AVCC
https://www.avpreserve.com/tools/avcc/
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Many archivists today are faced with large, uncatalogued collections of audiovisual material. While most of us are aware that we must take action to prevent these collections from being lost forever, it can be difficult to know where to begin, especially if the content and preservation status of much of the material is unknown. AVCC is an open-source, web-based tool from AVPreserve, a consulting firm with expertise in audiovisual and digital preservation, that is designed to help archivists begin cataloging and assessing their audiovisual collections. AVPreserve describes it as a tool that "provides a series of inventory templates and quantitative reports that promote simple and fast documentation and analysis of collections of audiovisual materials."[1] Crucially, it is intended to be "easy for non-specialists" to use.[2]

To begin using AVCC, go to https://avcc.avpreserve.com/login and create a free account for personal or organizational use. Use of the tool and "storage of data provided is free for accounts under 2,500 records," and "plans for larger collections are available."[3] After creating an initial account, additional users may be added, enabling multiple members of an organization to contribute to, edit, and view the same records and reports. Users can be assigned one of four levels of permissions, with the most basic allowing only for viewing records and reports. AVCC is a web application, so there is no software to install and little to no technical expertise needed to get an account up and running. AVCC also provides a very useful "Help Guide" that offers advice on topics such as data entry, searching and managing records, and strategies for using AVCC as efficiently as possible.[4] It includes links to helpful resources for identifying audio and video formats.

One creates new records in AVCC using a form that includes dropdown menus and free text fields. In most cases, hovering over a field and clicking on it will generate a pop-up that provides a description of the field, why it is important, and tips for data

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[1] "Announcing the Release of AVCC Inventory & Collection Management Tool," *AVPreserve* [blog], June 29, 2015, https://www.avpreserve.com/blog/announcing-the-release-of-avcc-inventory-collection-management-tool/
[2] Ibid.
[3] "What is AVCC?" AVCC, accessed April 9, 2016, https://avcc.avpreserve.com/help/whatisavcc (must be logged in with a free account to view).
[4] "Help Guide," AVCC, accessed April 9, 2016, https://avcc.avpreserve.com/help/list (must be logged in with a free account to view).

entry. Most metadata fields are not required, although a select few are, such as Unique ID, Location, Format, and Title. The form will not save if the same Unique ID is assigned to more than one item, which conforms with best practices of associating one ID with one item and helps prevent data entry errors. Some users with poorly labeled or unlabeled collections will likely find that they are unable to fill in a number of the metadata fields because the physical media they are working with does not provide the information, but this should not be a barrier to using AVCC. One of the most useful aspects of AVCC is the flexibility it provides for the level of detail that can be entered for each record. Additionally, especially for non-AV specialists, simply filling out the item-level record is a good learning experience, as the metadata fields serve as a useful guide as to what characteristics to look for when evaluating physical media.

AVCC provides a number of ways to evaluate data after it has been collected. Several options exist to download reports and graphs that provide visual overviews of the data. It is possible to do keyword searches across the entire set of records or limit searching or browsing to a specific field, and to export the entire set of records or a particular subset. Records and reports can be exported as XSLX or CSV files, and graphs as PDF documents or JPEG, PNG, or SVG vector images.

At my institution, we used AVCC to conduct a survey of our university archives film collection. Our goals included using acid detection (AD) strips to evaluate the preservation status of the film and determine the amount of our unique material. AVCC proved to be an excellent tool for these purposes. There is a field in the template to record the acid detection strip level for film, and a graph option provides the number of records at each level. This was a great way to quickly illustrate our progress when updating colleagues on the project. One of my few complaints about the tool was that in the faceted search option for some fields, such as acid detection strip and reel diameter, it is currently only possible to search for one term. Choosing multiple options is possible for some facets, and it would be helpful if it was possible for all. Among other things, this would allow one to view all records that had an AD strip reading of 1.5 or higher.

A particularly useful feature when working with a large number of previously created records is the Bulk-Edit option. Users can select a set of records and then make a change to a particular field in all of them, rather than going through and changing each one by one. This proved useful for us when a number of items were moved and needed their locations changed. Another way AVCC makes data entry more efficient is by customizing the fields that are visible on the template and the order in which they appear. This can be done for individual projects by selecting "Field Settings" under the "Settings" menu in AVCC.

At my institution, using AVCC provided several advantages over recording data in a spreadsheet or using a cataloging system not designed specifically for audiovisual material. Initially, I appreciated how easy it was to get started, the variety of options it offered for sharing data, and the advice offered in the "Help Guide," particularly

the sections on identifying formats and data entry tips. Using a template created by audiovisual preservation experts also provided us with guidance on what data we needed to collect and helped promote standardized data entry. The fact that there were fields and terminology that I was not familiar with prior to using AVCC encouraged me to seek out sources to learn more about these concepts. Without a template, I might have overlooked them completely.

Overall, AVCC appears to be an extremely useful tool for creating item-level inventories and beginning to evaluate audiovisual collections. It is particularly noteworthy for being accessible to users without significant expertise in audiovisual preservation or access to technical support and providing a wide range of options for the level of detail that can be included in records. For all these reasons, AVCC is well worth exploring for archivists interested in gaining greater intellectual control over the audiovisual material they seek to preserve.