Analyzing Discoverability in an MPLP World: How Levels of Description Impact Findability

Anna-Maria Arnjots  
*Utah State University*

Paul Daybell  
*Utah State University*

Kurt Alan Meyer  
*Utah State University*

Andrea Payant  
*Utah State University*

Becky Skeen  
*Utah State University*

Liz Woolcott  
*Utah State University*

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Analyzing Discoverability in an MPLP World

How Levels of Description Impact Findability

DLF Forum
October 11, 2022
Baltimore, MD
PRESENTERS

Paul Daybell  
Archival Cataloging Librarian  
paul.daybell@usu.edu

Andrea Payant  
Metadata Librarian  
andrea.payant@usu.edu

Becky Skeen  
Special Collections Cataloging Librarian  
becky.skeen@usu.edu

Liz Woolcott  
Cataloging and Metadata Services Unit Head  
liz.woolcott@usu.edu
ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTORS

Coders/Analysis
- Sara Skindelien
- Anna -Maria Arnljots
- Kurt Alan Meyer
- Melanie Shaw
- Bryn Larsen
- Maddison Gardner

Advisors/Reviewers
- Randy Williams
- Bob Parson
- Terri Jordan
- Kelly Rovegno

Thank You!!
01 BACKGROUND
DISCOVERABILITY RESEARCH PROJECTS

Multi-year phased research into user search behavior for all metadata standards employed by USU’s Cataloging and Metadata Services unit

- Phase 1: MARC records
- **Phase 2: EAD**
- Phase 3: Dublin Core
CURRENT EAD WORKFLOWS

- EAD finding aid creation and remediation done by staff in both the SCA & CMS units
- CMS created finding aids first generated in XML, with the `<dsc>` populated from an Excel spreadsheet using a mail merge process
- Once created, the finding aid is loaded into two separate locations:
  - ArchivesSpace (staff only viewing)
  - Archives West (consortia site for public viewing and searching)
EAD RESEARCH PROJECT BASICS

STEP 1
Create two versions of the same finding aid with one described at the file (box/folder) level and the other at the item level.

STEP 2
Post both finding aids online at the same time and leave up for at least a year.

STEP 3
After time is up, pull analytics for each guide and assess which descriptive level was most frequently accessed.
DUELING FINDING AIDS

- Five total collections
- Two EAD Finding Aids created for each collection
  - Identical finding aids EXCEPT the collection inventory
  - One at the box level of description
  - One at the item level of description
  - Posted online and left untouched for a minimum of 1 year
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Box 1</td>
<td>Utah Agricultural College football program</td>
<td>1904</td>
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<td>Folder 1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>1913</td>
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<td>1922-1972</td>
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<td>Box 1</td>
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<td>1945-1949</td>
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<td>1950</td>
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<td>Dates</td>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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</table>
| 1:          | Item 1: Utah Agricultural College versus University of Washington  
Washington Line-up: Crim, Babcock, Pullen, Sigsward, Railbauck, Shoudy, Tibbles, Brinker, Shaw, Dean, Clark, McElmon, Tiley Utah Line-up: Peterson, Mortensen, Nelsen, Matesen, Nelsen, Roberts, Jamisen, Fein, Engersoll, Madsen, Walngard | 1904 October 22 |
| 1:          | Item 1: Utah Agricultural College versus University of Utah  
3 copies  
University of Utah Line-up: Summer, McIntyre, Naylor, Briggs, Petersen, Barker, Wartham, Sutherland, Hamilton, Gardner, Travers Utah Agricultural College Line-up: Jones, Price, Griffin, Owen, Snow, Green, Egbert, Laurensen, E. Brossard, H. Brossard, Peterson, Williams, Doutrie, Caine, Perry, Frew, Lewis, Hendricks, Mohr. Officials: W. Hugh, Bown, D. A. Callahan | 1913        |
| 1:          | Item 1: Letter from Jack Croft organizing 1922 football team 50th reunion                                                                                                                                 | 1972 April 17 |
| 1:          | Item 2: Utah State University Football Team Roster  
Adamson, Herb; Barker, Elwood; Bowman, Will W.; Brolinbroke, Bert; Church, Rudolph; Conroy, Maurice; Cooley, Walter; Croft, Jack; Evans, James; Gardner, Bert; Gardner, Dave; Harris, S. R.; Hendricks, C. D.; Jeffs, Armond; Kirk, Harvey; Knowles, Willard B.; Leddingham, Clarence; Lindsay, Claude; Maughn, Joseph; Nelson, George (Trainer); Peterson, Venal; Romney, E. L. (Coach); Schaub, Wesley; Seigfried, Joshua; Stanger, A. G.; Whitney, Byron; Williams, Jack; Woodside, Howard; Woolley, Ray; Wrencher, John | 1922        |
| 1:          | Item 1: Utah Agricultural College versus Wyoming  
Aggle Line-up: "Reo" Conroy; "Butch" Knowles; "Jack" Croft; "Bun" Wooley; Leddingham; "Wes" Shaub; B. Gardiner; Harvey Kirk; V. Peterson; "Snell" Harris; "How" Woodside; "Lil" Evans; "Jack" Williams; Church; "Hash" Bingham; "Jack" Seigfried; D. Gardner; D. Hendricks; "Sprotto" Bowman; "Pinky" Jeffs; Adamson; "Shanty" Lindsay; Rrencher; Baker; "Joe" Maughan; Whitney; Balinkbroke; Stanger; Cooley.. Wyoming Line-up: Hegeholm; Alers; Ducker; Highleyman Johnstone; Gilber; Thompson; Pierson; Hobbs; G. Smith; C. Smith; Blanchard; Madden; King; Wittenbroker; Vandaveer; Corbett; Desmond; Coach Corbett; Manager Schlosser | 1922 November 11 |
COLLECTIONS

