Gathering History: Collaboration and the National Digital Newspaper Program

NATIONAL ENDOOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
and LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
Historic Newspapers Landscape

- Content available in many formats, varying condition and access
  - Paper, Microfilm, Digital
- 140,096 U.S. newspapers published 1690-present
  (5541 newspapers published in Texas)

- Historic newspapers digitized and available from a variety of sources
  - Commercial database publishers (ProQuest, Gale, Newsbank, Google, Ancestry, NewspaperArchive…)
  - Commercial publishers’ archives
  - Individual cultural heritage institutions (small, medium, and large)
  - Collaborative programs like NDNP or Texas Portal to History
Features of Collaboration

- Partnerships
- Shared goals and expectations
- Shared practices
- Shared benefits
The Electric Is the Car
of Elegance, Convenience, and Economy

Simplicity of Operation is a characteristic of the electric automobile. It requires no knowledge of mechanics. No cranking. No frequent adjusting of parts. A child can do it.

Safety. The electric should not be overlooked. No danger of explosion. No runaways. Always under perfect control.

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Convenience. No other vehicle can be as convenient as an electric. The batteries can be charged while the owner is asleep, and the car is ready for instant use all the rest of the twenty-four hours.

Economy. Both in point of upkeep and operation the electric is most economical.

Appearance. The designs of electric pleasure vehicles are truly artistic, and they should be so, for the manufacturer when designing his car does not have to consider a lot of cumbersome, dirty machinery.

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Working with Newspapers

- Newspapers
  - fundamentals of history
- Broad user-base
  - so many disciplines – political historians, economists, genealogists, fashion…
- High demand for access
  - onsite, loan, online
- No single U.S. collection
  - national, research, state, local
- Newspaper format challenges
  - paper/microfilm, layout
- LOTS OF IT!
  - 140k titles known
The first collaboration – US Newspaper Program

Partnerships:
- NEH, LC, State Awardees, Partners within States

Shared Goals:
- To locate, catalog, and preserve on microfilm newspapers published in the United States from the eighteenth century to the present.

Shared Practices:
- 1984-2010, funded projects in 50 states, 2 territories, 8 national repositories

Benefits of Collaboration:
- Partnerships in all states
- 140,000 titles cataloged through CONSER according to USNP cataloging rules
- OCLC WorldCat provides access to CONSER records plus 900,000 holding records created by projects
- more than 75 million pages filmed under according to standard practices
Now…the National Digital Newspaper Program

Partnerships:
- NEH, LC, State Awardees (Partners within States)

Shared Goals:
- To enhance access to historic American newspapers
- To develop best practices for the digitization of historic newspapers
- To apply emerging technologies to the products of USNP (United States Newspaper Program, 1984-2010)
  - Microfilmed Content
  - Newspaper Union List (Catalogue)
  - Partnerships
Now…the National Digital Newspaper Program

Shared Practices:
- Imaging, Metadata, File Formats, Searchable Text
- Selection, Tools, Experiences

Shared Benefits:
- Aggregating a national collection of historically significant content, selected by states
- Providing free basic access to lots of content, geographic diversity, full timeline
- Getting the most benefit out of limited resources
- Establishing uniform digitization practices
- Extending good digital library management practices – data management, preservation, access
- Developing “Community of Practice” around digitization of historic newspapers
>3.3 million pages
- 1860-1922
- 439 titles from 22 states and DC
- [http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/)

**Coming Soon:**
- States added in 2010 (New Mexico, Tennessee, Vermont)
- Newspapers from 1836-1859
- New awards announced July 2011.
Beyond NDNP – Benefits of Collaboration

- Reuse of NDNP assets in many state digital libraries
  - California Newspaper Program - http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cdnc
  - University of Hawai‘I - http://evols.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10524/22
  - Kentuckiana Digital Library - http://kdl.kyvl.org/cgi/t/text/text-idx?xg=0;page=simple:g=news
  - Utah Digital Newspapers - http://digitalnewspapers.org/
  - Portal to Texas History - http://texashistory.unt.edu/search/?q=&t=dc_title&fq=dc_type%3Atext_newspaper

- Data specifications in use beyond NDNP
  - Texas Digital Newspaper Program
    - e.g., Best Practices in Digitization - http://tdnp.unt.edu/standards/
  - National Libraries - METS/ALTO used in
    - UK, France, Australia, New Zealand, Austria, Norway, Slovenia, Slovak Republic …
Beyond NDNP – Benefits of Collaboration

- Open Data Access
  - Linked data and API access to Chronicling America, [http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/about/api/](http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/about/api/)
    - RDF/XML views available to Open Archives Initiative Object Reuse and Exchange (OAI-ORE) repository tools
    - OpenSearch and Atom APIs for search queries
    - Bookmarkable URIs for all pages
  - Open Search API
    - e.g., Montana Historical Newspapers - [http://montanahistoricalsociety.org/research/MTMemoryProj.asp](http://montanahistoricalsociety.org/research/MTMemoryProj.asp)

- Open-Source Software Development –
    - LC Newspaper Viewer in Action
      - e.g., Oregon Historical Newspapers - [http://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/](http://oregonnews.uoregon.edu/)
      - Other awardees and interested parties working on software development collaboration through SourceForge
In Summary…

- Collaboration in Digitizing Newspapers leads to:
  - Making the most of limited resources
  - Extending practices beyond the actual program
  - Learning from each other’s experiences
  - Building new tools together and in the same direction
  - Improved access to more historic newspapers and new discoveries
Thank you!

- NDNP Public Web
  http://www.loc.gov/ndnp/

- NDNP Web Service
  Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers
  http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov

- Contact us at ndnptech@loc.gov