Application of Rapid Imaging Methods in a Library-Archive-Museum Environment

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Abstract: Imaging solutions based on digital cameras can produce access-quality images at several times the rate of established flatbed scanner processes, promising a dramatic increase in the amount of digitized material that can be derived from archival collections. After conducting research into existing processes at several institutions, including the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, and the Art Institute of Chicago, the Benson Ford Research Center (BFRC) at The Henry Ford, Dearborn, Michigan, has also launched a camera-based rapid imaging workflow aimed at supporting an organization-wide digitization initiative.

The BFRC's Library-Archive-Museum (LAM) environment presents several challenges to a high volume imaging process, however, including blending of archival and museum material selection processes and metadata requirements; collection management system ingest; workflow integration with existing 2D and 3D object imaging processes; and publicly-accessible display of images and metadata.

The poster outlines the development of the BFRC rapid imaging workflow and the approaches taken to meet the various LAM challenges. Initial program targets are given, followed by key points derived from research into existing rapid imaging processes. Details of the BFRC implementation are presented including identification of equipment and costs involved; compatible material types; image resolution capabilities; production rates; and metadata collected and schemas employed.

About the author:

Brian Wilson is the Digital Processing Archivist at the Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford, Dearborn, Michigan. He is responsible for enabling electronic access to archival description and materials, which includes conversion of legacy hardcopy finding aids to electronic format; creation of new description in EAD XML; digitization of and metadata generation for collection materials; and implementation of digital access systems and methods.

Brian is a 2010 graduate of the University of Michigan School of Information where he specialized in Archives and Records Management. He also holds an undergraduate degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan. Prior to joining the archival profession Brian worked for 20 years as a mechanical engineer and designer in the automotive industry, primarily involved in the design and prototype of engine and power train components.