Today, I’d like to describe several technical enhancements that have been developed in the past year.

I did a presentation with John Helmer and Larry Landis [at the Online Northwest meeting] on the NWDA, and during that session one of the points that I emphasized was the importance of adherence to standards in making this complex program, the NWDA, work. Adherence to standards is also important in the creation of enhancements, such as RSS feeds, as I’ll describe....

**OAI harvesting**

This development work was completed last year, but I wanted to remind you of this existing capability.

The NWDA’s Open Archives Initiative data provider support provides a means for scholarly repositories to harvest NWDA collection-level content. But another point: next-generation discovery systems, such as Ex Libris Primo, support the searching of OAI data. Primo user, like the University of Iowa, are making OAI data available through their next-generation catalogs.

Thus, the OAI data provider instance can be used in several ways to widen access to NWDA content.

Since the NWDA finding aids are in XML format, creating a service such as OAI support or RSS feeds (which are both XML services) means taking the NWDA finding aid XML as an input and creating another XML document, as directed by a specification or ruleset (in this case, the Open Archives Initiative – Protocol for Metadata Harvesting 2.0).

ListSets command to display sets. These are, in effect, handles that you can use to go in and grab NWDA repository content. Thus, it’s possible to harvest subsets of the NWDA repository (collection-level) data by either NWDA member repository or by subject, as defined by NWDA browsing terms.
Just remember that it's possible to retrieve NWDA collection data using an OAI or Open Archives Initiative data provider.

**RSS application development**

RSS, or really simple syndication, is an XML-based format used to publish information on frequently-updated content.

This is another standards-based development activity. This time, information on NWDA finding aids is exposed according to the rules defined in the RSS 2.0 specification.

The NWDA uses a native XML database; the documents are stored in XML format. The transition from the NWDA database to an XML, RSS feed is pretty straightforward.

These elements are supported for items in the feed. Items correspond to NWDA finding aids. The category element is important; it allows users to search or filter on a subset of the feed. As with the OAI data provider application, NWDA browsing terms are employed.

**User commenting feature**

This capability was described in a 2007 *D-Lib Magazine* article ("Creating the Next Generation of Archival Finding Aids") describing next-generation archival access tools, employed in the Polar Bear Expedition Project at the University of Michigan.

In this project, archivists considered the possibility of a commenting system that enabled users to annotate the collection and item description information in finding aids. This approach was rejected in favor of a system that enables commenting, but at the same time keeps the finding aid intact. I have worked to implement a similar approach in the development version of an NWDA commenting system.

For the Polar Bear Expedition Project, submitted comments are reviewed by a project archivist. Users have submitted comments pointing out errors with collection descriptions; submitted additional information for the collection. One additional use of the commenting feature by users has been offers of donated materials to the archives.
In some cases, the commenting feature has been used for researcher-to-researcher communication. So, in this case, how the commenting feature should work is an important issue. Should comments appear upon submission by an NWDA researcher site user? Should comments be moderated by an archivist?

Here are some examples of this commenting feature in place.

The prototype for the WSU-developed service is currently online for working group review:

- Screens that show a finding aid with some sample comments
- Screens that show a finding aid without any comments
- Screens that show how a user would enter comments for a finding aid; I propose the use of a captcha as opposed to a login system; this would be one of the issues submitted to the WG for review prior to bringing commenting online.

Google metrics

- Google Analytics are an extremely powerful method for assessing web site usage. As Jodi will demonstrate, you can retrieve very detailed reports using this tool.

  “Stats give you numbers. Analytics give you information.”

Analytics is software that generates metrics. Analytics report on the most popular pages in a site; how long a user stays on a particular page; the percentage of people who bounce, or leave the site, from a particular page.

Google Analytics is a historical analytics program, which means statistics are not tracked in real time. The statistical data that appear in the reports that Jodi will be showing are 1-2 days behind.
- We continue to capture log use data, and can build complementary reports as well. For example, the Document Summary reports, which are based upon application use logs (such as the) and this search engine distribution report, which uses the web server or Internet Information Server use logs. We archive these logs, so it's always possible to go back and analyze use.

- Google Analytics represents a different approach for reporting data. They are activated by copying some JavaScript tracking code into all web site pages. This code is generated by Google Analytics, and the code, which includes the unique identifier for the site, is inserted into the body of web pages to be tracked. This number is unique to each web site profile tracked by Google.

This screen shows the code. You can check an NWDA web page to ensure that the tracking code is present.

Summary

Found that having an XML database, and having the documents stored in XML, is a good foundation for extending the NWDA application. An example is the RSS feeds for the NWDA. They take the XML from the database and repurpose it into XML for another use.

FROM THE USER SIDE: THE SCRIPT
SETS A COOKIE ON AN INDIVIDUAL
USER, MACHINE

- IF USERS TURN OFF COOKIES OR DON'T
ALLOW THIRD-PARTY COOKIES, THE
USER WILL APPEAR TO ANALYTICS TO
BE A 'NEW' USER EACH TIME THAT
THEY ACCESS THE SITE

- WEBSERVER LOGS 1 USER
- ANALYTICS EACH USER ACCOUNT APPEARS TO
BE A DIFFERENT USER

"Technical metrics, a summit is a big pet"
XML editor

Rajib Sarkar

Digital Project

Last-Seen Tool Add-On

July 2007

Rajib Sarkar

The above text is a hand-written note on a page, likely discussing an XML editor tool, with specific mention of a tool named 'Last-Seen Tool Add-On'. The text appears to be a brief note or reminder, possibly related to software development or digital tools.
Present

Use templates: enhance, include support for the entry of component-level information

Connecting implementer (early stages) (Model - raw data is interacting with primary sources)