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Case Study – A Call to Action: Migrating the Reveille from CONTENTdm to Digital Commons Poster

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Case Study – A Call to Action: Migrating the Reveille from CONTENTdm to Digital Commons

Abstract

Forsyth Digital Collections presents their content on more than one platform. Since the acquisition of Digital Commons and the launch of the FHSU Scholars Repository in January 2016, there has been an institutional effort to determine which platform is best suited to displaying existing content. Beginning in 2009, the FHSU Reveille Yearbooks collection had been hosted in CONTENTdm. This collection suffered from issues relating to access and user experience. In 2014 additional effort was put into improving the collection though those efforts did not achieve the desired result. In the spring of 2017 it was determined that the Reveille Yearbooks were a good candidate for moving from CONTENTdm to Digital Commons. The purpose of this case study is to examine the thought process in determining why this collection was unsuited to CONTENTdm, why Digital Commons was the better platform, what choices we made in presenting this collection in Digital Commons, the practical difference between the two platforms, and a retrospective comparison of usage between the two platforms.

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Thought Process

Why Digital Commons?

- Ability to handle large .pdf files.
- Better support for in-text searching.
- Required less metadata creation per item due to in-text search capabilities.
- Support for embedded book reader technology.

Reveille 3.0 Design

- Created as a book gallery to highlight cover artwork of individual issues.
- Designed as a browsing collection organized by year with the ability to sort into individual decades.
- A book reader was embedded using the Internet Archive to preserve the feeling of flipping through a yearbook.

Discussion

Comparing Usage

CONTENTdm does not provide detailed usage data. The main metric of "page views" can provide an incomplete picture of collection usage. Google Analytics can supplement this information but historical data was not preserved. Digital Commons focuses on "downloads" as the main usage metric. However, in collections with an embedded book reader, users are less likely to download issues because they can access it in the browser. It was determined that "metadata page hits" was the most comparable metric for comparing usage between the two platforms.
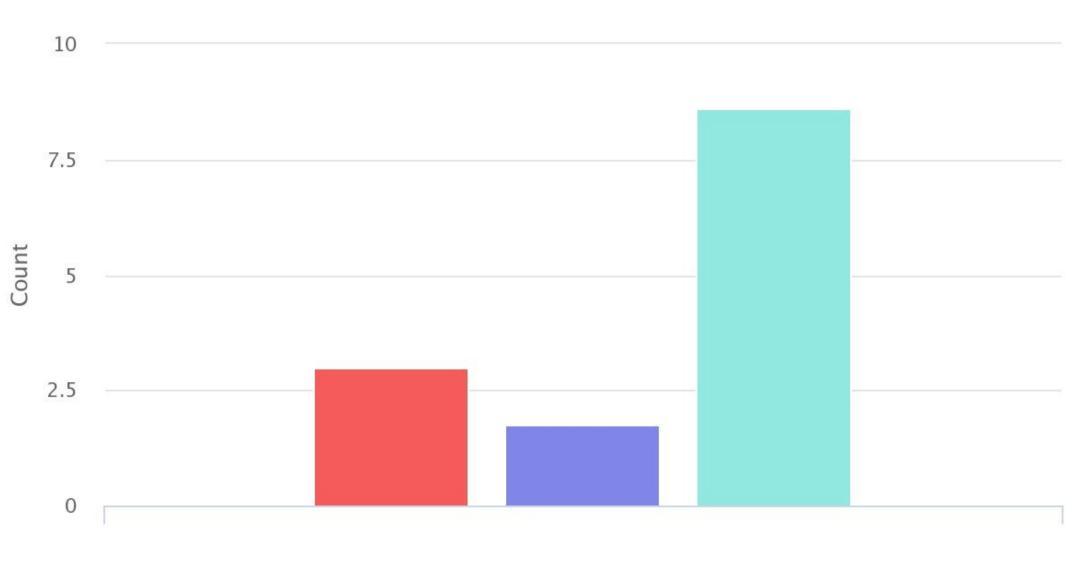
Reveille 3.0 Usage

- The *Reveille 3.0* has been live since July 2017.
- Since then it has received 1,903 metadata page hits. This surpasses the total yearly page views of any year for *Reveille 2.0*.
- Most of these hits came in July after a publicity push from the library and University Relations.
- As of September 30, 2017 average page view per item for the *Reveille 3.0* is 6.91 views per item up from 3 views per item in *Reveille 1.0* and 1.75 views per item in *Reveille 2.0*.

Comparison of Usage

Reveille Average Page View per Item by Collection

Legend: Reveille 1.0: CONTENTdm, Reveille 2.0: CONTENTdm, Reveille 3.0: Digital Commons

Conclusion

- Decisions made nearly a decade ago may no longer be the best choices given the current state of technology.
- Access and discoverability were the greatest drivers in deciding that the *Reveille* should be moved from CONTENTdm to Digital Commons.
- A detailed analysis of past efforts at improving the *Reveille* showed that efforts did not result in increased collection usage.
- Making conscious decisions based on data before expending resources altering an existing collection is key.
- Preserved historical data is vital to making well-informed decisions.
- Identifying barriers to usage (long load times, lack of in-text searching) and then addressing those problems represented the greatest challenge in this project.

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