Creating an eResearch Desktop for the Humanities

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Office of Fair Trading Notice

- This presentation is live – no lip syncing is used
- This will affect the complexity of the presenter’s dance performance
Project Overview

• University of Southern Queensland (USQ) project
  – The Australian Digital Futures Institute (ADFI)
  – Public Memory Research Centre (PMRC)
• Goals:
  – Develop software that assists researchers to:
    • Collect and manage digital resources
    • Work within their various communities
    • Curate and distribute outputs
• Avoiding
  • A monolithic solution that provides all application services - too big, too many tools
They’ll come looking for you....

- Researcher: Leonie Jones
- Battle of Fire Support Base Coral
- Started May 12, 1968
- Largest battle fought by Australian troops in Vietnam
  - Lasted 26 days
  - Cost more Australian lives than Long Tan
- Primary question:
  - Did the official history give the whole story?
  - The politics of commemoration:
    • Why is this battle not well known?
They’ll come looking for you....

- Oral history project
- Data collection:
  - Formal and informal interviews
    - Australian and Vietnamese veterans
  - Official records
  - Diaries and letters
  - Photos, music and video
  - Realia: Boots, tags, etc
- This sort of project is more than data
  - Strong community of veterans that have supported the project and want their stories told
They’ll come looking for you....

- Data stats:
  - ~30Gig
  - ~1500 files (and growing)
- Large amount of the research data already collected
  - Provides a more stable early development environment
- Still some big questions:
  - How do we transition to a public collection?
  - How do we enable communities to contribute to research:
    - Researcher, supervisors, participants, public
The central idea is to provide a web view of data from disparate sources from the moment data are created – the web becomes a natural way to work with data from the very start, rather than a deposit challenge at the end of a project.
Step 1. Harvest data from a range of sources

• Harvesters:
  – Collect data from various sources (local/networked)
  – Filesystem
    • “Live”
    • Polling
  – RSS/Atom feeds (in development)
  – OAI-PMH
• Future possibilities:
  – Websites
  – Zotero
Step 2. Extract the metadata, apply conversions and store

- Metadata is extracted from a range of file formats
  - ICE
  - Aperture
  - Metadata is stored as RDF
- Web-ready conversions
  - ICE converts various formats to web formats
- Storage layer:
  - Now: Local filesystem
  - Later: Fedora and CouchDB
Step 3. User interfaces for eResearchers

- Current functionality:
  - Search
    - Limit through facets
  - Tag
    - Free tagging now
    - Taxonomy tagging soon
  - File viewing
    - In browser as much as possible
  - Create views
    - Saved searches
Step 3. User interfaces for eResearchers

The Fascinator

Everything

**SEARCH**

Search all items by entering one or more keywords

There are currently 1063 items available

**LATEST ADDITIONS**

1. Alan 1.mpg
2. Alan 2.mpg
3. Alan 3.mpg
4. Alan 8mm.mpg
5. Letter.mpg
6. coralmap120668.jpg
7. gun268002.jpg
8. gun68001.jpg
9. maryletter1.jpg
10. maryletter2.jpg
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FILE PATH</th>
<th>RESULTS</th>
<th>SHOWING 1 TO 10 OF 1063 ITEMS (0.0 SECONDS)</th>
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<td><code>C: (1063)</code></td>
<td><strong>Tracer.doc</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><code>Data (1063)</code></td>
<td>Tags:</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOURCE</td>
<td><strong>Doc2.doc</strong></td>
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<td>Susan Maddock (7)</td>
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<td>Denis Hare (4)</td>
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<td>Keith (2)</td>
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<td>Clear selection</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Alan 2.mpg</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Alan 3.mpg</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Fascinator

coralmap120568.jpg

**METADATA**

**Title**
coralmap120568.jpg

**Format**
image/jpeg

**ATTACHMENTS**
aperture.rdf
coralmap120568.jpg
coralmap120568.thumb.jpg
SOF-META
Step 4. Backup and share the data

• File within views can be backed up to a directory
  – Local or mapped (e.g. ARCS Data Fabric)
• Working to integrate:
  – Repository submission (SWORD)
  – ANDS Identify/Register my Data
• Collaborative repositories
  – From desktop to shared environments
• Public sites
Try it out!

- Working to be as open as possible
  - Open source licence (GPL)
  - Documents to help users/implementers
- The code
  - Java/Python based
  - Maven makes it easy to check out a project and its dependencies
  - Ticket system to track progress
Questions?

- Website: [http://fascinator.usq.edu.au/](http://fascinator.usq.edu.au/)
- Google Group: the-fascinator-dev
- Duncan: duncan.dickinson@usq.edu.au