Letterform Archive Assessment + Strategic Plan, 5 Year Plan.

Statement of preservation

Collection Area: Digital Collection

The Letterform Archive aims to capture high-fidelity digitization of the objects in the collection, and aims to provide an online archive designed for designers. The main goal of the archive is digitizing the full physical collection of 60,000 objects and providing that the digitization of these objects and having the metadata and vocabulary be familiar for these designers. This also continues into our digitization process of meticulosity photographing the objects and never doing scans, allowing for high resolution photos that capture detail and texture's of paper and ink, and could capture the relief of letterpress or engraved printing.

With the proposal of this 5-year plan the Letterform archive aims to expand our collection to digitally born content including, fonts, EPUB files, working design files (e.g., Figma mockups), PDFs, software, audiovisual files, and websites. We hope to have fully digitized and preserved around 2,500 of these objects by 5 years, as we compare it to our current progress of our digital collection where we have averaged around 500 objects digitized to our required detailed level each year. [Based on the updates given by the online collection.]

We continue fleshing out vocabularies and building resources to be more inclusive and expansive for our collection. Our vocabulary started at a higher-level and now we are refining these higher level categories for more specificity. We also hold our non-traditional stance in describing archival material, as we do our best to describe the archives at item level instead of at box or folder level. This allows us to link items that relate with unique metadata and can show the process from these items like sketch to final through our online archive.

We continue to use our unique cataloging standard with the emphasis on designers.

- Standard built from VRA Core and MARC Cataloging standard,

At the current point of Digitization the collection has 3,500 objects available on the public archive, as it is important to focus on key aspects of each object as we it serves important not only for designers but also online research.

We will create a preservation and metadata standard that meets our standards of designing for designers with our newly acquired digitally-born objects. This will also include new methods of storage and descriptive information.

The enduring goal is to describe our material in the way graphic designers, calligraphers, lettering artists, and type designers would look for it.

(“About Letterform Archive,” n.d.)

Budget Considerations

When looking at the 990, we can see by looking at the overall revenue and the stated expenses we can see how the Grant of 350k can be use. Focusing on the 350K and using it for the basis of the budget for further development of the digitization and preservation of the archive, here is a proposed consideration of the budget as based on our current division.

54% For Salaries and Wages

34.9% Right of Use

4.2% Equipment

2.3% Program Expense

0.5% Staff Development

2.4% Information Technology.

The Additional 75K and left over money from the budget can be used to further add to new technology and program use, as well as adding to staff development in these new tools and providing specific information technology that can better aid our goal of preservation.

(Roberts, 2013)

Staff development and Stakeholders

Current Staff

Stephen “Stewf” Coles, Associate Curator & Editorial Director, 'As a member of the curatorial team, Stephen helps shape the future of the collection'

sair goetz, Senior Collections Metadata Associate, 'At the Archive, sair works on Collections Metadata' would be describing the collection.

Kate Long Stellar, Collections Director, 'Kate leads the collections department, helped launch our Online Archive, and serves on the Archive’s curatorial team.'

Jada Haynes, Collections Associate 'hands-on work at Letterform Archive — organizing, processing, and housing the collection.'

Ellis Martin, Digitization Archivist, 'At the Archive, Ellis images the collection and coordinates rights and reproductions requests.'

Eve Scarborough, Digitization Associate, 'Presently, Eve assists with ongoing systematic digitization, imaging ephemera, process work, and more'

Paola Zanol, Collections and Preservation Manager, Maintained and preserved the digital and physical collection.

Stakeholders would include other Graphic Designers, Calligraphers, Researchers, Lettering Artists, Students, and other types of Designers. Linked by Air and Tobias Frere-Jones are also stakeholders.

