2016

Adding Media, Adding Value

Susan Doerr
University of Minnesota Press, doer0012@umn.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.7560

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
Adding Media, Adding Value

by Susan Doerr (Assistant Director, Digital Publishing and Operations, University of Minnesota Press) <doer0012@umn.edu>

Author’s Note: This article discusses the expanded media resources that may accompany a web-based, edition of a monograph and the impact the higher number of media brings to bear on a publisher’s time. — SD

Publishers have heard countless authors ask to include many images, tables, charts, even multimedia in their scholarly books and are used to saying, “Sorry, but it is not possible. The print format and space constraints just don’t allow for that material.” Today, with the creation of new digital platforms, the space and format constraints of print is becoming a thing of the past. Those of us who are building these new platforms are realizing that more is not always better, and that more media can lead to higher costs.

Two digital publication platforms that are currently in development, Manifold, from the University of Minnesota Press, and Fulcrum, from Michigan Publishing at the University of Michigan Library — both funded by grants from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation — allow authors and publishers to expand the amount and types of media that can be included in a published project. As more media are added, a press’ editorial and production staff, and the author, will spend more time preparing these media for publication. At the University of Minnesota Press we were able to quantify the increase in the amount of time we spent on our first projects prepared for the Fulcrum and Manifold platforms, giving us an idea of how much more time we might expect to spend on this work.

Manifold, developed in collaboration with the GC Digital Scholarship Lab at CUNY and the digital development agency, Cast Iron Coding, is a platform being developed to publish a monograph as a dynamic web-based digital edition — the “Manifold edition.” In the grant proposal for the Manifold platform we defined the characteristics of a Manifold edition as:

- A book that incorporates rich media, such as audio, video, and interactive game files;
- A book that integrates scholarly conversations in social media channels;
- A book that incorporates social reading practices such as reader feedback and critique (separate from peer review);

Enabling access to primary research documents and data, embedding or linking to archival materials, and incorporating rich media all require that editors and authors secure — and pay for — permissions, prepare and deliver media files to production staff, and create metadata for each item. While we are not limited by technology to a maximum number of media that we can include in a Manifold edition, both the author and press staff are limited by the time that they can realistically devote to a project, and this imposes a limitation on the number of media we are able to include in a Manifold edition.

At the University of Minnesota Press we estimate that our editorial and production staff collectively spend approximately 20 to 30 minutes on each media resource that appears in a book. This time is spent working with the author to determine if permission is required for illustrative content, quoted texts, and previously published chapters of works and securing required permissions; working with the author on captions; and adding information to our rights and permissions logs within a manuscript’s record in our database.

Securing permission is a hybrid responsibility. Many university presses ask that authors seek permission and pay any licensing fees required by the copyright holder. The press is responsible for maintaining permissions records and adhering to the restrictions imposed by the copyright holder. In practice, editorial staff often advise authors about when/if permission is needed and provide template letters and forms for requesting and granting permission. The Association of American University Press offers a 21-page permission FAQ for authors and university presses (http://www.aauapnet.org/policy-areas/copyright-a-access/copyright-a-permissions/copyright-a-permissions/), a document that both press staff and authors use in doing this work.

Creating metadata for media begins with the author. At the University of Minnesota Press we provide authors with a permissions log in which they list all the media they wish to include in a book. This document asks for the media’s title, creator, copyright holder, is permission needed, if so, was it obtained, caption, and location within the text. Upon com-

continued on page 22
Adding Media, Adding Value

from page 21

completion, the author sends the permissions log to the editorial assistant at the press who will add the information to the permissions log in our title database. When media are published in a Manifold edition, or on a companion website to a book (as on the Fulcrum platform), we must create additional descriptive metadata that is not part of our existing process. This new metadata includes alt-text for accessibility, additional or new descriptive text because these media may be viewed without the context of the book’s text, adjustment to the captions to remove references specific to the print edition (i.e., “the image to the left”), DOI assignment and registration.

The University of Minnesota Press hired a graduate student from the History department to assist the authors and editorial assistant with securing permissions and generating metadata for the illustrative material in Canoes: A Natural History in North America by Mark Neuzil and Norman Sims. Canoes has a companion website for its illustrative content, hosted on the Fulcrum platform. Our graduate student spent approximately 80 hours completing the metadata spreadsheet required for the Fulcrum platform. Canoes has 323 photos, maps, paintings, and other media, which means our graduate student’s 80 hours of work equalled approximately 15 minutes of time per item to create the metadata needed for Fulcrum.

