Applying “More Product, Less Process” to Digital Collections

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Library Technology Conference
March 19, 2014
Applying MPLP to Digital Collections

PRESIDENTIAL PAPERS
DIGITIZATION PROJECT

- Background
- Beginnings
- Breakthrough
Presidential Papers Digitization Project

**BACKGROUND**

- Unsolicited funding from donor
- Access restricted to on-site Archives users
- Correspondence of first president completed
  - Selection and metadata not done by archivists
  - Primarily individual letters or short exchanges
  - Not very user friendly
Beginnings — Considerations

- Remove access restrictions

- Description
  - Letters described primarily collectively
  - Speeches, reports, etc. described primarily at item level

- Process collections in conjunction with digitization
Presidential Papers Digitization Project

BEGINNINGS — CHALLENGES

- Need to show progress to funder
- Online collections structured by document type, not by president
- Correspondence presented collectively, but still described individually
- Disconnect between processing and digitization
BREAKTHROUGH — ARRANGEMENT

- Digital selection easier if collection already processed
- Match physical and online arrangement
  - One folder —> one digital object
  - Provide context through linking
- Use structure of online object for usability of large groups of documents
Presidential Papers Digitization Project

BREAKTHROUGH — DOCUMENT TYPES

Correspondence: collective approach

- Single letters not usually meaningful
- Folder-level collections place individual letters in context

- Structure of compound object provides overall snapshot and enhances navigation
  - Chronological arrangement: easy to decipher; doesn't impose interpretation
Breakthrough — Document Types

Speeches and reports: mixed approach

- Detailed descriptions not necessary

- Individual approach
  - Major papers or lectures that stand on their own
  - Reports with many appendices

- Collective approach
  - Repeat occasions
  - Created collections
  - Cohesive theme
BREAKTHROUGH — DESCRIPTION

- Full-text searching decreases need for metadata

- Metadata primarily at object level
  - Enter minimal number of fields manually
  - Include only general topics and notable people/places
  - Detailed physical description not critical

- Item-level metadata only for title and date
Breakthrough — Metadata Workflow

- Arrangement based on physical collection enhances workflow
  - Streamlines metadata creation
  - Enables reuse of information from finding aid

- Minimal processing encourages consistency by narrowing the focus of description
Presidential Papers Digitization Project

Antonius Kennelly Papers

HTTP://CONTENTDM.STKATE.EDU/CDM/LANDINGPAGE/COLLECTION/P16770COLL2

HTTP://LIBRARY.STKATE.EDU/ARCHIVES/PRES-SAKFA
Digitization requires more thorough processing

- Arrange correspondence in chronological order

- Exclusion of sensitive documents
  - Need to separate professional & personal correspondence
  - Personnel-related correspondence not digitized
  - Personal correspondence not digitized
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