Describing Digital Materials in Finding Aids

Version 3.1
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Introduction

Staff from the Michigan Historical Collections, University Archives and Records Program, and Digital Curation adopted the following conventions to standardize the description of digital materials in Bentley Historical Library finding aids. These guidelines are subject to periodic review and revision.

Key Terms

- Born-digital materials: refers to electronic records and other content (MS Office files, PDFs, image, audio, or video files, etc.) that were originally created and/or stored in a digital environment (such as a web servers, desktop computers, digital cameras, digital video recorders, etc.)

- Digitized materials: refers to materials that are digital derivatives of original paper or analog items and were created through scanning or another digitization process.

Components

Dates:

- Inclusive and bulk dates should reflect the time period in which the intellectual or artistic content of digital materials was originally created or used.

- For *digitized* materials, record the date(s) when the original paper or analog materials were created or actively used.

- Please note that the creation or last modified date for the digital files deposited in Deep Blue may be more recent than the dates recorded in the finding aid.

Extent:

- The extent of digital materials will be expressed as the content's volume

- Use the unit of volume (KB, MB, GB, or TB) that expresses the extent in the most concise and appropriate fashion. For example, 1.2 GB is preferred to 1256903 KB.

- This volume will not include archived websites in the Web Archiving Service, since these typically will increase in size every year and would require the revision of a great many finding aids.

- Example:

  Extent: **3 linear feet and 3.8 GB**

Digital Material Note:

- This note will only be used to identify the location of removable storage media within the collection or record group.

- Example:

    Digital Material: CD-ROMs in Boxes 2 and 4; 3.5" floppy disks in Box 12.

Abstract:

- The abstract should specifically mention the presence of digital materials, including format types or genres (i.e. "audio files" or "Office files").

- It is not necessary to list mime types or file extensions in the abstract.

Digital Processing Note:

- A brief, standardized statement with a link to a more in-depth document will be included after the scope and content note.

- Template:

Digital Processing Note

In preparing digital materials for long-term preservation and access, the Bentley Historical Library adheres to professional best practices and standards to ensure the authenticity, integrity, and security of material. For more information on the library's digital processing procedures and policies, please see http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/93344. Content may be available as individual files or a ZIP archives containing multiple files.

General Scope and Content Guidelines:

- The collection-level scope and content not should note the presence of digital materials.

- Series-level scope and content notes should include:

    o A clear and thorough overview of the intellectual content/subject matter of the digital materials.

    o A parenthetical reference to the volume of digital content for the individual series or subseries in an appropriate unit (KB, MB, GB, etc.).

    o An overview of the media types or genres (i.e. audio files, video files, still images, word processing documents, spreadsheets, etc.).

    o Special attention to special or unique file formats.

- It is not necessary to list all the file extensions found within a given series (i.e. .PDF, .DOCX, .JPG, etc.).

- Archivists should use their discretion to determine if it is appropriate to mention specific file formats found in series (i.e., "the series includes 20 podcasts in .MP3 audio files").

- To indicate the relative wealth or paucity of material packaged in ZIP files, it may be appropriate (but not required) to cite the number of files therein (i.e. "includes 3 .ZIP files that contain 12,320 files").

- As with paper materials, it is appropriate to note if the digital materials in a series required significant organization or rearrangement.

Archived Website Series and Scope and Content

- Following established conventions, web archives will be included in finding aids as a distinct series: **Archived Website**
- In addition to archived content stored in the California Digital Library's Web Archiving Service, the collection may include versions of sites captured by Nancy Deromedi in the 2000s. These should be transferred from optical disk and deposited in Deep Blue. (See Digital Curation for assistance.)
- You should also check to see if the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine ((http://archive.org/) has earlier versions of the individual/organization's website. Note that in searching for these earlier versions, the website domain name may have changed significantly over time (i.e. http://www.umich.edu/~bhl/ → http://bentley.umich.edu).
- The scope and content note for the series should identify the major functions of the website and content of significant informational or evidential value. Reference should also be made to the capture methodology and associated dates.
- Example:

  The Archived Website series (830 MB, 2002-2008; 2010-) documents the academic programs, accomplishments, resources, events, and people at the School of Art & Design. Content includes important news and announcements, publications (such as newsletters and course catalogs), and information about admissions, curriculum, degree requirements, faculty, exhibits, and the overall mission of the School. The website series is arranged chronologically and includes content captured by the Internet Archive starting in 1997 as well as captures provided by Bentley Library archivists 2002, 2003, 2006, and 2008. Starting in 2010, this archived website will be captured on a regular, ongoing basis as part of the University of Michigan Web Archives, hosted at http://webarchives.cdlib.org/a/universityofmichigan/.

General Note on the Container List:

- Digital objects may be packaged for deposit into Deep Blue at various levels: series, sub-series, folder, or item.

