

Archival Description and the Archivists' Toolkit at Princeton University

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Outline

- Background
 - Princeton
 - Tools
 - Archivists' Toolkit
 - Beta testing
 - For EAD
 - For MARC
 - Case study: AT for non-archivists
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Special Collections at Princeton

- Mudd Library
 - University Archives
 - Public Policy Papers
 - Manuscripts Division
 - Literary collections
 - Holdings in Western Americana, New Jerseyana, Colonial period, faculty papers, and many other subjects
 - Other small special collections
 - Engineering Library
 - Latin American Ephemera Collection
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Background and tools for description

- EAD implemented in 2004.
 - Coincided with review/implementation of *DACS*.
 - Wide variety of tools used for EAD.
 - Oxygen
 - Word templates/macros
 - Spreadsheets
 - Individual databases
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Background and tools for description, cont.

- Non-EAD description: even more tools.
 - ILS (Voyager)
 - Circa 20 legacy Access databases
 - Even more databases for accessioning and other basic functions.
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Archivists' Toolkit

- Beta testing in Fall 2006.
 - Informal testing of version 1.1 in Spring/Summer 2007.
 - Installation/implementation for Engineering Library in Spring 2007.
 - Implementation of AT for Mudd accessioning in Fall 2007.
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Archivists' Toolkit

□ What we like

- Promise of all divisions and repositories using the same tools for description.
 - Multiple outputs from the same tool.
 - Interface forces staff to think in terms of data (less in terms of free-form narrative descriptions).
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AT and EAD

- Usability
 - Data entry
 - Review processes
 - Import/export process issues
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AT and MARC

- Import/export issues
 - Granularity
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AT: The Big Issue

- Figuring out relation to current process and redesigning workflow.
 - Established decisions and best practice were not designed with toolkit in mind.
 - Template - <descgrp>s, attributes
 - Stylesheets
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AT: The Big Issue

- Workflow
 - Integration with current tools and delivery systems.
 - Creation of EAD in AT - relatively straightforward
 - Importing current EADs - a little more complicated.
 - Relationship with ILS – even more complicated.
 - Accessioning

 - Scalability questions

 - Decisions still need to be made.
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Case study: Archivists' Toolkit for non-archivists

- Princeton University Library: Engineering Library
 - Large collection of technical reports
 - No staff available to catalog individually, no desire to catalog individually.
 - Available staff consists of one professional librarian and student assistant.
 - EAD finding aids proposed as solution
 - No background in archival description or EAD.
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Case study: Archivists' Toolkit for non-archivists

□ Processes

- Met to discuss requirements, set minimum descriptive elements.
 - Installed toolkit, set up repository and logins (one for data entry, one for administration).
 - One brief demonstration/training session.
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Case study: Archivists' Toolkit for non-archivists

□ Results

- 10 finding aids produced.
- Item level description for hundreds of reports.
- Finding aids available soon
- Goodwill for Archives/EAD project.

- Plan to use for important and underdescribed Latin American Ephemera Collection in fall.
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Questions or comments?

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