Fall 2012 Capstone Poster Session

Friday, December 7th, 2012
3pm-4pm

1616 Guadalupe Street, 1st floor
De Soto National Memorial, dedicated in 1950, is a 25-acre park located on the western coast of Florida. The photographic records of the Memorial document the development and maintenance of the park, illustrating the challenges of preserving a small amount of acreage threatened by urban development on one side and beach erosion on the other. The photographs also show the growth of the Memorial's interpretation efforts from one set of outdoor displays into a visitor's center and a living history camp. I processed—arranged, described, and rehoused—De Soto National Memorial’s collection of over 16,000 images (prints, slides, negatives and digital images) as part of my three-month summer internship at the South Florida Collections Management Center in Everglades National Park.

In 1976, the town of Liberty Hill hosted an International Sculpture Symposium where sculptors from six countries created monumental sculptures over the period of one month. The sculptures are now being moved to a new park with plans for a museum that will detail the story of these giants. The goal of this project was to digitize the various photographs, slides, videos, film reels, audiotapes, and documents related to the symposium and its history. I created archival masters for each object as well as use copies to be used in promotional materials. Additionally, I developed a preservation plan for the maintenance of the digitized materials—both as a basis for the possible future museum and as a guide to how these materials were digitized for future users.
As the host institution's product is new, market research has yet to be completed for this product. While an immediate action plan is in place, the company had a need for extensive research on target customers and investors presented in a concise and clear format. This project entailed finding target market segments in the U.S., creating a sales pipeline from a multitude of sources, creating an expansion priority list for foreign countries, and researching key conferences, analysts, and press. Any additional or unexpected research needs that came up throughout the semester were also completed. These steps contributed to the company's business plan for the upcoming months.

An important component in any new project in user experience design is conducting stakeholder interviews. These discussions essentially set the stage for the entire project: they outline project goals, they identify potential challenges, and they get the ball rolling. Currently there is relatively little guidance or advice surrounding best practices for getting the most out of stakeholder interviews and synthesizing the findings from those interviews to make sure all goals, needs, and challenges have been identified and weighted. This project examines current research on conducting successful stakeholder interviews, evaluates existing interview logging tools, and makes design recommendations for a more UX-centered system that will optimize the stakeholder interview process.
Large technology companies have several and very complex software products being created by multiple development teams. These teams are often spread out over several national, and sometimes global, locations and might not have direct and convenient access to product managers, designers, and other stakeholders for the project. While this makes all parts of the development process more difficult, it is particularly problematic when it comes to the numerous details involved in creating consistent, usable interfaces. In order to provide a successful method for communicating all of the necessary details, I interviewed a number of different parties involved in the whole development process: product managers, usability experts, developers, visual designers, and QA testers. The interviews revealed that all of them strongly supported the idea of having some form of UI guidelines. There was also a strong consensus on what kind of information should be kept there, such as suggestions on how and when certain controls should be used, color schemes, rules for spacing and layout, keyboard shortcuts, and the expected results of common commands. Based on these results, I created an organizational and formatting schema that divides individual content topics (controls, commands/behaviors, design concepts, colors, etc.) into smaller, cross-referenced “articles”. This provides the granularity needed for users to search for the answer to a specific question, but allows them to quickly expand their search if more information is needed.

Digital asset management has become essential for repositories with large born-digital and digitized collections. The College of Liberal Arts' Department of Public Affairs utilizes their digital images for a variety of publicity purposes, including their bi-annual publication, Life & Letters. I implemented a digital asset management system for the college in order to make these materials more accessible. As part of the project, I assessed the materials, formulating my recommendations and developing a personalized best practices guideline. My final guideline includes the following components: catalog and folder taxonomy, file-naming conventions, metadata schema, migration strategy, detailed workflow, and guidelines for security and copyright.
Sean O'Bryan

*Developing Load Profiles and Data Maps for the University of Texas Libraries’ Integrated Library System*

University of Texas Libraries
Field Supervisor: Ja-Nice Woolaver

This project involved developing, analyzing, testing, implementing, and maintaining load profiles and data mapping to facilitate record loading of various formats into the UT Libraries’ Millennium integrated library system (ILS). Load profiles consist of a series of encoded commands that parse the raw metadata provided in vendor records and, in turn, translate that data for functional integration into the library catalog. Data maps are an encoded set of “regular expressions” that are embedded within these load profiles to perform qualified functions on this vendor-supplied metadata. Throughout this project I worked with various stakeholders, including the Bibliographic Database Management Unit, Acquisitions Department, and various e-resource vendors, to analyze and accommodate the specific parameters required. I developed a variety of load profiles and maps that are currently functioning successfully in the ILS and can be built upon as future needs arise. This project, while technically challenging, was an extremely rewarding educational and professional experience.

Annie Sollinger

*Visual Resource Collections: Conversion, Cataloging and Management*

Fine Arts Library, University of Texas at Austin
Field Supervisor: Sydney Kilgore

Management of visual resource collections at universities has moved increasingly from art history departments to libraries in recent years, and the collections themselves are moving from analog formats to digital. The Fine Arts Library at UT Austin administers the Visual Resource Collection for the department of Art and Art History. I worked on the conversion of teaching material in the VRC, cataloging images, finding the best versions to digitize, scanning and optimizing the images for on-screen use and projection. I worked with Sydney Kilgore to write a guide for professors to access these didactic materials through UT Libraries’ Digital Archive Services (DASe). The project bridged my interests in art history, digital asset management, creating quality digital surrogates, and making them accessible. I learned more about the responsibilities of visual resource managers to consistently and accurately catalog as well as ensure that digital collections are accessible to student and faculty users.
This paper examines the ever-changing relationship between technology and open-source intelligence gathering. For years, open-source intelligence was viewed as a lesser intelligence form, as it examined things like newspapers which tended to have information well after an event had occurred. This has changed drastically with recent changes in technology, however. With the advent of the Internet, publicly available information can be created and thus gathered much more easily. It can be used in more productive and predictive ways as well. This paper looks at this new landscape and discusses the methods and implications of techniques in place to utilize it.

The capstone provided an opportunity to explore real-world strategies and issues in developing digital archives from print materials for small organizations. The project began with an investigation into best practices for creating abstracts of online scholarly and technical publications. Best practices were applied to digitized IC2 publications by creating cover pages with abstracts, keywords, and other metadata. The final phase of the project investigated search engine optimization (SEO) of University of Texas Digital Repository (UTDR) materials, specifically IC2’s effectiveness at getting publications into Google Scholar and Google Search. In addition to the above activities, the capstone provided opportunities to develop and document workflow processes, including detailed instructions for continuing the organization's digitization efforts after the culmination of this project.