Ready for Launch: Building an Institutional Repository from the Ground Up

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What is the mission? Why do we need an IR?

One stop shopping for:

- Theses and dissertations
- Student research (honors capstones, RCEU posters, others)
- University historical publications (catalogs, fact books, newspapers)
- Faculty research
- University produced journals
- Local history journals
- University sponsored conferences
- UAH research reports
What vehicle will take us there?
Which IR is a match for our goals and abilities?
Who are the members of the mission support team and what are their roles?

Library Director

Head of Technical Services

Head of Archives and Special Collections

Digital Archivist and Digital Archives Team

Institutional Repository Librarian
Selecting an IR is often a difficult decision

Make your choice on your individual circumstances.

- Cost
- Technical skill
- Design and functionality
- Intangibles
Current Mission Timeline

2016- Identify the problem
2017-2018- Build the team
2019-Select the IR
2020-Pandemic!
2021-Make the commitment to Digital Commons and Pre-Launch Checklist
2022-Launch!
Mission Objective 1: Omeka to Digital Commons

What are we migrating?

- Yearbooks
- Student newspapers
- Course catalogs
- Other university publications

Why?

- Centralizing university publications
- Creating a record of the university’s development over time
- Facilitating user access
Mission Objective 1: Omeka to Digital Commons

- Keep our user groups in mind
- Decide how to group and display materials
- Decide which materials to exclude
- Adapt metadata for Digital Commons
- Ingest files: makeshift staging area vs. Batch File Upload Manager
Objective complete!

- 1,070 items in Historic University Publications to date
- 13 different publications represented, many more in the pipeline
- Providing essential information on the history of the university for UAH affiliates and the community
Mission Objective 2: CONTENTdm to Digital Commons

What are we migrating?

- Undergraduate Honors Capstone projects and theses
- Undergraduate research posters
- Conference papers

Why?

- Using a platform that meets our needs
- Centralizing university scholarship and creative output
- Streamlining and standardizing student submission processes, using peer review tools
- Building the library’s relationships with other departments on campus
Mission Objective 2: CONTENTdm to Digital Commons

- Keep university stakeholders in mind
- Decide how to group and display the materials
- Choose a migration option
- Make the project manageable
- Deal with inconsistencies and find missing information
- Take lessons from the process
Objective complete!

- 23 conference papers
- 590 Honors Capstone projects
- 976 undergraduate research posters
- Building closer relationships with departments on campus
- Opening doors to receiving more materials that document university creative output and research
Conclusions

Choosing an IR is a decision which requires long term planning and adoption criteria are unique to each institution.

Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of your institution and your team is crucial in IR selection.

Reach out to Institutional Partners and identify datasets before you select an IR.

Take advantage of your Digital Commons consultant’s knowledge.
Questions?