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ArchivesSpace to Primo Pipeline: Harvesting Finding Aids for Discovery

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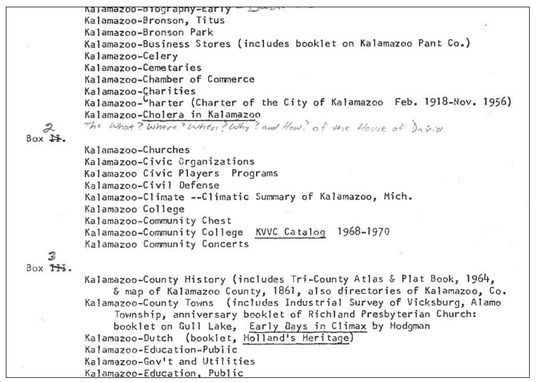
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
University Libraries

About

WMU Libraries' next step in making our archival collections more discoverable is to harvest finding aids from ArchivesSpace into our library's discovery layer, Primo, appearing alongside print materials, electronic resources, and digital collections in a single search. This poster will provide details of the process: from setting the granularity of harvested description in ArchivesSpace to creating a pipe into Primo using the Open Archives Protocol for Metadata Harvesting (OAI-PMH).

Background


Kalamazoo-Biography-Early
Kalamazoo-Bronson, Titus
Kalamazoo-Bronson Park
Kalamazoo-Business Stores (includes booklet on Kalamazoo Pant Co.)
Kalamazoo-Celery
Kalamazoo-Cemetaries
Kalamazoo-Chamber of Commerce
Kalamazoo-Charities
Kalamazoo-Charter (Charter of the City of Kalamazoo Feb. 1918-Nov. 1956)
Kalamazoo-Cholera in Kalamazoo
"An Hour's Dinner Party" and How! at the House of Day
Box 2
Kalamazoo-Churches
Kalamazoo-Civic Organizations
Kalamazoo Civic Players Programs
Kalamazoo-Civil Defense
Kalamazoo-Climate --Climatic Summary of Kalamazoo, Mich.
Kalamazoo College
Kalamazoo-Community Chest
Kalamazoo-Community College KVVC Catalog 1968-1970
Kalamazoo Community Concerts
Box 3
Kalamazoo-County History (includes Tri-County Atlas & Plat Book, 1964, & map of Kalamazoo County, 1861, also directories of Kalamazoo, Co.
Kalamazoo-County Towns (includes Industrial Survey of Vicksburg, Alamo Township, anniversary booklet of Richland Presbyterian Church: booklet on Gull Lake, Early Days in Climax by Hodgman
Kalamazoo-Dutch (booklet, Holland's Heritage)
Kalamazoo-Education-Public
Kalamazoo-Gov't and Utilities
Kalamazoo-Education, Public

We all have them: legacy finding aids on paper with penciled alterations

The Zhang Legacy Collections Center is home to the Western Michigan University archives and regional history collections, which document the history of southwest Michigan and the university. In 2011, WMU began to investigate archival collection management and description tools, with a special interest in creating more access to archival description by having finding aids accessible online. The first digital finding aids went up in Archon, and later migrated to ArchivesSpace in 2016.

Links were provided in the MARC 555 and 856 fields on the collection-level record. Patrons viewing the record in WorldCat and the library catalog could now follow the link to the full collection description online in the ArchivesSpace public interface. Many legacy finding aids, often typed with pencil edits, were now easily editable, added to, searched, and sent electronically to patrons. Accessibility was increased.

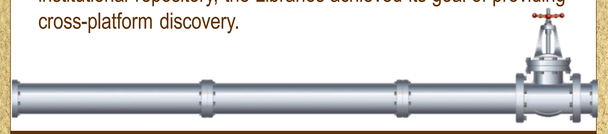
On the Value of Online Finding Aids:

"…it gives us an opportunity to serve our patrons, namely our researchers, in the most efficient way possible. When I think about what we would have to do before ArchivesSpace it was very time consuming to get information out to those who requested it. Now it's … accessible to anyone who can access it. It's a win-win situation for both the institution and the patron." – Lynn Houghton, Curator, WMU's Regional History Collections

The Goal of Greater Discoverability

WMU Libraries also wanted to create a greater discoverability of their collections. Even a robust collection-level record can be limited in the amount of description and access points provided. With the migration of our ILS and discovery layer in 2015, the Libraries now had the option of using OAI-PMH functionality to build a Pipe and harvest data directly into our discovery layer, Ex Libris Primo.

A Pipe is a set of steps that the harvested data goes through to be turned into a normalized record that can be displayed along all other resources. Using Pipes to bring in content from digital asset and archival collection management platforms and our institutional repository, the Libraries achieved its goal of providing cross-platform discovery.



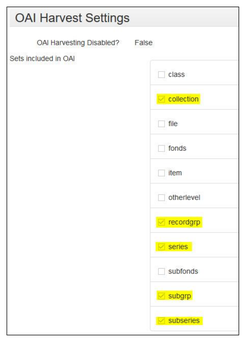
ArchivesSpace Configuration

An OAI-PMH interface for ArchivesSpace was included in v2.1.0, and was designed to not harvest unpublished and suppressed records. We assigned a metadata prefix for Dublin Core, oai_dc. WMU waited to harvest until v2.5.0 and the version's inclusion of additional functionality in the ArchivesSpace staff interface that allowed for selective harvesting by selecting Sets.

