

RECEIVED

NOV 19 2008

IDAHO COMMISSION FOR LIBRARIES

Project: Lili-Quick Docs (State Documents Digitization Project)
Project Director: Charlotte Fowles: Idaho Commission for Libraries (former Idaho State Library)
Project # T05352-00
Evaluator: Vicki Kreimeyer
Date: November 19, 2008

Project Purpose:

As stated in the grant application, the purpose was "...to identify digital documents relevant to Idaho history classes, create a database, load the documents and create or modify metadata for each document. Selected state agencies are needed as partners to provide original documents and promotional support. 20 middle and high schools were identified across the state to be the focus for promoting use of the materials in the classroom."

Evaluation Process:

- Read the grant proposal and quarterly reports
- Interviewed the project director
- Viewed the I-Docs digital database

Evaluation:

Lili Quick Docs successfully achieved its defined objectives. Documents and key state digital images were identified with input from classroom teachers, targeting students of Idaho history. State agencies were cooperative, especially the Secretary of State who provided master files for the *Idaho Constitution*, and *Idaho Blue Book*. The project director developed a contract so that initial work was accomplished by an experienced cataloger/metadata expert, which greatly expedited the tagging process. The consultant then taught the project director, so that she was then able to continue adding to the database beyond the initial documents selected. The database developed exceeded the goal of 400 items by 37%; 637 items were included in the test database. Teacher feedback was sought and received. Database use has been robust; for the three months during the grant period of September 2006-November 2006, over 16,000 hits were recorded. In a comparable period of January – March 2008, over 50,000 hits were recorded.

Key Elements of Success:

From my perspective, elements important to the projects success included:

- Thoughtful pre-planning over a 10 month period prior to preparing the grant application;

- Clear, well defined, and reasonably attainable objectives were developed;
- An engaged group of classroom teachers from a variety of schools throughout the state advised and provided feedback to the project director so that materials were appropriate and curriculum centered;
- Continued contact with teaching community through phone and emails following in-person visits at the schools by the project director;
- Contract with experienced librarian cataloger/meta-tagger, who created records for the first core materials and taught the project director so that she could continue the work;
- Even though this was the first grant funded project for the project director, she took full advantage of resources at ICFL to assist her with the grant process and reporting requirements;
- When the contract with an outside vendor to scan the Idaho Constitution and Blue Book were unsuccessful, enough project time and funds had been planned that the resources were successfully scanned locally;
- Nightly back ups were planned so that the developed database remains secure and all work done each day is preserved.
- Targeting a specific age group of students, matching the materials to curriculum need, and partnering with teachers contributed to the frequent uses of the database and its ease of use, as documented in the statistics and follow up survey.

Project Sustainability:

Project sustainability is always a desired goal when new projects begin with grant funds. This project demonstrates positive steps towards sustainability and provides a foundation for future developments in the following ways:

- 10 -15 documents can be added per month by current staff within the criteria set by the project, thus continuing the database's growth and development; and
- Content DM, the software platform, has been continued as a state wide license by the ICFL.

The project demonstrated careful planning, identified a strategically targeted audience with specific information need for easy access to full text Idaho history documents. The outreach to teachers in 20 communities, visits to the schools, and follow up communication were essential to the success and the use of the database. Sufficient planning time allowed the project to be completed even though an unanticipated problem developed with an outside vendor. Teachers were informed with book marks, updates by email and personal contacts by the project director. And finally, the project director's own skill set was enlarged and she is able to continue adding to the database as appropriate for this purpose.

Further Enhancements and Development:

There are activities that would further enhance and develop this tool for the library community, the education community and the public at large. From my perspective such activities would include:

- Increase outreach to schools through targeting an additional 10 schools per year for personal contact by the project director;
- Continue to promote use to the broader school library community, teachers, and public library communities through presentations at appropriate regional and state wide conferences;
- Provide age appropriate materials for the teachers of the fourth grade Idaho history assignments and for children's librarians in public libraries;
- Make more bookmarks available to both public and school communities; and
- Promote in creative ways using technology that reaches these audiences – links through Google, Wikipedia, blogs etc. all provide ways to increase traffic to I-Docs as it grows and develops. For example, when searching Google for Idaho Document now, I-Docs is first on the list – additional sites will emerge as the use of social networking technology increases.

The future of digitization of Idaho historic documents and images is further brightened by the successful effort to make the Idaho Commission for Libraries the official depository for digital documents. Legislation passed in the last session provides this authorization, and a librarian has been hired to lead this effort at the Commission. Efforts made in this pilot project to support the study of Idaho history provide invaluable experience for the expanded mission of the Idaho Commission. The two efforts nicely compliment each other, and will serve to enhance and increase access for Idaho's citizens to the work of their elected officials and public agencies.