There is room in the budget* to hire four additional full-time Digitization Archivists, this would help in our goal of digitization of the whole collection. This would also leave an additional 23K in the budget which could be potentially used for a part-time Digitization Archivist. This could also be used to hire a specialist in creating new preservation methods for specific types of our digitally-born objects,

*(If we use a yearly pay of 41,500 for each, [Note: this is a guesstimate from the information of the 990 removing the top paid people and dividing it by the number of employees with them removed, this number could actually be higher or lower. Due to living quality of location it would be wise to estimate that the yearly pay would be higher in the 75-100K range and would limit the amount of new hires] this additional budget would be from the 54% of the 350k)

(“About Letterform Archive,” n.d.; Roberts, 2013)

Collection Management

VRA Core & Marc are used as the basis for a customized cataloging standard that best fit the need for providing for designers. Metadata language has also been developed as custom vocabulary has been created to better serve our users needs, this vocabulary is still being added to and worked on as it the specificity of the vocab is currently being worked on.

Following OAIS and DCC Curation Life cycle for Digital Online Collection as reference models for our online collection. This includes but is not limited to the digitization of physical objects and their ingest, digital preservation, archival storage and data management.

For Ingest, The Current objects will be continue to be photographed using the custom photography standards made by E. M.Ginger which includes using and creating,

- Raking Light
- High Resolution Files (IIQ/RAW)
- Premium Camera Equipment
- Sensitive Staging for each object

This will then create a IIQ, TIFF, JPG Files for each digital object. The Filing Process of these images will be,

- Objects first photographed in RAW format, Phase One Camera
- Results exported and processed as TIFFS with layers preserved to allow color corrections and other adjustments
- Cropped and output as Web-ready JPGS in the two different sizes.

Using Bit stream Preservation alongside our current archival storage practices.

Producing and storing LOCKSS for all files and content of each digital object.

Creating a DAR, which will help in centralizing the data of the collection in one location, and providing information for the ingesting and processing of our digital-born content.

Using long-term preservation methods on the online collection including

- Virus Scans
- File Transfers
- Integrity Checks
- File Backups

- File Format Identification
- Creation and Review of Metadata
- Preservation (Bit-level or Migration when needed)
- Secure Storage
- Retrievability & Accessibility
- Ongoing Maintenance of Hardware, Software, & Operating Systems.

These Preservation methods would be implemented using various software systems such as MD5, and Checksum by Corz.

For specific management of our born-digital content will include,

The Creation of new Software preservation similar to our creation of customized ingest, and cataloging standard. This will be in aims to preserve and represent these digital-born objects in the same way we do for our physical and digitized objects, designed for designers to use and be familiar with and also be of the highest quality so that it can be used by the community like our current collections. Due to this there will be a mixture of migration and emulation used depending on how it best suits the archive and the object.

SPOT model to be used in risk assessment of the new digital-born objects, this could also be used on our current digital online collection.

The management of this new collection will follow our current levels of preservation.

[NDSA Levels of current online archive observed

Storage: Mix of level 1 and 2, due to my lack of access and knowledge of their current storage system.

Integrity: Mix of level 1 and 2, due to my lack of access or knowledge into the current systems of detection and how the archive preserves there items in terms of integrity.

Both of the above will be aimed to be a level 3 in this hypothetical.

Control: Mix of 3 and 4, as I can not confirm their maintenance or performance reviews/access logs.

Metadata: Level 4

Content: Mix of Level 3 and 4, as unsure of the archives systems of monitoring or migrations as it is not noted.]

(Fu, 2018, 2019, 2020; “The Online Archive,” n.d.)

Software Systems

VRA Core & MARC are used to make a version of new cataloging standards that better fit for designers.

Custom Extension and UI by Murray Grigo-McMahon

Custom App written by Nick Webster

Custom Photography Standards by E. M. Ginger

IIQ, TIFF, JPG Files for each digital object.

- IIQ: proprietary Camera, RAW form created by Phase One, 12,00PX 100-200MB
- TIFF: Layers preserved to allow adjustments for printing purposes, 12,000PX 1-2GB
- JPG: Regular and Thumbnail sizes, Web-ready for the Online Archive, Regular 3,000PX 1-2MB, Thumbnail 800PX 50-150KB

File Process

- Objects first photographed in RAW format, Phase One Camera
- Results exported and processed as TIFFS with layers preserved to allow color corrections and other adjustments
- Cropped and output as Web-ready JPGS in the two different sizes.