- At the bare minimum, the finding aid *must* describe each individual 'item' that is deposited into Deep Blue. This level of description is important so that a link to the digital object may be inserted in the finding aid.

- If one or more directories have been packaged into a .ZIP file:

  - The processor should list major subdirectories a better indication of the available materials.

  - If these folder names are nondescript, abbreviations, or otherwise obscure, it may be necessary to provide a more complete folder title or supply a parenthetical note with additional information.

Location (Box No):

- In lieu of a Box Number (i.e. "Box 1"), use the term "Online" for open/unrestricted digital materials.

- Use the term "Closed" for restricted digital materials.

- If the library has both digital derivatives and original paper and analog materials, retain the original box number and include a <dao> element at the end of the line to link to the digital item.

Date:

- As mentioned above, the "unit date" should reflect when the intellectual content of the digital (or original paper/analog) material was created/actively used.

- Do not use the creation or last modified date for the files deposited in Deep Blue.

Format

- To indicate the nature of the digital object, indicate the file extension in a physical facet note immediately after the date or parenthetical note field. Use shortcut **alt p-f** or select from the list of macros.

- Include the extension (in caps) and period.

  - Viewed with the paragraph marks and formatting symbols shown: %pfe(.PDF)%pfe

  - Viewed without the paragraph marks and formatting symbols: (.PDF)

<dao>:

- The <dao> tag is used to provide a direct link in the EAD finding aid to the deposited material. It may be selected from the Word "Styles" menu.

- For archived websites in the Web Archiving Service, use the link to the CDL 'landing page' for the site (or, if necessary, a direct link to a page).

- For material in Deep Blue, use the unique numerical portion of the Deep Blue "handle" (i.e. http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/handle/2027.42/92219).

- Examples:

    o Archived Web site: **http://webarchives.cdlib.org/site/sw1nk36n2t**

    o Deep Blue: **2027.42/92219**

Restrictions:

- Access restrictions should be noted at the lowest level at which the applicable digital material is packaged and described. This could be at the level of series, folder, or item.

- The processor should enclose the restriction statement in brackets, and then use the appropriate 'restricted' style from the BHL finding aid templates (using a **bold** font style) .

- In addition to standard UARP restrictions applied to executive, personnel, and student materials and those related to HIPAA or attorney client privilege, the library will note when digital materials are accessible only via the reading room: **[Restricted: reading room only]**

Order of elements for an item in the container list:

1. Unit title
2. Unit date
3. Format
4. Restriction or dao link
5. Notes (if any)

Examples of Container Lists

Note: formats use physical facet tag (Alt-pf) and links use dao tag (Alt-do)

Open content in Deep Blue; individual files:

Online

Women's History in Michigan Science and Engineering Oral History Project

Audio recordings
Ajzenberg-Selove, Fay, 2007 (.WAV file) **2027.42/83521**
Buckley, Paulita, 2007 (.WAV file) **2027.42/83518**
Carter, Barbara, 2007 (.WAV file) **2027.42/83528**
Transcripts, 2007 (.ZIP file) **2027.42/83524**

Open content in Deep Blue; multiple directories in a .ZIP file:

Online

Digital Materials

Ann Arbor Projects, 2006 (.ZIP file) **2027.42/89903**
Fuller Road Exhibits
Great Street Toolkit

Restricted content:

Online

Allen Lichter, Dean 1998-2006

Email Correspondence, 1998-2006 (.ZIP file) **[ER Restricted until January 1, 2028]**

Digitized Material, with original paper/analog items:

Box 1

Essays

Fun, Fun, Fun: The Price of Fun, undated
Scientific Saw Hammering, ca. 1920 (.ZIP file) **2027.42/89927**
The American Soul Aflame, undated (.ZIP file) **2027.42/89936**

Archived Websites (includes main site and related resources)

Archived Website
School of Art & Design
Online

1997-2001 (These versions were preserved by the Internet Archive and are made available through its Wayback Machine. The Bentley Historical Library is not involved in the collection or maintenance of this material.) **[http://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.umich.edu/~webteam/soad/[**

2001-[ONGOING] (These versions were preserved by the Internet Archive and are made available through its Wayback Machine. The Bentley Historical Library is not involved in the collection or maintenance of this material.) **[http://web.archive.org/web/*/http://www.art-design.umich.edu/[**

March 28, 2002 (.ZIP file)**[2027.42/98973[**
May 21, 2003 (.ZIP file)**[2027.42/99121[[**
February 23, 2006 (.ZIP file)**[2027.42/99122[**
April 31, 2008 (.ZIP file)**[2027.42/99123[**
2010-[ONGOING] **[http://webarchives.cdlib.org/sw1j679c4s/http://art-design.umich.edu/[**

Related resources
2010-[ONGOING]
[http://webarchives.cdlib.org/a/universityofmichigan/sites?page=1&tag=School+of+Art+%26+Design[