PROJECT #3:
DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL, UNITED KINGDOM
TOURIST BOARD WEBSITE

Overview

The south-coast beaches of Dorset in the United Kingdom were a staging post for the allied forces invasion of France on D-Day during World War Two. American G.I.’s and other forces including British, Canadian, and Anzac troops (Australia and New Zealand), arrived en mass in 1944 to prepare for the Normandy beach landings of June 6th. An abundance of multimedia assets remain documenting this period in history including photographs and film footage.

Dorset County Council are investigating the feasibility of adding a digital asset management system to their tourist website in an effort to promote their unique role on that day, a day that is now world famous. They hope to use the DAM system to attract tourists who wish to visit these historic sites that in turn will increase revenue for the county.

Several coastal cities including Bournemouth and Weymouth played an integral role in facilitating the success of that day and many archeological sites remain in existence.

The council also feel that it would be advantageous for them to archive these assets for the good of future generations. Since there are fewer and fewer World War
Two veterans, the repository could also be used by relatives interested in genealogy to use it for research into the lives of loved ones during this period in history. Perhaps they could even locate photographs of said family members and the DAM could also generate income from the sale of reproductions of those images. Of course, licensing and any potential legal issues would have to be negotiated, if need be, to facilitate this potential reusable content as lucrative revenue.

Dorset County Council is also considering a promotional outreach program to reach out to the local population to rummage through their archives to see if they have anything relating to this moment in local history.

With this in mind, the DAM system should be extremely user-friendly, making it extremely visually appealing and a repository that can be accessed by those who are proficient in computers as well as those who only have rudimentary skills.

The system would be accessed via a link, a specifically designed icon, on the front page of Dorset County Council Tourist Board website. To continually promote the archive, a new image or video asset or audio asset could be utilized on a monthly basis and would link to the archive.

It is also possible, subject to a mutually beneficial partnership so that the archive could also link to the Imperial War Museum’s World War Two D-Day archive as well as British Pathe.

We are mainly dealing with images and old newsreels, the quantity and quality of those assets is unknown. Since much of the current archive has not been digitized then most of the expense will come from converting those assets. The tourist board is
considering launching a volunteer drive to help facilitate the analog to digital transfer of these assets specifically to help keep costs down. This should off set the expense.

**Metadata Models**

Metadata is the structured knowledge that we have about things we collect.

To make a collection usable, we need to record what we know about the things in the collection and make that knowledge available to others. The record of our knowledge about our collections is metadata. We use that knowledge, that metadata, to manage our collections of things, to reveal them to others and to make them usable (Best Practices for Descriptive Metadata, 2008).

Metadata is structured in a certain kind of way that follows a standard created to help with the organization and retrieval of information. It is structured for resource description, and is used for resource discovery and for organizing electronic resources in particular.

Descriptive metadata describes a resource for purposes such as discovery and identification. It can include elements such as title, author, and keywords (NISO, 1). Questions to ask when initially creating a record can include: What is it? Who made it? When was it made (date/year)? What is it about? Who is the intended audience/user?

Many different metadata schemes are available to use to implement this database. An important aspect to keep in mind regarding whichever metadata scheme is chosen is that it should have the, “ability to create metadata records locally, allowing the creator of the collection the flexibility to design schemes that reflect the local nature of specific objects in their collection (Noone 2010).”
After the initial set up of the database, it is wise to take into consideration that those on the ground will handle the continual upkeep, the locals, who will manage the content and add new digital assets and metadata for those assets. Or alternately, a digital asset management system vendor will handle it.

Another consideration is the budget. It is essential to choose a metadata scheme that is cost effective, a way to produce a large amount of metadata very quickly so users can have access to the resources. Also, make sure the records have complete and consistent information so they can be accessed, used and shared. Therefore, it is essential to devote resources to generate good metadata as it takes manpower, time and money to develop something of quality. It is also a laborious process.

Interoperability, the ability of a system to work with or use parts of another system, is also a major concern. We do not want our chosen scheme to live in a void. Taking all of this into consideration, it seems that the simpler the better so let’s take a look at two metadata schemes, Dublin Core and RDF (see Appendix A at end for examples):

**Dublin Core**

Dublin Core is a set of metadata elements including title, creator, subject, description, contributor, date, type, format, identifier, source, and rights, amongst other elements. It is simple and concise and can be used to describe web-based assets. All Dublin Core elements are optional and repeatable and can be represented in any order. Since it is an easy metadata scheme, it is relatively easy to teach a non-technologically
minded person how to input information into each element and upload to the database.

