The Role of Librarians in DAM and in Your Organization

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Information Edge
“Modern civilization will not collapse from a lack of resources or a war--it will collapse from the crush of information. I am only half joking."

Two Case Studies

- Exploratorium
- Pacific Energy Center

Soap Film Painting

Image by S. Schwartzzenberg
Exploratorium

- Science, Art and Human Perception
- Hands-on science in over 500 interactive exhibits
- Museum as an educational center
- 14,000 indexed assets
- Images, PDFs, Word files, audio and video files

Pinscreen Faces
Image by A. Snyder
EDAM
Exploratorium Digital Asset Management

- IMLS funded
- 2001-2003
- 2.75 FTE staff

Recollections
Image by N. Rodger
Audiences

- Educators
- Museum Partners
- Commercial Media
- Journalists
- Historical Researchers
- Staff

Salt Piece
Image by A. Snyder
Departments

- Media Production and Marketing
- Learning Tools
- Photography
- Public Information
- Teacher Professional Development
- Exhibit Services

Rotunda at Night
Image by S. Schwartzenberg
Central vs. Departmental Catalogs

- **Central**: best quality, both high and med resolution; full indexing; available to all staff and partly to external audiences
- **Departmental Catalogs**: range of quality and resolution; partial indexing; limited availability. Designed to help departments control access to their material.

Fracture in Granite

Image by P. Doherty
Conceptual Framework
Categories / Keywords

- By Audience
- By Conceptual Area
- By Exhibit Name
- By Phenomena
- By Date
- By Place
- By Event

Light Walk
Image by S. Schwartzenberg
Field Structure

- Asset Creator
- Other Contributor
- Caption
- Exhibit Builder
- Person Portrayed
- Master Format
- Master Location
- Asset Quality
- Copyright

Bubbles
Image by S. Schwartzenberg
Dissemination

- Internal Network
- External Web

Brine Shrimp Ballet
Copyright

Solar Eclipse Sun’s Corona

Image by A. Snyder
Challenges

- Took a long time to get started
- Processing/Indexing time
- We spent much more time on infrastructure than we intended; time well spent

Anti-Gravity Mirror
More Challenges

- Physical organization of assets
- Territoriality
- Setting priorities
- Lack of intellectual property policies

Bubble Demonstrates Osmosis

Image by S. Schwartzemberg
Solutions

- Have patience with territorial feelings - new system will assert itself
- Train and retrain
- Document processes and policies through an internal website
- Museum slowly changing processes
Pleasant Surprises

- Popularity of the digital assets with staff and external users
- Some of our best assets were created by non-media department staff
More Surprises

- New resources to come out of project include exhibit cross-reference database, event/exhibition database

Colored Shadows

Image by A. Snyder
Hidden Treasures

- Paul Doherty Collection
- Staff scientist’s personal images
- Demanded by teachers
- Filled collection gaps: geology and astronomy
- Agreement with him is model for future agreements with other staff

Circumzenithal Arc
Image by P. Doherty
Letting Go

- What’s lost is lost
- Prevent future loss

Air Rings

Image by S. Lani
Looking Forward

- More customization to external audience needs
- More evaluation
- Concentration on audio and video assets
- New audiences such as scientific researchers
Exploratorium Digital Library
http://www.exploratorium.edu/digital_library/

- Asset Archive
- Explo.tv
- Polar Media Collection
- Math Explorer Activity Database
- SMILE Pathway
Pacific Energy Center

- Seeking DAM solution
- Many formats
- Internal use only
- Ability for staff to add simple metadata

PEC Heliodon
Those DAM Librarians!

- Know audiences – who they are, what they look for and how
- Expertise in building metadata schema and taxonomies
- Recognize the business value that finding information brings to an organization
- Create IP policies that address copyright issues
- Extensive experience and expertise organizing assets of all kinds and know that you get out of a record, what you put into it
Those DAM Librarians!

- Know how to organize information and assets for findability
- Generally they are viewed as neutral working for the good of the entire organization
- Have big picture view
  - Contribute to workflow strategies
  - Able to prioritize what needs to be indexed first and why
- Know to start small and let the success of a DAM project speak for itself
Thank you and be in touch!

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