Make the Investment!: Project management leads to success at institutions of any size

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Comments
Presentation is also available at https://osf.io/4nvxs.

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Make the Investment!
Digital Project Management

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Outline

Liberal Arts College

Research University

Shared Elements of Success
Creating Opportunities for Digital Project Management at Small Institutions

Images from left to right: Vassar College Art Historian using slide collection, Wheaton College Digital Lab, Emerson College’s Shared Shelf installation
The Rise of the Digital Initiatives Librarian

- New position, nebulous title.
- Project manager and stakeholder connector.
- Sole practitioner, but not a "solo shop".
- Diversity in projects, materials and partnerships.

Student workers collaborating on a manuscript digitization project at Wheaton College.
Small Institution Challenges

- New position, past expectations: Divorcing yourself from past positions and service models.

- Navigating potentially difficult working relationships.

- Big dreams → limited resources!

- Building, maintaining and growing relationships with the “service providers” that make a digital project possible. (i.e. Archives, Technical Services).

*Desk Set*, 1957.
University of Iowa Libraries

- Decentralized to centralized services.
- Digital work is work.
- Existing program, growing challenges.
Challenges

- One of many digital project managers.
- Project manager, not a department head.
- Being a team play vs. being a coach.

Image from Hans von Gersdorff’s *Feldtbuch der Wundartzney* (1530). University of Iowa Libraries John Martin Rare Book Room.
Shared work of project management

- Emphasize small “pm” not capital “PM”.

- Formalize a project planning process.

- Deputize sub-project managers, as needed.

Institutional Snapshots

4,134 students
1 library
20 staff members
1 year into Digital Initiatives program

32,150 students
7 libraries
174 staff members
1,011,644 files/year
≈32.5 TB/year
Principles for Success

- Maintain open lines of communication & transparency.

- Share in success and give credit!

- Be a "team player" and adopt "all hands on deck" mentality.
Tools for Success

- Develop a team.
- Leverage technology.
- Embrace systems thinking.
- Acknowledge human fallibility.

Thank you!

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Make the Investment! Digital Project Management
Email us with questions & comments, or chat with us.