Dublin Core offers flexibility in the creation of metadata used to describe digital objects.

**RDF**

The Resource Description Framework (RDF), developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), is a data model for the description of resources on the Web that provides a mechanism for integrating multiple metadata schemes (NISO, 11). RDF is an XML (extensible markup language) application and a language. It is a standard. It is structured.

Both schemes offer flexibility, a must, but Dublin Core is easier to use even for a layperson.

**Taxonomy**

Metadata can be embedded in a digital object or it can be stored separately. Metadata is often embedded…in the headers of image files. Storing metadata with the object it describes ensures the metadata will not be lost, obviates problems of linking between data and metadata, and helps ensure that the metadata and object will be updated together (NISO, 1).

An alternative way to store the metadata is separately from the digital assets within a database. The metadata would be linked to the object it describes. This method can facilitate search and retrieval for both the owner of the database and the user and is an important reason for its creation.
The purpose of this database is for individuals, the general public, to access it from the home page of a tourist information website, with that in mind, the taxonomy has to be simple and complete, it has to allow the digital assets to be found by assigning relevant criteria / keywords / tags to each asset.

From the outset, it is imperative to spend the time researching each asset to identify all of the information it can possibly contain. Since this database is focused on a specific period of time in history, namely the lead up to the D-Day landings, and it is also specific in it’s geography, namely the English county of Dorset and it’s coastal beach towns, then, if the information is not already easily accessible or contained with the original assets, then employing someone who has knowledge of this time and this area would be advantageous.

On the tourist information homepage, a link, an image, which could be changed every month, would redirect a user to the database. Since this database also contains video, then the homepage could contain both an image and a video. The content could be broken down into geographic locations, for example, a town such as Weymouth or Bournemouth, or the soldiers of a certain country, for example, the United States as opposed to Canada or Great Britain. The assets themselves would display as thumbnails. This seems the best way for a user to access the information and something visual is always more preferred than just text. A user responds to visual, lets say a photograph, and then would read up on what the photograph represents.

Another use for this database could be for family members to research about loved ones who were stationed on the beaches of Dorset. With the popularity of genealogy on the rise, this could be a good use for this database and could lead to the
implementation of an e-commerce component somewhere down the line which could be added to the website to handle purchasing options.

**Workflow Issues**

One of the first problems that could potentially occur when converting the film negatives to digital files is a lack of information. When the material was originally shot, the cameraman was the only person who kept records of the content of each reel. Since most of the photographs and short-film clips were shot during times of crisis, especially during World War Two, capturing data to identify different locales, military units, specific battles, etc. was not a priority. Many reels of negative film contain different images from different battles all rolled into one without a customary clipboard to differentiate one series of images from another (Austerberry 308).

These quickly scribbled notes consisted of basic information such as: location, key people, and what was happening within the shot. Therefore, when it comes down to cataloging the library and creating the record, the catalogers’ job could be a difficult one.

Even so, all of this original information forms a valuable source for adding some descriptive metadata to the images and film clips including, in some cases, a title, description, year, film canister number, and whether the clip contains sound or is silent.

Since some of the original information is limited in scope, or in some cases non-existent, the difficulty in adding descriptive metadata to these images and short-films that contain rare footage but nonetheless extremely valuable footage, can be difficult. The end result should be about user-accessibility.
To combat this, the adoption of a better descriptive metadata scheme, using clearer keywords, or simpler keywords, would make it much more user-friendly and easier to access especially by a person who has limited computer literacy. The big picture here is that some of these users could be veterans themselves who are new to technology.

To create a standard as to how to catalog and create descriptive metadata for such archival films could segway into an international standard that could be utilized for other projects relating to related footage. The standard could be utilized for photographs dating back to the same era or war. Location and date, including month and year if possible, appear to be the most important information needed to access specific footage. Therefore, it would be advantageous to not just search by decade but by year, month and location.

**Digital Preservation of Assets**

Digital information is fragile; it can be corrupted or altered, intentionally or unintentionally (NISO, 2). There’s also the issue of hardware obsolescence as technologies change exponentially. There’s also the issue of standards. MARC21, a library cataloging tool, is being phased out in favor of new technology. There’s also the issue of where to store such a large database. Do you keep it in-house on a dedicated server? Do you also have a backup with an outside provider? Do you utilize cloud technology? What about the original assets? Since we are referring to tangible objects such as photographs, negatives, film stock, and audio files such as cassettes, does it make sense to keep the original hardware used to create these assets? At least, if the worst
were to happen, and all metadata was lost and the files become corrupted, then the
originals would be available to design a new project plan from the ground up.

