Repository Development at the Library of Congress

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Abstract

Last year the Library of Congress acquired approximately 25 million unique files, comprising everything from scanned government documents to recordings of oral histories. The Repository Development Center (RDC) at the Library of Congress is a team of software developers responsible for building the tools and services that support the digital content lifecycle for these large, heterogeneous collections.

The RDC does not manage the Library of Congress digital repository as one software development project. Instead, we conceive of smaller projects as a partnership between developers and content owners. These projects are iteratively and pragmatically managed on small project teams. This is all done in close collaboration with our colleagues making curatorial decisions.

We will present a number of the tools and services developed and implemented by the RDC, in the context of the Library of Congress content lifecycle: accession, selection, description, preservation, and access. We will offer both demonstrations and links to open source releases where available. We continue by discussing the software development process at the Library of Congress: how we choose projects, use of open source software, iterative development, improvement of our processes, openness, and connectedness to our communities.

We conclude with an overview of projects that are currently available to the public in hope of attracting collaboration from others in the community.

Biography

David Brunton is a computer programmer with seventeen years of experience in all aspects of software development from coding to architecture and management. Prior to joining the Library of Congress, he successfully managed a series of small private sector software companies. He lives with his wife and four children on a farm near Annapolis, MD.

Kate Zwaard is the acting Chief of the Repository Development Center at the Library of Congress where she manages software development in support of the digital content lifecycle. Prior to joining LC, she worked at the Government Printing Office, where she helped conceptualize and develop the FDsys system. An advocate for digital preservation and open government, she co-chairs the NDSA Standards Committee and has co-chaired the PREMIS editorial committee.