Selective Harvesting and Sets: A set is a grouping of items in a repository that allows for selective harvesting. In ArchivesSpace, Sets reflect the hierarchy established through the required element, Level of Description. This element, which follows the DACS content standard and EAD3 structure standard, can have the value of **class, collection, file, fonds, item, other level, record group, series, subfonds, subgroup, subseries**. These values are the Sets available for harvesting.

Selecting Sets: Log in to the staff interface of ArchivesSpace. In the **System** dropdown, choose **Manage Repositories**, then select the repository to be harvested. Under the section **OAI Harvest Settings**, granularity can be determined by checking the box of the desired Sets to be harvested.

Sets we selected for harvest included **collection, record group, series, subgroup**, and **subseries** – those Sets that provided a high-level description and a manageable amount of records. The other levels of description used most often in our finding aids, **file** and **item**, had inconsistent or generic titles and limited description and therefore did not have enough unique access points to add much for discovery.



Discovery Configuration and Pipe Construction

Primo can harvest records from an OAI repository like ASpace by creating a Pipe, which sends scheduled OAI-PMH requests.

Data Source: tells discovery layer where the data comes from and how to get it

Scope the Data: groups data as a 'collection' for searching

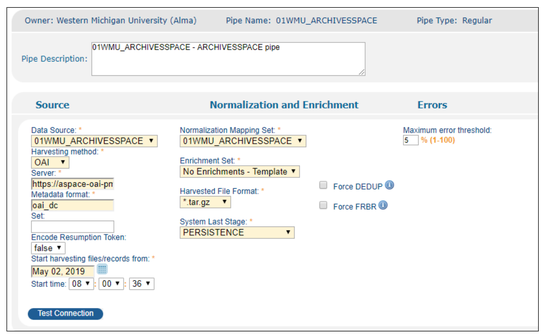
Normalize the Data: tells discovery layer how to handle data so it can be searched, displayed, and indexed with data from all other sources, including rules for:

- resource type
- which fields should be searchable
- which fields to display
- facets

When combined, this results in a Pipe* that feeds data from ArchivesSpace into the discovery layer to be displayed alongside all other materials.

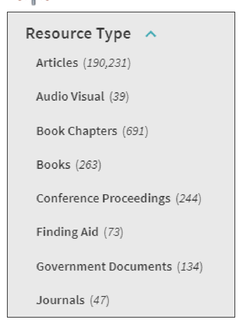
*Actually three Pipes: one to harvest data, one to delete all data, and one to renormalize existing data.

Schedule the Pipe: WMU decided to harvest regularly once a month to catch ongoing changes and updates to our finding aids.



Primo back office Pipe set-up

Resource Type and Facets

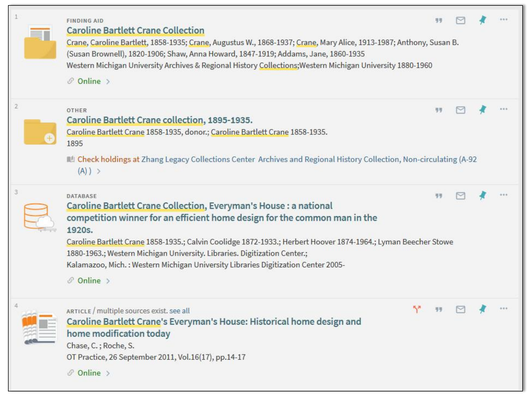


In order to enable more precise searching, we wanted users to have the ability to facet their search results by resource type.

Because Primo out-of-the-box does not contain a resource type for finding aids, we created one via Primo's normalization rules and assigned them a unique icon.

Cross-platform Discovery

In this example, the collection-level MARC21 record is alongside the Caroline Bartlett Crane Collection finding aid. The resource type of Finding Aid is displayed along with the assigned icon.



Custom icons courtesy of Univ. of Tennessee, Knoxville

Harvesting ArchivesSpace fit well into the Libraries' overall discovery strategy of cross-platform, one-stop-shop discovery. Now our finding aids display alongside the collection-level records, secondary sources, and the Dublin Core records of digitized archival materials harvested from two digital asset management platforms (CONTENTdm and Luna).

Conclusion

We achieved our initial goal of creating more access and potential for discovery by harvesting finding aids into our discovery layer. To learn if our archival description is actually being discovered more than before, Google Analytics has been set up for ArchivesSpace.

In the first three months of tracking, Primo is listed as the top provider of referrals to ArchivesSpace, though the majority of traffic is still direct or from organic searches.

An interesting side effect of creating new finding aids directly in ArchivesSpace is the more expansive approach to multi-level description. Unlike a static document, all the resource records from **collection** down to **item**, can be discovered on their own, outside the context of the larger finding aid. It becomes more important to add creators, subjects, scope and content, and descriptive titles at every level of description, especially if that level was chosen for harvest into the discovery layer.

Next steps include loading record group inventories from the University Archives and adding more legacy finding aids.

Contact information

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