Then, there’s the question of fire that could destroy the original assets as well as
the possibility of water damage. However you look at it, insurance to cover the cost of a
new database needs to be taken into consideration as part of the total budget for the
project.

With all of this in mind, as I have stated earlier, it is imperative to detail the
physical characteristics of the asset in question and to track the lineage of the digital
object, if it has already become an electronic resource, since this metadata is key to
ensure the survival of the resource and aid in its continual accessibility into the future. I
believe the above metadata models explained above will aid in facilitating this wished for
outcome.

**Legal / Licensing Issues**

One of the most important aspects of this plan is to negotiate rights for some of the
images and film footage that could and would be used in this database. It would be easier
if the object of the Dorset County Tourist Board was simple to highlight areas of interest
to World War Two history buffs or to identify specific geographic areas where troops
congregated in anticipation for the D-Day landings. Since the county hopes to generate
income from tourists who book hotels, or Bed and Breakfast accommodations, as well as
spend money in pubs and restaurants, in amusement arcades, on shows put on at local
theatres, then the goal is to increase business and use this unique point in history, to
attract holidaymakers to it’s shoreline.
Perhaps, a yearly license could be negotiated with the owner of the original images for a nominal fee or at least a link established that would redirect back to the hosts website.

There is also the possibility of canvassing the local population to ascertain how much original materials lay within the homes of the immediate citizens. Perhaps there are old photographs of relatives who lived in this part of the country at this period in time. The Dorset County Council could do a countywide promotion via a local news station explaining what they are looking for and why they are looking for it. They could then have a standard legal paper, much the same as those used to conduct audio interviews, where the county would have rights to use the asset for a number of years to come, or these images could simply be donated.

DAM Vendors

1. OPEN TEXT DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS
   www.opentext.com

   Open Text offers the control of content for better engagement and better marketing of product. They produce, publish and distribute digital media and content through a secure platform, offering cloud or onsite storage and utilize intuitive search. Their motto is: “create one, use-many”. One of their clients is Marks and Spencer (M&S) a retail company in the United Kingdom.

2. CANTO
   www.canto.com
Canto digital asset management offers enterprise DAM for organizations of all sizes that require full service over multiple platforms. Mostly work with large corporations. One of their product, CUMULUS, is an enterprise DAM system that uses sophisticated metadata to store, search, sort, track changes of brand assets over multiple platforms and channels.

3. CAPTURE

www.capture.co.uk

Capture’s motto is: we put people first and make sure our technology and team really works for you. They are a leading content management specialist and service provider with a modular platform and help with licensing and track and control digital assets. They can develop a website, customizable, which can helps users find assets faster and be clear about how your assets are used. Capture will grow with you. The system has the ability to work with or use parts or equipment of another system. The pricing is fair, you can choose what you want as they have integrated modules and pay monthly or yearly. Current clients include, Historical Royal Palaces, Visit England Images, and Visit Britain Images.

In my opinion, Capture is the digital asset management vendor that Dorset County Council Tourist Board should employ. They already have expertise in the same business model as they have worked with both Visit England Images, and Visit Britain Images. There is also the option of creating your own system, customizable; to best suit the tourist boards needs. Also, the pricing is fair and can be paid on a monthly basis. Capture also
help with licensing issues, they could potentially negotiate a favorable contract with large
digital asset repositories such as Getty Images who hold many of the World War Two
images the website would need.
Copyright: Galerie Bilderwelt, 1944 / Getty Images

Caption: US troops on the Esplanade in Weymouth, England, on their way to embark on ships bound for Omaha Beach for the D-Day landings in Normandy in June of 1944.

Sample Dublin Core Record

<dc:creator>Galerie Bilderwelt</dc:creator>
<dc:subject>D-Day</dc:subject>
<dc:publisher>Getty Images</dc:publisher>
<dc:date>1944</dc:date>
<dc:type>Image</dc:type>
<dc:rights>Getty Images</dc:rights>
Sample RDF Record

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<metadata
xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
xmlns:dc="http://purl.org/dc/elements/1.1/"
><dc:creator>Galerie Bilderwelt</dc:creator>
<dc:subject>D-Day</dc:subject>
<dc:publisher>Getty Images</dc:publisher>
<dc:date>1944</dc:date>
<dc:type>Image</dc:type>
<dc:rights>Getty Images</dc:rights>
</metadata>
```


[http://www.library.yale.edu/dpip/bestpractices/BestPracticesForDescriptiveMetadata.doc](http://www.library.yale.edu/dpip/bestpractices/BestPracticesForDescriptiveMetadata.doc).
