

## **Jump In Initiative**

### **Northwestern University Library**

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#### Background:

Northwestern University Library (NUL) began a pilot project to explore management and potential workflows for born-digital records and hybrid collections in December 2012. This effort was a collaboration between University Archives (Special Libraries Division) and Digital Collections (Library Technology Division). The Jump In Initiative fit in nicely with this pilot project. The Manuscript Librarian and Visual Resources Librarian served as project managers and oversaw the work of the Metadata Assistant, who liaised between the two departments.

In general at NUL, after a Deed of Gift and other donor agreements have been completed, born-digital records and hybrid collections containing electronic records on removable computer media are accessioned in University Archives and are treated as artifacts. This practice can lead to the degradation of the content on the removable computer media over time, and requires a digital accessioning workflow to be established.

#### Approach:

The team decided to inventory the removable computer media that was contained within the accessioned-but-unprocessed collections located in University Archives. The information on the accession cards was entered by staff of University Archives at point of intake. By recording this information we would be able to deliver more meaningful insights on collections that had not been reviewed since they were accessioned. This approach meant that obtaining the information on the cards would be a priority, rather than handling the physical media.

The accession cards for University Archives reside in a four-drawer cabinet, arranged according to record group number, and total 5000 cards (estimating 100 cards per linear inch). Student workers were given a list of appropriate removable computer media to search for and provided the Metadata Assistant with help in identifying collections by inventorying all of the drawers. For this survey, we opted for removable computer media only (no analog media such as reel-to-reel audiotapes or 16mm film).

Although the accession cards were very useful in identifying which collections contained removable computer media, they did present some challenges. The majority of accession cards had a media count only if there were one or two types of artifacts included, which in some cases

made it necessary to estimate a number of items. Descriptive information about the media was sometimes missing, too, especially for floppy disks.

Result:

The number and types of removable computer media in unprocessed University Archives collections are now known as a result of the data that was compiled for Jump In. Removable media, such as floppy disks, memory cards, flash drives, so forth, can be imaged locally in a batch process method, once the necessary staff, hardware and software is acquired. The information gathered can be used to complement the pilot project by informing policies and workflows for managing born-digital records and hybrid collections in University Archives at Northwestern University Library (NUL).