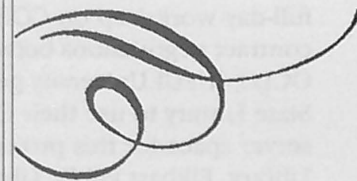


INDIANA MEMORY: THE MAKING OF A STATWIDE DIGITAL LIBRARY

by Connie Rendfeld



WHAT IS INDIANA MEMORY?

Indiana Memory is a statewide collaborative effort to provide access to the wealth of primary sources found in Indiana libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural institutions. Guidelines for digital imaging projects based on national standards have been created and made available to organizations digitizing collection items. Indiana Memory provides a way for local organizations to create and provide access to their collections by making content management software and Web server space available. Indiana Memory is also a Web portal, providing access to Indiana's history and culture as found in digitized books, manuscripts, photographs, newspapers, maps, audio, video, and other resources.

DESIGNED FOR COLLABORATION

In December of 2003, the Indiana State Library convened the Indiana Digital Library Summit. The goal was to bring together representatives from all types of Indiana libraries, as well as archives, historical societies, and allied cultural organizations. The purpose was to begin a discussion on how those groups can work together on the common issue of digitizing unique Indiana resources. Representatives from fourteen organizations attended. The outcome from the meeting was a stronger determination to develop an Indiana Digital Library.

The Indiana State Library was encouraged to take a leadership role in the creation of the Indiana Digital Library. Working groups were formed to investigate various topics identified at the Summit, including standards for digitization, infrastructure requirements, and copyright. The LSTA mini-grant program for digitization projects became a vehicle for the creation of the digital library. Applicants were encouraged to collaborate with other cultural institutions to digitize materials with a statewide historical significance.

An Indiana Digital Library Summit was held in the summer of 2005 to discuss the current digitization initiatives. Two ideas at this meeting became the focus for Indiana Memory. The first idea centered on the

creation of a portal page for Indiana digitization projects, with the objective to have the variety of materials that have been digitized in Indiana gathered together in one location to allow easy public access.

The second idea was based on the realization that Indiana libraries and cultural organizations needed assistance with creating and providing online access to their digital collections. Meeting participants discussed ideas for providing an infrastructure for collection management in a collaborative manner. The content management software CONTENTdm® was recommended. As a result, the Indiana State Library began negotiations for an unlimited CONTENTdm® license with OCLC with the intent of offering the software to libraries for their digitization projects.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM CREATED

Once the decision was made to provide CONTENTdm® as the collection management software, the Indiana State Library began work on the implementation. Robin Crumrin, Director of Digital Initiatives at IUPUI University Library, joined the staff of the Indiana State Library during a ten-month sabbatical beginning in August of 2006. OCLC provided the services of Laurie Gemmill, Implementation Services Manager, to assist with the planning process.

At this time, the State Library created the Indiana Digital Library Advisory Board with representation from various public and academic libraries, the Indiana Historical Society, and the Association of Indiana Museums, as well as other state agencies with an interest in this project. The Board played an active role in providing oversight for the implementation team. Monthly reporting to the Board kept the project moving forward and key documents developed at this time, including guidelines for scanning and metadata creation and the collection development policy, received Board input and approval.

Beta testing began late in 2006. The implementation team selected five institutions to be beta testers. The Indiana State Library, Indiana State Archives, Culver Union Township Public Library, Elkhart Public Library,

and a collaboration of the Starke County Public Library and the Starke County Historical Society were selected to create test collections using CONTENTdm®. Representatives from each of these organizations attended a full-day workshop on CONTENTdm. Due to lengthy contract negotiations between the State of Indiana and OCLC, IUPUI University generously allowed the Indiana State Library to use their CONTENTdm® license and server space for this project. In the end, the State Library, Elkhart Public Library, and the Starke County collaboration were successful in creating collections and the experience allowed State Library staff to better understand the challenges and benefits of using CONTENTdm®. After the contract was finalized, OCLC was able to move the collections of the beta testers from IUPUI to the Indiana State Library server.

