

Wyoming Memory: Bringing the histories of Wyoming to life through a virtual gateway to Wyoming's rich collections
(Wyoming State Digitization Plan)

Vision

To bring the histories of Wyoming to life through a virtual gateway to Wyoming's rich collections.

What

The creation of a virtual collection of materials about Wyoming's histories. Digitization is a tool that can be used to provide public access to collections that have traditionally been available only by visitation to the physical collection.

Who

Archives, libraries, historical societies, museums, governments, organizations and individuals throughout Wyoming.

Why

To 1) increase awareness of Wyoming's histories and how they connect to the nation and the world; 2) provide alternative access to primary sources for educational and research purposes through digital technologies; 3) support other Wyoming heritage projects, such as History Day and the Wyoming Heritage Project; 4) increase the capacity of Wyoming participants to provide educational programming; 5) increase cultural tourism for economic development of the region; 6) celebrate ethnic diversity in Wyoming; 7) encourage collaboration among Wyoming organizations of all kinds, linking with collaborative efforts in other states; 8) create and sustain the technical infrastructure supporting digitization for Wyoming's participants; and 9) provide student opportunities for technology career development.

When

Now. However, it is important that standards and preservation guidelines be developed before actual projects begin and that training be provided.

How

The Wyoming Statewide Digitization Planning Committee recognizes the value as well as the commitment involved in digitization. Thus, everything needs to be done to assure that all digitization projects that are undertaken by Wyoming participants will be able to be shared, today and in the future and that there is no duplication of effort. Specific strategies to achieve our vision include:

- 1) Funding will be obtained from multiple resources**
- 2) Staffing will be adequate and trained**
- 3) Equipment will be adequate**
- 4) Standards for scanning and metadata will be agreed upon and used by all participants**
- 5) Priority items and collections will be identified**
- 6) An inventory of items and/or collections already digitized will be maintained**
- 7) Items and/or collections can and will be presented on multiple platforms**
- 8) A single point of access for participants as well as users will be developed**
- 9) Preservation guidelines will be agreed upon and followed by participants**
- 10) A project marketing/public relations plan will be developed**
- 11) Training and a means of input and feedback will be provided to audiences**

Funding will be obtained from multiple resources

Multiple sources of funding exist. It is also hoped that digitization can become part of Participants' regular work plans and thus create few demands upon budgets and staff.

Some possible sources of funding are listed below.

1) State Government Funding

The State Legislature has been extremely supportive of providing funding for the purchase of databases for statewide use. Digitization enables the creation of databases of Wyoming sources and it is possible that the Wyoming Legislature would be willing to fund such a process.

2) Federal Government Funding

a) Library Standards and Technology Act Funding (LSTA)

Wyoming State Library receives LSTA money on an annual basis. These dollars have recently been used to purchase statewide access to databases and provide training for library staff. Evaluation is important in LSTA funding and because of this, the State Library would prefer to pay for the training using these funds.

b) Institute of Museum and Library Services Grant (IMLS)

Grants are available through IMLS for digitization. Once we have adopted this statewide plan, have done training and undertaken some projects, we may want to apply for an IMLS grant. The multistate Western Trails Project was funded by an IMLS grant. One of the things we learned as part of that project was that the reporting requirements are demanding.

c) NEH National Newspaper Digitization Proposal

Currently, there is a request for proposal for a newspaper digitization project. The State Library in partnership with the University of Wyoming Libraries and State Archives intended to submit a proposal. However, after doing a review, we decided that our time would be better spent on a separate project to digitize Wyoming's newspapers from 1849 through 1922.

3) Private Funding

a) McMurry Grants

b) Partnerships

4) Self Funding

Staff will be adequate and trained

For very large projects, such as the newspapers or the Annals of Wyoming, it will probably be most efficient to outsource the scanning and OCR. A list of possible vendors will be maintained on the statewide web site.

For projects that are small or involve materials that can not be removed from the institution, local staff will be required. Partnerships could be created between local schools, historical societies, libraries, museums, professional organizations and individuals. Projects involving students at all levels could provide invaluable experience in technology career development.

Training will be essential to assure consistency. A statewide training program will be provided using LSTA funds received by the State Library. This training will be offered locally to any group who is interested in participating in the project.

Many other training opportunities also exist. Information about training opportunities will be maintained on the project website.

