Against the Grain

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Editor

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Technology Left Behind
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- CONTENTdm — http://contentdm.com/
- University of Washington Libraries
  Digital Collections — http://content.
  lib.washington.edu/index.html

Luna Insight, a product of Luna Imaging, accommodates a wide variety of file formats and permits the sharing of collections between its customers and also subscription services, such as the AMICO Library. In one example, Stanford University makes use of the Luna Insight software in its database of the correspondence of Athanasius Kircher. (A complete list of participating institutions can be found on the Luna Web site.) In addition to the Insight software, Luna offers a full range of digitization services, including scanning and/or photographing original prints and film and editing the images for color variation, cropping, and sharpening.

CONTENTdm grew out of a project at the Center for Information Systems Optimization (CISO) at the University of Washington. The product also supports a broad range of file formats. A few image and document files are included on the Website as examples. OCLC is handling the marketing of CONTENTdm to libraries, museums, and non-profit archives, and those organizations using the product have the ability to automatically add their collections to WorldCat. The company offers a free 60-day hosted trial or a full-evaluation copy of the software for interested institutions.

One More Option

One other option that I have not yet discussed is the use of publicly available Websites and databases of art images. If you are interested, there are many free images on the Internet from reputable sources. A series of articles evaluating publicly available art databases accessible via the Web was published in the September, October, and November/December 2004 issues of Searcher Magazine. (The full text is available online: http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/sep04/
mattison.shtml.) The primary reason I neglected to mention this option before now is because Furman never really considered using free Websites as a permanent solution to our image access problem. While many of our students use the Internet to obtain access to art images, free Websites won’t fulfill all of our needs in the classroom. Our Art professors require greater image quality and image manipulation.

Issues to Consider

As you look for the best solution to your own problem, here are some things to keep in mind.

Metadata — It is important to consider the metadata that goes along with the images. Who is going to create it? How much will there be for each item? Can you add, edit, or delete metadata? You could put all the images in the world into a database, but without some good indexing and metadata to go with them you may never be able to get them out again.

Image Quality — If you decide to build your own database, the size and quality of the images in the database is going to affect the amount of storage you require for the database. If you subscribe to a database of images, you have no control over the quality of the images or accompanying metadata.

Functionality — What kinds of things do you want to do with the images? Zoom-in and/or zoom-out? Re-sizing? Side-by-side viewing of images? Downloading? Export for use in a presentation or on a Website? Do you want to use the database for something other than images, such as video, audio, and/or document files? What kind of print quality do you need to have?

Life of the Product — When picking a product, think long term. What ever type of service and/or product you choose, you will most likely have to live with it for a number of years. Choose some-

Rachel K.
Schenk
Memorial
Scholarship

This year the third Rachel K.
Schenk Memorial Scholarship of $1,200 will be awarded to the person who has demonstrated a true love of books. There are three requirements:
1) The applicant must write an essay of no more than 600 words on "my love of books."
2) The applicant must be a librarian with a library degree.
3) The applicant must be a first-time attendee to the Charleston Conference in 2005.

Please note: The Rachel K.
Schenk Memorial Scholarship will be given for the next two years and will be an award of $1,200 per year. So if you don’t get it one year, there is always the next year.

Deadline for application is August 20, 2005. For more information, visit http://www.katina.info/conference/scholarship.html or contact <ksrauch@comcast.net>.