

The AIMS Project and approach

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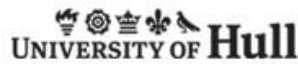
Simon Wilson, Digital Archivist (AIMS Project)

Exploring the AIMS approach

- Introduction to AIMS
- One outcome in development
- AIMS approach White Paper 'Functions for Stewardship'
- Collaboration and 'Unconferences'

The AIMS Project

- Two year project Oct 2009 – Oct 2011 funded by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
- Virginia (project lead), Hull, Stanford and Yale
- Funding provided a digital archivist at each site with a software developer based at UVa
- Core project team also included lead archivist at each site
- Collaboration with digital repository experts at most sites



The AIMS Project - objectives

- To process a total of 13 born-digital collections
- To use Hydra, a Fedora repository-based solution, which other institutions can freely and easily install and implement
- To research and disseminate methodology & lessons learned from real-world processing range of born-digital collections
- A white paper and good-practice guidelines

The AIMS Project - principles

- To use open-source software with a strong user community
- To use applicable standards eg OAIS, EAD etc
- To avoid re-inventing the wheel and to build upon best practice from other projects and initiatives
- To actively engage with colleagues already working with born-digital collections

Rationale – many cooks are better than one

- Inter-institutional collaboration, to produce inter-institutional results - relevant to broad audience
- Cross-departmental collaboration – creativity, innovation and improvement
- Starting from ‘paper-based’ archival principles, applying theory to specific collections as real case studies
- Application of the theoretical to ‘real’ scenarios does mean a much wider range of issues are considered

Commonality/differences

At the outset of the AIMS project

	Fedora repository	Born-digital collections	Collection Management System
Hull	✓	✗	CALM
Stanford	✓	✓	Archivist Toolkit
Yale	✗	✓	Archivist Toolkit
Virginia	✓	✓	Virgo (library system)

born-digital archives @ Hull University

- Collection development – accepting born-digital material

	Quantity	Media	Content
Stephen Gallagher	14,320 files (13.6GB)	- Via external drive - 39 Amstrad disks	<i>FinalDraft</i> specialist screenwriter software
Socialist Health Association	2558 files (670MB)	- Via USB pen drive	3 rd party content & copyright etc
Organisation X	n/a	n/a	n/a
Other born-digital deposits	18,761 files (18.4GB)	- Via external drive	

born-digital archives @ Hull University

- Organisation X
 - Deposited large paper-based archive, not yet ready to consider transferring born-digital material
 - Need to build trust around confidentiality & IPR
 - Also lack of perception of born-digital as ‘archives’

Retrospective survey

- Review existing collections to “find” born-digital material that had already been deposited amongst paper archives
- Same principles and processes apply, but the smaller volume makes it manageable and a good place to start
- Opportunity to learn from knowledge and experience of other AIMS project partners

AIMS approach: development of Hypatia

- Identified requirement for an open-source tool for the Arrangement & Description of born-digital material
- How to define 'Arrangement' in a born-digital context
- Existing tools which have potential for development
- Scope and functional requirements of tool

Hypatia – defining the requirements

- Defined and refined by Digital Archivists (GoogleDocs)
 - considered aspects like GUI, import/export of EAD, technical and descriptive metadata, representation of intellectual arrangement, rights and restrictions, viewing files, reporting, appraisal

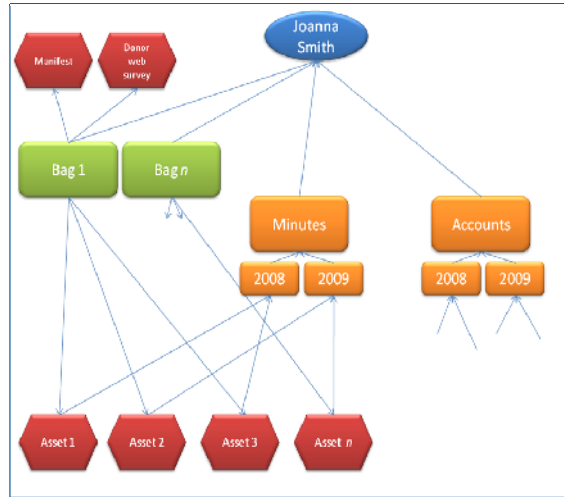
- User stories for developers to understand more clearly

Grimace is an archivist for the McDonaldland City Archives. He needs a report containing counts of all the different types of files in RG 12/4/2009, the Mayor McCheese records. He doesn't need to know where each file falls in the collection hierarchy. He also needs an approximate calculation of the total size of the record group. He needs to share this information with H.M. Burglar, the IT director for the City of McDonaldland.

Hypatia: blue sky thinking

Fedora

- uses relationships between assets
- parent/child relationship will be familiar to us all
- create & capture the intellectual arrangement



Hypatia – mock-up (for the developers)



The AIMS Approach

Functions for Stewardship	Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Collection development •Accessioning •Arrangement & Description •Discovery & Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>Definition,</i> •<i>Key factors, pre-requisites</i> •<i>Objectives, outcomes</i> •<i>Tasks, decision points</i>
<p>Preservation – represented in decision points</p>	<p><i>Generic – not based on specific software or environment</i></p>

Functions for Stewardship:

- Definition: scope, relationship with other sections
- Key differences between paper & born-digital
 - principles involved,
 - different implications
- Objectives of section as a whole
- Key factors crucial to success

Functions for Stewardship

- Pre-requisites for embarking on workflow
 - (eg policy framework, technical infrastructure).
- Individual tasks, with objectives and outcomes
- Key decision points,
 - decisions to make at this stage
 - decisions that you may have had to make at an earlier stage
 - implications of decisions made now, for later stages

Digital Archivist community

- AIMS objective to build Digital Archivists' Community
 - USA – building networks
 - UK – network exists, more engagement & collaboration
- Range of institutions, environments, collections, users, resources
- Wide awareness of issues, range of development, pilots & possible solutions
- Discussion, knowledge exchange – blogs are very effective
- Shared development? Collaborative testing?

Born-digital archives – direction of travel

- Key theme at un-conference - move away from a **specialist service** practiced by a few *digital* archivists to being the **normal service** practiced by all archivists
 - similar path to that taken by ICT, no-longer ‘specialist’ but core
 - in UK majority of activity is in national institutions and universities – reflecting scale of “challenge” faced and availability of funding
- Formation of the International Curation Education (ICE) Forum - act as link between practitioners and educators

Born-digital archives – dissemination models

- *DPC Roadshows* demonstrate the high level of interest in digital preservation awareness and training
 - is not and will never be a “one solution fits all”
- How useful is the ‘un-conference’ style / approach?
 - Broad scope for the day, not focus on ‘single subject’
 - Unstructured, discursive
- Is there potential this as a methodology – to enable and include wider range of institutions?

Format of the day

- Two speakers will present brief positions relating to an element of the workflow at their institution
 - present both back to back
 - opportunity for 1 or 2 questions for the speakers
- Remainder of the time – and focus for the day – is for exchange of experiences, knowledge, ideas, etc
 - we will take notes of the discussion & post onto the wiki – flag anything not for sharing beyond this room