Other staff that would be helpful to the project might be subject experts/advisors to assist with placing individual collections in context, legal council for questions about copyright, donor agreements and participant protection, and state and regional coordinator positions.

Equipment will be adequate

Again, for very large projects, it will probably be most efficient to outsource the scanning and OCR. Recommendations about equipment will be posted on the project website.

The State Library will consider developing an equipment package that could be checked out to participants for small projects. It is possible that participants such as the American Heritage Center, Buffalo Bill Historical Center or State Archives will share specialty equipment.

Standards for scanning and metadata will be agreed upon and used by all participants

As participants in the multistate Western Trails digitization project, the University of Wyoming, Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, State Historical Society, Platte County Library and State Library assisted in the development of the “Western States Digital Imaging Best Practices” and “Western States Dublin Core Metadata Best Practices.” The documents for these best practices can be found at <http://www.cdpheritage.org/resource/scanning/index.html> and <http://www.cdpheritage.org/resource/metadata/wsdcmbp/index.html>

There are other standards that are being recommended such as the “Public Broadcasting Metadata Dictionary.”

To provide consistency and complete interoperability, it will be important for everyone to use the same standards. A work group will review the possible standards and recommend what will be used statewide.

In addition to standards for scanning and metadata, a common Wyoming vocabulary also needs to be developed and adopted for providing author, title and subject access to the scanned items. A work group will also be created to develop this vocabulary.

The adopted standards and the “Wyoming Thesaurus” will be placed upon the project website. A template for metadata entry will also be placed on the web site.

Priority items and collections to be digitized will be identified

When selecting items and/or collections to be digitized, it is helpful to address the following issues:

- Intellectual value of the collection to researchers
- Demand from current (or potential) users
- Historical or geographic area covered by the collection
- Whether another institution has digitized the same or similar materials
- Physical condition of the collection
(Issues to consider include whether the material is suitable for digitization, preservation or whether preservation work need to be done prior to digitization. Bound volumes should be able to be opened to at least a 90 degree angle to be scanned; maps may need to be significantly reduced to display online resulting in a loss of fine detail and spatial context)
- Copyright and privacy issues
- Collection use and development policies that your institution may already have in place.

Items that have been identified as having high interest include city and county government records, local genealogies, Wyoming publications, photographs, diaries, private collections, oral histories, maps, and three-dimensional objects.

The priority collection to be digitized is the Wyoming newspapers. Those from 1849 through 1922 will be digitized first. In order to digitize the 1923-present newspapers, copyright permission will need to be obtained from the individual newspaper publishers.

An inventory of items and/or collections already digitized will be maintained

In order to track items or collections that are digitized (or for which there are plans to digitize) an online database will be developed. Participants will be able to search the database as well as add to it by completing an online form.

Items and/or collections can and will be presented on multiple platforms

Once an item is digitized and its associated metadata created, it can be used in multiple ways. Items and collections can be stored in “digital databases” such as *Contentdm* or *Hyperion* and “served” to the user directly. Individual databases (e.g. newspapers) can also be created as well as online exhibits (e.g. Wyoming “Studies”). The following public interfaces should also

be considered when planning:

One-stop research center including message board for researchers

Interactive content

Virtual curators/historians

Audio and video streaming

Means for items to be purchased online (security)

Blogging

Respect for user privacy

A single point of access for participants as well as users will be developed

A web page will be developed for the project. As mentioned previously, it will include templates, sources, references and contacts for those who are creating the content.

It will also act as a portal for users to access all of the Wyoming Memory projects.

Preservation guidelines will be agreed upon and followed by participants

The process of digitizing creates huge files. The scanning standards require that items be scanned at a high resolution for preservation purposes. The image that is served to the public is saved at a lower resolution.

Creation of preservation guidelines and procedures for the statewide project will be required before the project can progress further. Preservation guidelines must address storage, migration, security, and data preservation issues. A preservation work group will be created. Once guidelines are in place, they will be posted to the project website.

A project marketing/public relations strategy will be developed

The project will be branded and marketed using the press, radio, television, public gatherings (pep rallies) presentations, etc. A work group will be created to address this issue.

Training and a means of input and feedback will be provided to audiences

The project website will be developed with user’s needs in mind as well as those of contributors. “Training” can also be addressed in the marketing/public relations plan. Additional presentations and training sessions will also be offered.