LIBRARIES BEGIN USING CONTENTDM

The Indiana State Library offered CONTENTdm® to libraries for their digitization projects for the first time with the 2007 LSTA Digitization Grants. Eleven digitization grants were awarded totaling \$150,000. Five of the grantees chose to use the State Library's CONTENTdm® license. The project staffs of the grantees were invited to a one-day workshop on basic digitization practices and an introduction to the software. The Acquisition Station software was then installed locally allowing them access to the Indiana Memory server.

In July 2007, the Indiana State Library offered the CONTENTdm® software to libraries without grant funds. Three libraries applied, and their digital projects were approved.

In addition to the individual projects, the Indiana State Library is working on a statewide project to digitize county histories. The goal is to have each county represented online and to encourage local organizations to participate. State Library staff, with the assistance of the Indiana Historical Society, identified a list of books to be digitized and the county histories will be available on Indiana Memory by the end of 2008.

INDIANA MEMORY AS A WEB PORTAL

While work was progressing with establishing an infrastructure for libraries to use creating digital collections, the Indiana State Library was also developing the Web portal to provide easy access to these collections. The idea to create a single resource to Indiana's history and culture was part of the vision of the initial Digital Summit. The proposed portal needed to provide seamless searching across all of the collections while maintaining the identity of the individual collection. The answer was found in the CONTENTdm® Multi-Site Server from OCLC.

In addition to the Indiana State Library, several public and academic libraries in Indiana are creating and maintaining digital collections on CONTENTdm® servers and it is essential to provide access to these collections. The Indiana Memory interface is able to provide easy searching across multiple servers using the Multi-Site Server. Collection metadata is gathered and combined into a single index, providing quick search times. When a search is completed items matching the search parameters are retrieved from multiple servers and displayed in a single user interface. When the user clicks on an individual item, he is taken to the remote server of the hosting institution.

In the fall of 2007 work began in earnest on developing the Indiana Memory Web interface. A designer was contacted, and State Library staff began identifying digital collections that met the established standards. Libraries were contacted asking for permission to include those collections and requesting suggestions for additional collections. In all, the metadata from fifty-five individual collections located on eight separate servers was collected and indexed.

The Indiana Memory Web interface is designed to provide multiple access points to the digital collections. The user has the ability to search across all collections, just one collection, or select the collections that are of interest. A selection of pre-determined subject searches is also available on the home page. Because the initial searches are done from the indexed metadata, results are quickly available. When the user selects an item, he or she is then taken to the host server to view the display image and full metadata record.

Indiana Memory offers contributing institutions an opportunity to be part of the state wide project and adds additional access points to their digital collections. Contributing institutions are able to maintain their local identity and many institutions have created special search interfaces that are not affected by the Indiana Memory software.

CONTINUES TO GROW

Indiana Memory is constantly evolving and has barely begun to tap into the rich resources available in the archives, historical societies, and museums across the state. The items in Indiana Memory represent only a small percentage of the materials held by the contributing institutions. Digital resources are continuing to appear, providing access to a variety of unique historical resources not previously available.

Indiana Memory is made possible in part through grant funding from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to the Indiana State Library under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act. It also relies heavily on the cooperation of individual

organizations that undertake digitization projects and make their resources available online.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Connie Rendfeld is the Digital Initiatives Librarian for the Indiana State Library and is responsible for the development of Indiana Memory and the digitization of the State Library's collections. She also oversees the LSTA digitization grant program. Prior to working at the State Library, she was Associate Director of Local History Services at the Indiana Historical Society, where she provided professional development assistance to local historical organizations across the state. Connie is a graduate of the Archival Administration program offered by Case Western Reserve University and holds a Master in Library Science and American Studies. For more information about how your institution can participate, contact Connie Rendfeld at crendfeld@library.IN.gov

