

Boise State University Special Collections and Archives holds approximately 7,000 linear feet of manuscript and university archives materials. We started the inventory in March. Certain collections took longer than expected and we did not quite finish; however we plan to finish by June. Three staff participated in Jump In and wrote about their perspectives.

Cheryl

Participating in Jump In was beneficial in numerous ways. First and foremost, this initiative motivated us to create an inventory of our digital records. Although we had discussed doing this previously, it was the impetus for us to create a strategy and actually accomplish this needed-to-be-done task. Additionally, we now have solid knowledge of the types and formats we have, a more thorough knowledge of our collections, and a place to start as we move forward in establishing digital records policies and procedures.

Our approach was to, for now, not document any audio-visual material though we did note where there was some. We focused primarily on floppy disks, CDs, zip disks, and any other similar content. One of our most interesting discoveries was what appears to be a predecessor to the zip drive. Even our IT staff had never seen one before. The project overall helped us learn more about our unprocessed collections and will give us grounding on how to document incoming accessions containing digital content.

This project also assisted in donor relations. Donors continually ask about donating electronic documents and there is a great need to capture these from university offices. By participating in this initiative, we are able to tell donors that we are addressing this issue. We make it clear that we don't have policies and procedures currently in place, but they were pleased to hear we are taking practical steps to address the issue.

Julia

As the university archivist, I went through the university records looking for digital records and was surprised to find hardly any floppy disks in the collection. I did find an abundance of CDs that contained data files and photographs. I also found boxes of cassette tapes, microcassettes, and reel to reel tapes whose condition will have to be evaluated to determine their transference to current media. By going through each collection and looking through boxes, I was also able to deaccession items that should not be kept permanently in the archives. The Jump In Project is a very effective tool to learn more about what is contained in the university archives and provide a better understanding of the types of electronic files that should be kept in the future. It also helped provide a better idea of the growth rate of the collection, specifically what collections receive the most new acquisitions, and what planning should be done for future growth and space allocations.

Jim

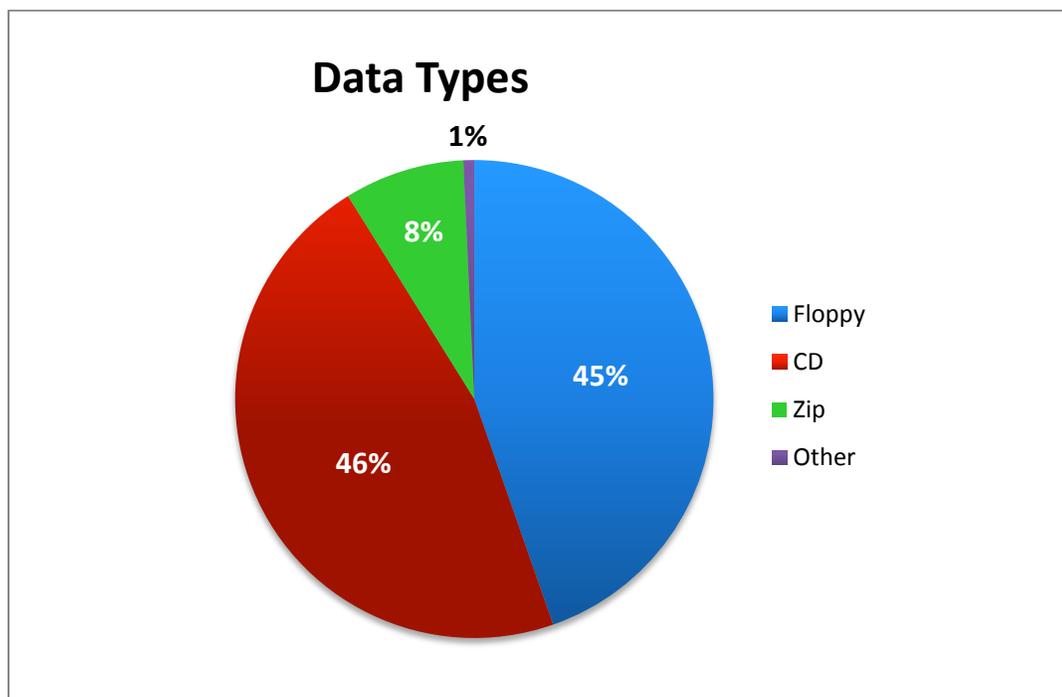
The Jump In project proved to be difficult to plan and tough to finish. It was relatively easy to survey individual boxes, but the process was drawn out and labor intensive. We ended up finding many floppy disks and CDs scattered through the collection. So far, I have not tried downloading any of the files we found. I can see a future project coming soon to try downloading many of the single-item objects we located. There are, however, some collections with many files that will need further planning before we load them to our server.

Going forward, it makes sense to inventory computer files as we accession them. This can save us from losing track of these records later. Going further, it might make sense to download the contents of these CDs and floppy disks right away and reduce the risk of corrupted files from degradation of the media. This Jump In

inventory process shed light on the scope of the digital management project that is ahead. While it may be time consuming, I feel we have a better understanding of the steps required.

After a few hours of checking boxes for discs and floppies, we decided to include our student assistants in the project. We found an increase in efficiency having a student operate the laptop while a staff member checked boxes. While results varied from collection to collection, on average a two-person team could check 20 to 40% more than a single person. One problem with this system, however, was coordinating a time that worked for staff members and student schedules.

Floppy	CD	Zip	Other
121	126	22	2



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