Visual Resources Software Users Discussion Group

Minutes

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Art Libraries Society of North America 29th Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA

submitted by:

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ATTENDANCE:

Norine Duncan (Brown University)
Paula Hardin (Univ. of North Carolina)
Sheryl Whilhite (Wellesley College)
Andrea Bailier Cox (Wellesley College)
Mark Pompeila (Rice University)
Meg Klinkow (Univ. of Chicago)
Leigh Gates (Art Institute of Chicago)
Eric Schwab (Cornell University)
Andrew Gessner (Columbia University)
Trish Rose (Indiana University)
Jennifer Johnson (Occidental College)
Pam Born (Tufts University)
Margaret Webster (Cornell University)
Linda McRae (University of South Florida)
Ann Whiteside (Harvard University)
Sonja Sturm-Kuniej (Herron Art Library, IUPUI)
Daphne Dufresne (University of Quebec at Montreal)
Carole Ann Fabian (University at Buffalo)
Irene Puchalski (University of Toronto)
Betsy Peck Learned (Roger Williams University)
Pedro A. Figueredo (University of Miami)
Trudy Jacoby (Trinity College, Hartford)
Cherry Wu (Harvard University)
Christine Sundt (University of Oregon)
Elisa Lanzi (Smith College)

MINUTES:

Meeting was convened by Norine Duncan (Brown University) at 10:30 AM

NEW BUSINESS:

Paula Hardin asked for an informal census of software currently being used in VR collections. Attendees reported the following applications in current use: FileMaker Pro, Galley Systems/Embark, MS Access, Multimymsy, VRMS.

Conference proposal forms for the joint ARLIS/VRA meeting in St. Louis are due May 1st, 2001.

It was proposed that the ARLIS and VRA software Users Discussion Groups meet jointly during the St. Louis conference. It was suggested that either discussion items be pre-identified and more focused, or multiple meetings be scheduled for a more productive and manageble session.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Scanning Priorities -- how are individuals prioritizing requests from patrons and administratively identified requests for scanning.
Paula Hardin reported problems in scanning every circulated slide, especially those signed-out by non-art faculty. Returned slides often need cleaning, retrospective conversion of slide records, data entry, remounting, and re-labeling. These additional tasks cause a workflow problem. She reported a need to include quality control measures into the digitization process, and suggest that to improve quality of scanned images, clean and scan "raw" film and then re-mount.

Trudy Jacoby suggests that faculty edit their slide lists for digitization based on future needs for study sets. She recommends outsourcing for scanning.

Christine Sundt suggests accounting for additional costs of digitization and web development in annual or project budgets.

Attendees noted that copy-stand work typically reflects faculty priorities and frequently represents non-commercially available images. Suggestions:

Unique items, those not likely to be available commercially within the foreseeable future, are the priority scannables rather than standard core image sets

Initiate direct-to-digital photography for new copy-stand orders

Scanning Targets: what standards are being observed for scanning targets?

Digital projectors are set to 1024 pixels, so digitized images should attempt to match that size. Suggested target: scan at 700 dpi from 35 mm slides for 1024 pixel output. Mark Pompelia suggested 2100 dpi scan for archival TIFF; he uses Debabelizer and ImageAccessPro for image compression and HTML creation as a batch process.

Linda McRae suggested that work-order forms specify intended use of digital image (Web or archival). She recommends low-resolution scans for the Web, archival quality scans for copy-stand images or purchase digital format from vendor; and hi-resolution scans for archival CD with lo-res derivatives for presentation and the Web.

Discussion of image permanence and changing standards for archival digital masters (currently: 18-20 MG archival standard.) Changes in hardware and software affect long-term readability; rescanning mandated by improving quality of digital technologies.

Conference Sessions: suggestions are welcome for ARLIS/VRA joint meeting sessions; proposals are due May 1st.

Attendees suggested a conference workshop on image scanning techniques, including multiple levels of expertise (beginner and intermediate.) It was suggested that Susan Jane Williams (Yale Univ.) be contacted for feedback on workshops held at VRA 2001. Ann Whiteside will take suggested digital imaging resources and include them on the VRA website http://www.VRAweb.org/.

Attendees suggested the following Web resources for image digitization:


Discussion on instructing faculty in use of digital images. Margaret Webster noted that problems of multiple technologies (network hardware, software, desktop configuration) require faculty to be instructed multiple times, and that needs include in-class demonstration and support, as well as assistance with hardware and software. Other reported on multiple strategies for addressing faculty technology learning needs including web-based tutorials and summer seminars.

Barcoding: what are current practices regarding the use of barcoding slides?

Images are barcoded primarily to track faculty and non-departmental uses of collection for circulation reports. Analysis of circulation stats assist in:

Collection development policies

Digitization prioritization

Cleaning prioritization

Weeding
Drawer arrangement

Andrea Bailey Cox volunteered to convene next year's Software Users Discussion Group.

Meeting was adjourned by Norine Duncan at 12:00 PM.