Spotlight on Published Collections

The explosion of digital forms of scholarship has led to a great increase in the variety and amount of materials that need support. Whether it is to support the full spectrum of faculty scholarship, to present special collections, or to house campus documents, libraries are looking for dynamic solutions to preserve and showcase unique and scholarly collections. Optimized for discovery, Digital Commons helps schools and libraries increase access to these collections and to showcase them in ways that maximize user engagement. This document summarizes some of the major concerns for libraries hosting collections and presents an overview of what Digital Commons can offer.

Engaging Ways to Discover Collections

One factor in the appeal that published collections have for broad audiences is that they are often composed of hybrid objects -- papers, images, audio and video files, ephemera. This variety also poses some of the biggest challenges for librarians and collection authors. Digital Commons gives libraries and collection authors a great deal of flexibility in organizing materials so that the collection can tell its own story most effectively.

- A publishing platform rather than a database, Digital Commons allows collection authors to focus on the most relevant materials, rather than what is most recent (as is the case with most archival platforms). See, for example, the Maine Song and Story Sampler, The Community Within: Knox County Black History Archives, and Butler Family Letters
- Our community/series structures allow you to mimic the organization of your school, your center, an existing archive, or to organize materials by content type
- Design options like banners, slide shows and book galleries allow collections to be experienced as online exhibits
- Multiple ways to link to related materials

Solutions for Multimedia and Interactive Content

Digital Commons continues to develop features to support the explosion of interest in hosting multimedia content. We also integrate with third-party services like Embedly and Google Maps to provide engaging ways of discovering content. Here are some examples of what you can do with multimedia and interactive content on Digital Commons:

- Pan and zoom for image galleries
- Streaming audio and video (via campus streaming servers, or services such as Soundcloud, Vimeo and Youtube)
- Geolocation
- Timelines
- Embedded comments
- 3-D viewers
- Flippy page readers through services such as ISSUU and FlippingBook and Internet Archive's e-reader

Meeting Preservation and Archival Needs

Digital Commons enables libraries to showcase collections effectively while also maintaining archival standards necessary for long-term preservation. Here's what you can expect:

- Flexible Metadata: Users can tailor metadata fields and include as many or as few as are required for their collections
- Search: With our latest system upgrade, users can now search custom metadata fields as well as standard ones
- Batch upload and batch revise features allow libraries to efficiently add and revise information on large collections
- Best practices for working with other platforms: Whether you want to integrate with another platform, or want to migrate your content from it, we can offer you numerous examples and advice from other schools
- Preservation: Your content is stored in triplicate on our servers and monthly backups are sent to a third-party archival service. You can also sign up at no cost for our quarterly content deliveries which sends all published metadata and full texts. Digital Commons is also LOCKSS compliant and subscribers can form private LOCKSS networks to back each other's content for long-term preservation.