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

- Utah State University College Journal Index (USU 10.02:27): Collection of 16 boxes of newspaper clippings covering the University from 1890 to 1954
- Utah State University Football Programs (USU 16.1/2:55): Collection of 16 boxes of programs for football games (including team and biographies of players/coaches) from 1904-2012

FIFE FOLKLORE ARCHIVES

- Adam's Elementary Valentine's Tea Fieldwork (FOLK COLL 69): Collection of 3 boxes of interviews, slides, and cassette tapes documenting a Valentine's Tea at a local elementary school from 1995-2012
- Bear River Heritage Barn Survey (FOLK COLL 29a): Collection of 14 boxes of interviews, photographs, and fieldnotes documenting historic barns in the Bear River Heritage Area from 2002-2016
PULLING AND CODING URLs

https://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/

ark:/80444/xv901763


SEARCH TERMS

ARK

USU REPOSITORY
## AIRTABLE CODING BASE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>URLs</th>
<th>Count (URLS)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Last Name</td>
<td>Any last or family name for an individual person</td>
<td>Beckwith</td>
<td>/ark:80444/xx810485/op=fst</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>First Name</td>
<td>Any first or individual name for an individual person</td>
<td>Rob</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Institutional Name</td>
<td>Any name for a corporate entity</td>
<td>USU: Utah State University</td>
<td>/ark:80444/xx430755/op=fst</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Any term that refers to a topic not otherwise covered</td>
<td>athletics</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Any term that is a calendar year</td>
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<td>alpha+chi+omega</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Any term that reasonably comes close to the name</td>
<td>college index</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>fieldhouse</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Title (Person)</td>
<td>Any term that indicates a person's job, position, or role in an</td>
<td>head coach</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Any term that indicates a geographic location such as a city, county,</td>
<td>Franklin Idaho</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Any term that indicates the user is looking for a specific format</td>
<td>photos</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Middle Name</td>
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<td>earl wayland bowman</td>
<td>/ark:80444/xx810485/op=fst</td>
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</tbody>
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Utah State University men's basketball programs, 1948-1991

Overview of the Collection

Creator: Utah State University
Title: Utah State University men's basketball programs
Dates: 1948-1991 (Inclusive)
Quantity: 11 boxes, (5.5 linear feet)
Collection Number: USU_16.1/3:55a
Summary: This collection contains highlights of the Utah State University men's basketball programs.
Repository: Utah State University, Merrill-Cazier Library, Special Collections and Archives Division
Special Collections & Archives
Merrill-Cazier Library
Utah State University
Logan, UT
84322-3000
Telephone: 4357978248
Fax: 4357972880
scweb@usu.edu
Access Restrictions: No restrictions on use, except: not available through interlibrary loan.
Languages: English

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain any necessary copyright clearances.

Permission to publish material from the Utah State University men's basketball programs must be obtained from the University Archivist and/or the Special Collections Department Head.

Preferred Citation

Initial Citation: Utah State University men's basketball programs USU_16.1/3:55a. Special Collections and Archives, Utah State University Merrill-Cazier Library, Logan, Utah.

Following Citations: USU_16.1/3:55a, USUSCA.
03 RESULTS & TAKEAWAYS
MAJOR THEMES

NAMES
Are the most common searches

PAGEVIEWS
Are driven by the Collection Inventory

INVENTORY
Lack of robust Collection Inventory negatively impacts discoverability
RESEARCH QUESTION

WHAT TYPE OF SEARCH TERMS ARE MOST COMMONLY USED BY PATRONS AND WHERE ARE THEY FOUND IN THE FINDING AID?
RESEARCH QUESTION 1

77.86% Of search terms were names

95% Of all search terms were found in the Collection Inventory

76% Of URLs with search terms, matched only the <scopecontent> and <unittitle> tags
IS THERE A MEASURABLE DIFFERENCE IN DISCOVERABILITY AND USER INTERACTIONS BETWEEN FINDING AIDS DESCRIBED TO THE ITEM-LEVEL AND FINDING AIDS DESCRIBED TO THE BOX OR FOLDER LEVEL?
RESEARCH QUESTION 2

6,100 %
Item-level descriptions were 61x more discoverable

98.39 %
Of all pageviews occurred in item-level description finding aids

3,750 %
Item-level finding aids were accessed on 37.5x more days that file-level finding aids
RESEARCH QUESTION

HOW DO SEARCH PARAMETERS IMPACT DISCOVERABILITY FOR FILE-LEVEL DESCRIPTION VS. ITEM-LEVEL DESCRIPTION?
RESEARCH QUESTION 3

1,020%
Item-level finding aids averaged 1,020% more pageviews for instances where search parameters are known (database searches)

20,420%
Item-level averaged 20,420% more pageviews for instances where search parameters are unknown (browser-driven traffic)

90%
Of URLs with search terms matched with item-level, only 5% matching with file-level
WHAT DO WE DO WITH THIS?

NAME
Use personal names wherever feasible

IDENTIFY
Existing collections that could improve with item-level description

COMBINE WORKFLOWS
Use the item-level metadata created during digitization to expand collection inventories

INVESTIGATE
Conduct further research
Results published in the *Journal of Archival Organization*

CONTRIBUTORS

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Thank You!!
QUESTIONS?

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paul.daybell@usu.edu

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Metadata Librarian
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becky.skeen@usu.edu

Liz Woolcott
Cataloging and Metadata Services Unit Head
liz.woolcott@usu.edu

THANK YOU!