Manifold adapted the Fulcrum metadata spreadsheet for media and the Digital Projects Editor at the University of Minnesota Press is presently at work to prepare the metadata and media for The Perversity of Things: Hugo Gernsback on Media, Tinkering, and Scientiffication by Hugo Gernsback and edited by Grant Wyhoff for upload into the Manifold platform. As we refine the process of composing the additional metadata required — as we build it into our routine workflow — we expect the time for metadata creation will be reduced by about one-third to half the amount of time our graduate student and Digital Production Editor have spent, or approximately seven to ten minutes per media item. For a project with 323 media items this would equal 37 to 53 hours of staff time, or about a week of work.

For one or two projects an additional week of work can be absorbed by our existing staff. The University of Minnesota Press publishes approximately 110 books per year. If one-third of our list, or 36 projects, were to be published on dynamic platforms that required the creation of additional metadata this would equal 1,332 to 1,908 staff hours, or 33 and 48 weeks of time — almost a full time employee. The amount of staff time we are able to allocate to working with an author on media permissions and metadata will be a significant factor in determining how many books we can publish as Manifold editions.

The conversation between author and editor about inclusion of media is both a curatorial and practical consideration of time. Do all the media that an author proposes to include enhance a reader’s understanding and experience within this project, and if so, does it merit the time? Not every scholar will have 300 media resources to publish in their project. Not every project will benefit from the inclusion of 300 media resources, even when platforms like Manifold and Fulcrum are able to include them.

University of Minnesota Press author John Hartigan, in his blog post, “Writing the Continuous Book,” http://www.umnpressblog.com/2014/11/upweek-writing-continuous-book.html says, “The best part is that though I keep accumulating more material than I know what to do with, my anxieties over what to do with it all are dissolving. I’m just watching what unfolds and trying to learn from it all, rather than worrying about how it will fit in the next book — or anticipating all that won’t make it between the next set of covers.” Platforms like Manifold and Fulcrum will allow authors like John to include many of the materials they are accumulating in their published projects. We believe that when selected thoughtfully more media will enrich a reader’s engagement with a scholar’s work. The addition of more media in a Manifold edition will be a meaningful investment of both the author’s and press staff time and effort. Our challenge then, is to make this work an efficient part of our workflow.

Making Connections ...

from page 18

remains essential. Connecting scholarship to readers, opening the academy, and fostering the impact of scholarship in communities will remain part of our mission, as it is for our larger institutions.

Lydia Otero documented the history of a place. The University of Arizona Press helped take that history to the community. While the story of La Calle is an extraordinary example, it exemplifies our values as a publisher and the value of university presses more broadly. Books can take root in communities, and university presses help scholarship flourish.

Rumors

from page 6

created Logo art utilizing both the ATG and Charleston Conference graphics. Some audio content from the 2016 Charleston Conference plenary sessions is being configured to put into podcasts. These will be made available shortly on the Charleston Conference and Against the Grain websites. Stay tuned! http://atghepodcast.libsyn.com/podcast

Do you keep up with libraries by reading the ATG NewsChannel? Did you read that Jackie Gleason, the television comedian and motion picture actor had “a deep and abiding interest in parapsychology and its many components.” So much so that he collected “approximately 1,700 volumes of books, journals, proceedings, pamphlets, and publications in the field of parapsychology.” His collection consists of “both scholarly and popular works published in the United States and abroad” and will impress anyone interested in this fascinating topic. (See also: Special Collections: The Jackie Gleason Collection.) Fortunately, Marilyn Gleason, the widow of Jackie Gleason, donated the collection to the University of Miami Library in 1988 and their Special Collections has assembled a website featuring numerous examples from the collection. http://scholar.library.miami.edu/gleason/index.html www.against-the-grain.com/

The National Federation of Advanced Information Services (NFAIS) has announced that the energetic, innovative, and incredible Judith Russell, the Dean of University Libraries at the University of Florida, has been selected to receive the NFAIS 2017 Miles Conrad Award. NFAIS’s Miles Conrad Award, long considered the information community’s premier annual honor for achievement in fostering the growth of information services, is being given to Russell in recognition of her significant achievements in librarianship and for her leadership in information services throughout a career spanning academia, government, the non-profit and private sectors. Russell will be honored at the NFAIS 2017 Annual Conference, February 26-28, in Alexandria, VA, and will deliver the annual Miles Conrad Memorial Lecture. You all will remember Ms. Russell was also featured with Charles Watkinson, Associate University Librarian for Publishing at University of Michigan Libraries and Director of University of Michigan Press, at the 2016 Charleston Conference in the presentation The Devil is in the Details: Challenges of Collaborative Collecting.

Also — Check out our Penthouse Suite interview with Judith Russell from this year’s Charleston Conference! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMyU294Izxs&list=PLIGLt62pr1M6F-QS1R1XgFKGPM9AP-A&index=19 https://nfais.membersclicks.net/miles-conrad-lectures

continued on page 62

22 Against the Grain / December 2016 - January 2017 <http://www.against-the-grain.com>