Infrastructure and support moved back in-house from central IT
  o Servers / VMs
  o Storage
• All of these changes allowed better control of:
  o Planning for digital preservation
  o Allocation of resources (infrastructure & people)
  o Development directions & priorities
REALIGNING ORGANIZATIONAL THINKING

• 2013 – Strategic Digital Initiatives Working Group (SDIWG) formed
  o Chaired by Head, Digital Initiatives
  o Key stakeholders within Libraries
  o **Charge**: develop framework & recommendations to strategically evolve OSUL’s digital library program to meet current & future needs

• 2013 / 14 Products
  o **Guiding Principles**
  o 2013 – **Digital Preservation Policy Framework**
  o **White Paper**
  o **Master Objects Repository report**
### Guiding Principles

Value statements defining how we move forward as well as evaluate current projects

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<tr>
<th>We build services, not products</th>
<th>We focus on the user</th>
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<td>We carefully weigh when to Build vs Buy vs Borrow</td>
<td>We work with partners</td>
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<td>We develop modular services, not monolithic systems</td>
<td>We embrace research as a core, fundamental value</td>
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<td>We develop for change</td>
<td>We strive to stay grounded in the real world</td>
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<td>We don’t keep everything forever</td>
<td>We are driven by standards</td>
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<td>We will build in assessment</td>
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WHITE PAPER

• Implementation of a Modern Digital Library at The Ohio State University Libraries
  o Analysis of the current environment
  o Vision of future environment
  o Gap analysis
  o Recommendations and goals for moving ahead
MASTER OBJECTS REPOSITORY REPORT

• Purpose
  o OSUL roadmap to a trusted digital repository
  o Initial implementation of recommendations in the Digital Preservation Policy Framework

• Charge
  o Define Master Objects & Derivative Objects
  o Define environment and high-level repository management processes for our digital storage system
  o Recommend procedures for proper deposit and registration of objects including workflows and metadata
  o Recommend hardware-agnostic processes
  o Recommend additional software, as appropriate
  o Identify other relevant issues
PROGRESS

• Shifting from current to envisioned environment
  o From stand-alone projects to a coherent platform & suite of services
• Filling in identified gaps
• Examples:
  o Teams responsible for organizational best practices around metadata, digitization formats, and digital storage management
  o Implementing recommendations for Archival Collections Management (ArchivesSpace) and Format Preservation
  o Developing an Image Management System
  o Values statements and recommendations for a re-envisioned Discovery Environment
BEYOND THE SYSTEMS

• Redefining workflows
  o Laying out clear paths for curation, preservation, access
  
  o Clear definitions around systems and their use
    o i.e., how do we manage video, audio; what goes in the Institutional Repository, and what doesn’t

  o Building a tolerance for iterative development
    o Listening to stakeholders as we fine tune connections
TRYING TO BE TRANSPARENT
LEVERAGING CHANGE

• A chance to refocus
  • Rethinking discovery and the roles of audience, design, and purpose
  • Supporting a formal digital exhibits program, and a matrix for understanding types and levels of preservation
  • Refocus on outside partnerships with a renewed commitment to data sharing and being good partners
  • Systematic evaluation of content at the edges, often stored in single use vendor products.
Questions?

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