DIGITISATION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Presentation to DISA Workshop

Digital Resource Management: From Data to Knowledge

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Africa Media Online is about “Africans telling Africa’s Story”
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We have created “a digital trade route”
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- Train and Consult
- Digitise Collections
- Create Online Systems
- Market Digitised Collections
African Image Pipeline Project
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• Partially Funded by the European Union through Gijima KZN, part of the Department of Economic Development, in partnership with the Digitise Africa Trust and with the official backing of the National Heritage Council
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- Ahead of 2010, digitise 24,000 images from 36 different collections around the country including Iziko, Natal Museum, NFI, SAN Parks, McGregor Museum, Cory Library, Fort Hare and others.
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9. Need systematic back ups
10. Need to make the work accessible in a secure, controlled manner
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DM2000072634:SAED:SOCIAL:MAR1952
- Mr Drum, Get Ready Durban He Is Coming Your Way - Mr congratulates one of the happy winners of the $ prize. Photograph taken in Sophiatown. Luckiest man in Alexandra! Mr Kingdom Xaba, of 163, 9th Avenue, Alexandra, seen when he had just been presented with Mr Drum's $ note. Although he is not married, Mr Xaba says he will not buy a wife with his lucky money! (Photograph by Jurgen Schaderberg Bailesys Archives)

Jpeg size: 2150.40 KB
Uncompressed size: 28.27 MB
Dimension: 1920x1930 px
Model Release: No
Property Release: No
Keywords: square, black and white image, 1950s, South Africa, advertising & public relations, publicity, 1952, Africa, Drum, township, staff, launch, black African people, March

Restrictions: Unless specifically stated this image does NOT have all model and property releases. Additional clearance is required for non-editorial use and for use in association with socially sensitive subject matter.

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1. Digitise images primarily for access purposes

- Preservation standards
  - Negatives and transparencies @ 16 bit, target file size between 120 and 140 MB, RGB colour space, Adobe 1998 colour profile
  - Prints @ 16 bit, physical dimensions at between 300 and 600 dpi depending on size, RGB colour space, Adobe 1998 colour profile

- Preservation is primarily in minimizing handling
- Primarily for Access, therefore, digitise appropriately
2. Degree of difficulty increases with file size, number of images, speed and tightness of budget

- File size
- Number of images
- Speed
- Budget
3. Need the right people involved

- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Attention to Detail
- Passion for and understanding of Images
4. Need the right equipment

- Scanners - horses for courses
- Powerful computers - loads of RAM and dedicated to different tasks
- Fast network - 1 GB
- Terrabytes of storage - external hard drives, tape drives, DVDs
- Software - Microsoft Expression Media 2, Adobe Photoshop CS4 Bridge, Adobe Photoshop CS4, Chronosync
5. Need a Clear Workflow

- Chaos is frighteningly easy to create, order takes work to maintain
- Check everything in at the start of the process and order it clearly - accession number
- Physical arrangement of work
  - Start one end and end the other, don’t have anything crossing over
- Have staff put back images in exactly the same order
- Have a clear way of matching number given by scanner and accession number
6. Need a Crystal Clear Folder Structure

- Tried to create automated system but failed
- Discovered best way was a folder structure with clear stages
  - We developed one with 24 stages (although there were parallel pathways for the Raw file, public Raw and Processed file)
  - Different people work with different stages and take ownership of their stage
- What we did develop was an automated Digitsation Tracker that tracked how many files were at each stage over time.
  For a smaller project this could be done on a spreadsheet
7. Need to work in batches

• One of our most important breakthroughs in maintaining order came when we decided to start working in batches
• Batches are what fits on a scanner at one time. Could be 1 image or in our case could be 40
• Principle is that no batch progresses to the next stage without every file in the batch completing the current stage
Configured and ready to synchronize.

Left Target:
- Connect to: Local Volumes
- Operation: Backup Left-to-right
- "David Larsen Pictures/Archived Images/RAW_0001" on "Elements"
  - MS-DOS (FAT32)
  - 465.6 GB (2.9 MB avail, 100.0% full)

Right Target:
- Connect to: Local Volumes
- "Picture Archives/David Larsen Archived Images" on "My Book"
  - MS-DOS (FAT32)
  - 298 GB (15.3 GB avail, 94.9% full)

Options:
- Synchronize deletions
- Archive replaced files
8. Need to use verification software to move files between stages

• It is frighteningly easy to lose hundreds of files while transferring them
• We have used Chronosync for our Macs
• Are PC equivalents
9. Need systematic backups

- There are only two types of people in the world, those who have had a hard drive failure and those who are about to have a hard drive failure
- 3-2-1 Principle
  - 3 copies
  - 2 media types (including write-once)
  - 1 off site
- Budget for storage
Nelson Mandela turns 91

"Nelson Mandela turns 91"
10. Need to make work accessible in a secure, controlled manner

- Access is what you are primarily aiming for in digitisation, so budget to make sure you achieve that goal
- Open access or paid access
- Ideally you want a system that gives appropriate access to different audiences
- Africa Media Online’s MEMAT system
In Conclusion

Heritage, both cultural and natural is a key component of what determines our identity as a people and therefore of what makes us unique in the World.

In economic terms it is our unique selling proposition and therefore is extremely important that we retain it in our control.

In the light of this, we believe it is imperative that we as Africans get to digitise our own heritage and so retain control of the great riches we have to offer the world.