

Planning for Digitization

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Why Digitization?

- Provides access when items are presented on-line
 - Patrons can view items anytime, anywhere
 - Rare/fragile items can be safely viewed
 - Promote underutilized collections
 - Multiple people can access the same items
- Compliments traditional preservation practices

Project Planning: First steps

- What do you want to accomplish?
- Which collection(s) do you wish to make available?
- Know your audience:
 - Who are you targeting?
 - What are their needs?
- What are you going to digitize?
 - What are the physical characteristics of the originals?
 - In what condition are the originals?

Planning: Copyright

- Copyright
 - If you don't own it, if it's not in the public domain, or if you don't have permission to use it, your project ends now.
 - Many cultural heritage institutions digitize only items already in the public domain.
 - Solve any copyright questions *before* you start. Procuring permissions can take awhile.

Planning: Conversion

- Where are you going to digitize the items?
- Work done in-house:
 - Who will do the work?
 - Hire someone or use current staff?
 - How will staff be trained?
 - What equipment will you need?
 - Do you have the proper physical environment to digitize?

Planning: Conversion

- Outsourcing:
 - How/where will you find a vendor?
 - What services do you need the vendor to provide?
 - How much will it cost?
 - Use an RFP (request for proposal) to compare prices and get more information.
 - Shipping rare and valuable items is a concern.

Planning: Accessibility

- Making the items accessible
 - What metadata scheme will you use?
 - Who will create the metadata records?
 - Are you going to catalogue the digital images differently than the originals?
 - How will you store the images?
 - How will you manage the images?
 - How will you provide access to the images?

Planning: Funding

- How is your project going to be funded?
 - Find funding within your institution
 - Is it guaranteed? And for how long?
 - Procure grant monies
 - What if you don't get the grant?
 - What happens when the funding ends?
 - Reduce costs through collaboration
 - Recoup some \$: provide high-quality copies for a price

What's This Going to Cost?

- Difficult to determine when not outsourcing
- Dependent on too many factors for each institution
 - Equipment you already own or need to buy
 - Staffing needs (including amount of chocolate needed to keep staff happy)
 - Condition/amount/type of material to digitize

Do test scans to see how much time it takes; use this

➡ to determine staffing needs

Document It

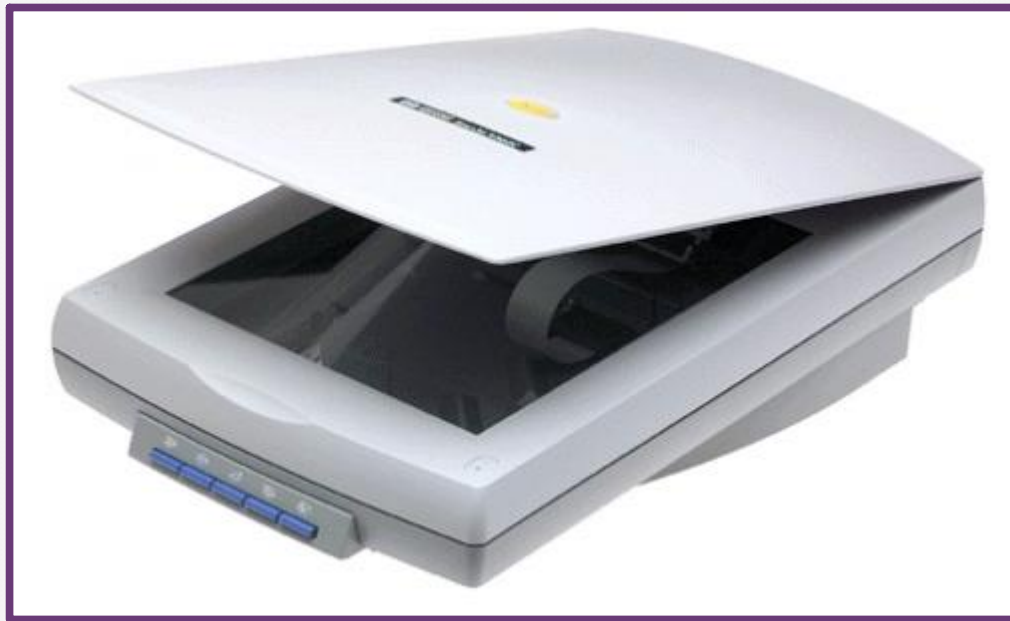
- Make sure you document all of your decisions throughout the **entire** project.
 - Easier to answer questions later
 - For others interested in learning the process
 - Template for future digitization projects in your own institution
- Print out your documentation

What Equipment Do You Need?

- First, determine the types of items you plan to digitize
 - Photos – are they color or black & white?
 - Text – do you have bound items?
 - Transparent media: slides, etc.?
 - Fragile items that need special care?
 - 3 dimensional items?
 - Audio and/or video?

Flatbed Scanners

- Usually the workhorse of scanning labs
- Some models able to scan up to 11" x 17"



Flatbed scanner

Other Scanners

- Film and slide scanners
 - Scan 35mm slides and film/negative strips
 - Batch-feeding mechanism available for many models – scan lots of slides automatically
- Wide-format scanners
 - Single-page, oversized items like maps & posters
- Planetary/overhead scanners
 - Good for fragile items
 - Expensive

Cameras

- Great for 3D items
- Cheaper alternative to planetary scanners
- Use in conjunction with copy stand (preferably lighted)
- Use 35mm to create slides and then scan slides, or use digital camera to capture
 - For digital cameras: make sure your camera can capture uncompressed images (like RAW or TIFF)

Other Needs

- Computer compatible with scanner/camera
- Software for image editing
- Storage for images (CDs for off-line master images; server for on-line access images)
- Appropriate and comfortable workspace
 - Secure storage for original materials
 - Ergonomic workstations
 - Lots of space around equipment
 - Lighting that can be turned off (for camera work)
- Content management system

Standards and Best Practices

- Capture once, use many times
 - Save master image as uncompressed TIFF – large image, high resolution
 - Create derivatives for online/other uses
 - Store master images off-line on CDs
- Resolution/bit depth of images: no one best rule
 - Many sources available as reference

Metadata

- Metadata provides access points and information about your images.
- Richard Urban will go into detail...

Final Thought

- DON'T THROW OUT YOUR ORIGINALS!
 - “Digital documents last forever—or five years, whichever comes first.”

- Jeff Rothenberg
 - There's more to the item than what a digital representation can show.
 - Scholars may still need the original for research...digital images aren't the real thing.