AMICO
www.amico.org
Art Museum Image Consortium: creating a collaborative cultural resource
University of Toronto
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What is AMICO?
• independent, non-profit, consortium of institutions with collections of art
• Mission: enable educational use of museum multimedia

Why AMICO?
• encourage broad use of museum collections
• create common library for consistency and ease of use
• administer educational licenses efficiently
• facilitate interchange of experience and ideas
• build links among museum and user communities

AMICO’s Challenges
• Content
  – What are we going to distribute?
• Documentation
  – How will it be described?
• Technology
  – How do we digitize, and provide access to it?
• Intellectual Property
  – Do we have the rights?
• Economics
  – Can we pay for it?
• Community Building
  – Why would we collaborate?
  – Who wants it, and what will they do with it?

Shared by all creators of information resources

Creating and Delivering the AMICO Library

AMICO Members
• established Consortium (1997)
• govern programs
• work on committees
• pay dues (equal to subscription costs)
• contribute to the Library annually
• use the Library
• see participation as part of their educational mission
AMICO’s Governance

- Board members are elected.
- The Board oversees the AMICO’s governance.
- Members may name representatives to the Board.

AMICO

- assists members
  - advice, training and support
  - specifications, best practices
- manages agreements
  - artists rights, distributors, licenses
- compiles library
  - verifies data formats, vocabulary
  - enhances indexing and authority control
  - validates image and multimedia files
  - ensures record structure, links
  - transfers to distributors

AMICO Works

Works in the AMICO Library are documented by a catalog record, and image and an image metadata record. Other multimedia may also be included.

AMICO Distribution

- AMICO Thumbnail Catalog
  - on Web for public access
- ResearchLibrariesGroup (RLG)
  - university access
- OhioLINK library consortia
  - on campus college access (under development)
- H.W. Wilson
  - Primary & Secondary Schools, Public Libraries and international users
- Cartography Associates
  - Image oriented users, instructors and art historians
- VTLS
  - Multi-lingual Unicode interface, international users
- Other Distributors, SCARAN, EBSCO, soon
- Different access for distinct communities and functional needs

Adding Distributors

- Research Libraries Group (RLG) - 1998
- OhioLink - 1998
- University of Michigan - 1999
- VTLs - January 2002
- Cartography Associates - September 2002
- SCARAN - Winter 2002
- EBSCO - 2003 planned launch
Subscriber Update

• New Distributors bring new user communities
  – Wilson - K-12
  – VTLS - international, small colleges, libraries
  – Cartography - slide libraries, visual studies
• Consortia bring benefits to smaller schools
  – Nylink – a library consortium in New York State
  – OhioLINK – Ohio wide university license
  – JISC – UK wide university license
  – FSC – Florida wide state university license
• # of Subscribers increasing significantly

AMICO Uses

Issues

• Content
• Documentation
• Technology
• Intellectual Property
• Economics
• Community Building

Issues: Content

• collections development
  – ~100,000 works
• critical mass
  – of what, for whom?
  – breadth vs depth
• authoritative documentation
  – text, image, multimedia
• persistence
  – access over time to same works

Suggest a Work

Issues: Documentation

• data specification
  – separate display data from access data
  – field level guidelines (for indexing dates, terms)
• editorial consistency
  – shared authority files and indexing rules
  – existing tools aren’t enough (~30% of Names not in ULAN)
• link to metadata standards
• cross-resource discovery
  – AMICO Library links to other resources
  e.g. bibliography and full texts
Contribution Management System

Editorial Highlights

- Accomplishments for Year 2001-2002
  - Object Type standardization
  - Date Indexing
  - Culture Indexing
  - Added Cataloging Examples to Members Site
- In Progress
  - Creator Reference File
  - Hierarchical Culture Index
- On the Horizon
  - More Creators
  - Shared Guidelines to document "born-digital" art
  - Styles and Periods

Issues: Technology Systems

- Members
  - collections management systems, image capture, audio, video, multimedia, extended text. The challenge of Integrated Workflow
- AMICO
  - contribution management, image and text validation, multimedia, member and distributor support. The challenge of Integrating Knowledge
- Distributors
  - software supporting searching, manipulation, presentation, and the teaching process. The challenge of Integrated Interfaces
- Subscribers
  - local on-campus systems, OPACs, Web pages. The challenge of Integrated Resource Delivery
- Users
  - own analytical, research, study systems. The challenge of Usability.

Issues: More Technology

- platform independent multimedia
- consistent and unique naming
- verification and maintenance of links
  - each AMICO work is a multi-part object
- consistent capture standards
- systems security, user authentication
- authenticity
- archival strategy

Issues: Intellectual Property

- consistent terms and conditions
  - common agreements, no special terms
- distinct licenses for user communities
  - primary school uses different from university
- artists rights negotiated
  - agreements with Artists Rights Society & VAGA
- protection
  - social and legal mechanisms vs. technological means
  - Pursuing social and legal control as needed

Technical Highlights

- Accomplishments for Year 2001-2002
  - Contribution Management Site Re-designed
    (http://update.amico.org)
  - XML DTD and export
  - New indexing tools for Object Type and Creation Dates
- In Progress
  - Creator Reference File
- On the Horizon
  - XML Import
  - Contribution Data Download
  - RDF experiments with the W3C

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Page 5
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Issues: Economics

- self supporting not-for-profit
  - cost-recovery required
  - not dependent on grant funding for core activities
  - long-term sustainability a key goal
- all institutional participants have stake
  - no money returned to members
  - subscription fees support activities of the consortium
  - incentives for distributors & subscribers to develop tools and add value
- keep access free at point of use

Issues: Community Building

- shared mission enables collaboration
  - not-for-profit and educational focus
- consistent terms for participants
  - common, transparent, formula-based agreements
- open multi-way communications
  - public specifications: technical and data
  - known license terms
- shared risks and benefits
  - members collaborate online
  - users share experiences
  - all build expertise

AMICO’s Committees

AMICO as example

- building multimedia digital libraries requires new methods and strategies
- social, economic, legal and technological challenges
  - integration of people, institutions and systems
- technology is an enabler not an end in itself
  - image databases only one small part of the picture

Collaboration

key to scalable and sustainable solutions that work across communities and support shared missions
More info?

ArtMuseumImage Consortium
http://www.amico.org
info@amico.org

(PS. AMICO is hiring student interns and some full-time employees; e-mail your vita and job interest)