Allows for Digital Images to be sharable with Archive Publications, Social Media, and Online Archive.

I would recommend adopting some other systems such as MD5 for checksum, as it will do integrity checks and detect changes in the file which can help us be alerted to data corruption or loss. Checksum by Corz will also assist in this as it will Verify the MD5 hatch and will be able to generate checksum and checking fixity.

Digital Asset Registration (DAR), as it can help facilitate management of preservation of digital content and provide high level summary's used to guide the preservation decisions. It will also help centralize the data in one location, and provide info for planning ingestion and processing of the digital objects.

Implement Bit-stream Preservation for the digital files created for each digital object, as it can be one of the systems for protection and preservation.

Have LOCKSS of the initial files and file process and of the metadata created for each object.

New systems created specifically for our new digitally-born objects in the archive.

New software Housing and preserving our new file formats including, WARC, Matroska, EVI Files, PDFS, and WACZ files.

Referencing systems for this like may include sites like,

- Archive-it, Archiveweb.page
- Linux

(“The Online Archive,” n.d.)

Access

Letterform Archive generally does not hold the copyright to the works within its collection because there are access rights that are being paid for digitization of the objects being digitized. We endeavor to properly credit and contextualize all the work we reproduce on our websites, where images are used solely for nonprofit educational purposes.

There are no restrictions for different staff and volunteers when digitizing the collection currently.

Accessibility is core as the archive is designed for designers to have familiar understanding when looking at the objects and metadata, this is aided by the cataloging system of metadata and the description of metadata using specific language curated to be for designers.

Proposed Workflow

Looking at a new work flow for or digital-born objects we can look at ones for website archiving,

Planning-Selection-Permissions-Capture-Description-Access

This workflow will follow our already created guidelines for our collection with new guidelines that best work for each type of object.

Planning

We will have to consider new approaches to certain objects such as planning what pages will want to be captured in regards to websites, or what fonts will want to be preserved if not all of them. Each new type of object may require new specific planning in this regard but this step may not be required for all.

Selection

The selection, unlike traditional one, will be focused on our core aim of the archive as mentioned and due to this will reflect designers when selecting what to preserve and ingest.

Permission

As with our other collections we will strive to attain permission for the use of all objects and contributing to pay for rights of use with objects, will also apply our current strategy of access with our collections in terms of reproduction and public access. All objects will be labeled holder and copyright information.

Capture

There will be different types of capture for each type of object, such as having specific systems for capturing images and data of the object.

Example of capture with Websites

- Start with a Webcrawler (Assuming as with other systems it will be tailored and made for the archive)
- Metadata added to this crawl
- Creation of a WARC File
- Using our own created technology (inspired by Archive-it) we will be able to replay the WARC file
- Possibly make a WACZ file along side this captures it is more portable
- Ensuring Quality of the capture throughout.

Migration and Emulation are two ways that we could capture our objects but each object will need to be considered how best to be captured and as such may be differ from other objects of similar type.

Description

We will continue to use are current level of description and aim to achieve the highest level of detail when creating metadata for each object. This will extend to our custom vocabulary in cataloging and continue our current addition to the vocabulary by adding lexicons that better reflect these digital objects that align with our community.

Access

Depending on permissions and copyright we will provide access to the archived material in a similar if not the same as our current digital collection. For items that are not able to be shown this way will have bibliographic records for all archived websites publicly accessible.

We will have our objects be of the same accessibility as our current digital archive.

(Bolton et al., n.d., n.d.; Fu, 2018, 2019, 2020)

All Information on the Letterform Archive was obtained from the Letterform Archive originally linked in the assignment. All other additional information such as systems to use and applications was obtained from the classroom modules and lectures.

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