Blazing a TRAIL: A Shared Vision and Collaboration Lead To Digitization Open Access and Preservation of U.S. Government Technical Reports

trail TECHNICAL REPORT ARCHIVE & IMAGE LIBRARY

Project Goals

TRAIL *is a Greater Western Library Alliance* initiative in collaboration with the *Center for Research Libraries* and other interested supporting agencies to identify, digitize, archive, and provide persistent and unrestricted access to federal technical reports issued prior to 1975.

Background

Most research libraries across the country have sizeable collections of technical research reports produced by U.S. government agencies. These collections are frequently a million or more for major research libraries and several thousand for smaller institutions. These technical reports range in length from several pages to several hundred pages and encompass content in hundreds of different subject disciplines.

While availability and access to more recent technical report literature has greatly improved through electronic delivery most technical reports particularly older ones still remain elusive to users.

Challenges

The challenges posed by these collections are 1) the diverse nature of distribution and collection development practices across institutions; 2) variability in selection and acquisition methods used resulting in incomplete series confusion in depository status lack of awareness and definition of a "complete collection," and 3) the lack of access points to collections that are not cataloged or are represented only by a series record. These problems coupled with the need to free up valuable collection/user space in libraries created a strong case for establishing the Technical Report Archive & Image Library (TRAIL) collectively maintained by the library community.

Recipe for a Collaborative Resource...

❖ Take one shared vision: digitization, preservation, and open access of U.S. government technical reports

❖ Fold in a collaborative team of engineering and government document librarians:
▪ Baylor University ▪ Colorado State University ▪ Cornell University ▪ GWLA ▪ Kansas State University ▪ Oklahoma State University ▪ Rice University ▪ University of Arizona ▪ University of Arkansas ▪ University of Colorado ▪ University of Hawaii at Manoa ▪ University of New Mexico ▪ University of Utah ▪ University of Washington

❖ Stir in support and participation from CRL, OCLC, Google, government agencies plus Stanford, Michigan and other contributing schools
In support of the effort, libraries at public and private universities as well as for-profit and non-profit organizations stepped forward offering to share their resources and seeking greater project involvement.

As TRAIL developed so too did a national meta-community founded by a gift-culture that solves problems by emphasizing each participant's willingness to give towards achieving the shared vision.
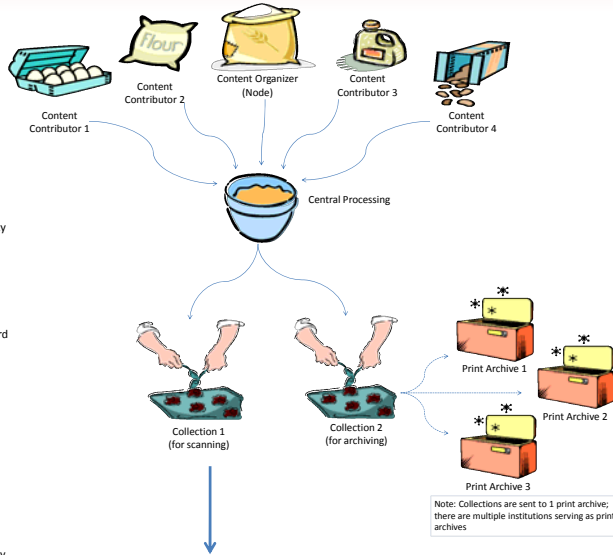
❖ Blend well
By capitalizing on the strengths and contributions of each institution overall project costs have been kept to a minimum while allowing institutions to participate in ways that have best matched their strengths resources and institutional priorities.

❖ Yield: Technical Report Archive and Image Library (TRAIL)
The collaborative project activities have yielded physical and digital Technical Report archives by providing participatory opportunities to libraries regardless of geographic location and by allowing participants to self-determine roles including the ability to choose more than one role while simultaneously matching institutional priorities.

❖ Serves: Everyone!

❖ And frees up valuable collection & user space!

Content Contributor 1 · Content Contributor 2 · Content Organizer (Node) · Content Contributor 3 · Content Contributor 4

Central Processing

Collection 1 (for scanning) · Collection 2 (for archiving)

Print Archive 1 · Print Archive 2 · Print Archive 3

Note: Collections are sent to 1 print archive; there are multiple institutions serving as print archives

	Microwave Method (Univ. of Michigan & Google)	Oven Method (Outsourced Digitization Vendor)
Use for:	Good quality normal-sized items appropriate for sheet-fed scanning; Items must be single volumes (bound) or despined	Special handling: anything with maps fold-outs; items that are delicate oversized borrowed or inappropriate for sheet-fed scanning
Cooking Time:	1-2 day scanning time	1-2 month scanning time

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GWLA Members

Arizona State University	University of Hawaii at Manoa*
Baylor University*	University of Houston
Brigham Young University	University of Kansas
Colorado State University*	University of Missouri
Iowa State University	University of Nebraska – Lincoln
Kansas State University*	University of Nevada – Las Vegas
Linda Hall Library*	University of New Mexico*
Oklahoma State University*	University of Oklahoma
Oregon State University	University of Oregon
Rice University*	University of Southern California
Southern Illinois University	University of Texas at Austin
Texas A&M University	University of Utah*
Texas Tech University	University of Washington*
University of Arizona*	Utah State University
University of Arkansas*	Washington State University
University of Colorado at Boulder*	Washington University in Saint Louis

*Project Founding Member

Recipe Cost:

(Average costs account for shipping, cataloging, and scanning.)
Avg. Yearly Funding for project: $128,000
Avg. cost per Item: $11.94
Avg. cost per page: $0.13

Recipe Reviews...

"Thank you so much for your help...The 25 year old copy of the monograph that I have was destroyed by water.....finding it online makes me very happy!"

"Please pass on my great appreciation to all those who have put together this very valuable service."

Give us your review on our recipe....