OLAQ

8-1-2019

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The Oregon Digital Newspaper Program (ODNP) at the University of Oregon Libraries is an initiative to digitize historic and current Oregon newspapers, making them freely available to the public through a keyword-searchable online database. The ODNP is committed to open access and has included collaboration and data sharing with larger programs like the Library of Congress' Chronicling America historic newspaper website. Since 2015, the ODNP has increased its open access mission by archiving and hosting born-digital newspaper content, as well as continuing digitization of historic newspapers from microfilm and print. This article outlines the ODNP's past and current open access efforts, inclusion of diverse content, and open source, sustainable applications, websites, and workflows.

Background

Founded in 2009 with a combination of grant funding from Library Services & Technology Act (LSTA), Oregon Cultural Trust, and the National Endowment for the Humanities' National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) in partnership with the Library of Congress, the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program at the University of Oregon (UO) Libraries has provided online access to historic Oregon newspapers for nearly 10 years. A precursor to the digital program, the Oregon Newspaper Microfilming Program, began in the 1950s at UO Libraries, where microfilm was created from participating newspapers from across the state, with positive film reels distributed to a multitude of Oregon libraries. While UO Libraries no longer microfilms newspapers, the Libraries have continued to pursue newspaper digitization and hosting of born-digital newspapers that can be accessed from the Historic Oregon Newspapers website (http://oregonnews.uoregon.edu).

Since 2009, the ODNP has received three grants from NDNP, along with additional grants from LSTA, Oregon Cultural Trust, Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association, and private donations. The detailed history of the development of the Program, as well as the first digitization projects that were completed, is outlined by Sheila Rabun in "Oregon Digital Newspaper Program: Preserving History While Shaping the Future" (Rabun, 2012). The Program has changed and grown over the past couple of years by relying less on grants from large organizations and adding new types of newspaper content to create a more diverse and inclusive digital newspaper repository. In January 2019, the ODNP website surpassed one

million pages of newspaper content, and the Program has several digitization projects in the active and upcoming digitization queues. External funding has been vital to the foundation and sustainability of the Program over the years, and recently the ODNP has made conscious decisions to become more independent and self-sustainable by adding a wider variety of historic and current newspapers to the collection, updating workflows and systems, and truly espousing open access principles of preservation and free access to digital newspapers.

Expanding Digitization and Partnerships

The ODNP's first steps to becoming more self-sufficient began in 2015, with funding from the LSTA Next Generation Newspapers grant, which enabled the transition to a self-supporting newspaper digitization Program. UO Libraries ceased microfilming newspapers in 2015, and the ODNP began accepting and archiving born-digital newspaper PDFs from current publishers, as well as photographing newspapers from print. The Program's decision to preserve born-digital newspapers and end the microfilming project was not only due to the change in direction of newspaper publishing and preservation, but also because to the limitations of the grant-based programs like NDNP, which enforces a limit on how much and what quality newspapers can be digitized. The support from NDNP and Chronicling America allowed the Program to digitize 700,000 pages; however, Chronicling America only allows digitization in grayscale with black and white microfilm. Also, until recently, they only allowed newspaper content in the Public Domain, up to 1923. They recently extended the date range of newspapers that they will digitize through 1963, but these papers have to be thoroughly proven free of copyright. The restrictions also exclude color images and current newspapers that are not microfilmed, including the plethora of born-digital news.

During this transitional phase, Newspapers.com (https://www.newspapers.com/) also approached the Program to digitize the University of Oregon's large collection of master negative microfilm to add to their online database. Institutions that have a subscription to Newspapers.com, including UO Libraries, have access to this content, but it will not be openly accessible to all until it is uploaded to the ODNP website in 2020, at the conclusion of a five year embargo period. This partnership was a great way to digitize around thirty titles, including spans of years for the *Oregon Daily Journal* and the *Oregon Statesman,* but the Program is interested in partnering with open access projects and initiatives moving forward. For instance, in 2018, the Program partnered with Reveal Digital (http://revealdigital.com/), a project that crowdsources library funding to collectively digitize and provide open access to diverse, often hidden collections. ODNP contributed the digital images of *The Western American,* an Oregon KKK newspaper from 1922–1923 to the Hate in America: White Nationalism and the Press in the 1920s project.

The ODNP has strived to include diverse and inclusive voices in the digital newspaper collection since its foundation with the digitization of *The New Northwest, The New Age, Portland New Age, Weekly Chemawa American, The Chemawa American,* and more feminist, African American, and Native American titles. This past year the ODNP was fortunate to receive an anonymous donation for the digitization of *Just Out,* 1983–2011, a landmark LGBTQ+ publication from Portland, and five other Portland-based titles from the 20th century. These include the African American owned and operated titles *The Advocate,* edited by Beatrice Morrow Cannady, the *Portland Inquirer,* the *Oregon Mirror,* and the *Portland Challenger.* These titles will begin to appear online in early 2019. Diversity and inclusion for ODNP also applies to other local newspapers like high school and college newspapers,

smaller neighborhood newspapers, and content that is often overlooked in national newspaper digitization programs. *The Amplifier* of West Linn High School was digitized in 2018, and select issues of *The Grantonian*, the student newspaper of U.S. Grant High School in Portland will be digitized this year.

Born-Digital News

Collection and preservation of born-digital, currently publishing newspapers has been the greatest change to ODNP in the past few years. Over 100,000 of the 1 million pages online are from current publishers from across the state. There are several reasons, apart from preservation and access, for the benefits of this program. Compared to images scanned from microfilm, born-digital images offer better legibility and more precise keyword search results. Also, public libraries that are invested in adding their local titles to ODNP offer external outreach, support, and quality control for the PDF uploads. Local librarians often check coverage of the online collection before physical copies of the newspapers are discarded, and the Program greatly appreciates this active concern for the coverage of the collection.

Figure 1. Title page of *The Asian reporter*, a participant in the current newspapers program.

Current publishers are often hesitant to join the Program in order to maintain revenue control of their digital archives. With embargos, the Program is working on more flexible and appealing submission options for publishers. ODNP is constantly trying to add more current newspapers to the website with outreach and frequent communication with publishers across the state. Another goal for 2019 is to lower the barrier for participation with easier uploading and PDF validation/verification for publishers contributing PDFs. Currently, this submission process is done via SSH File Transfer Protocol (SFTP), which can be difficult for some small publishers to manage. Newspaper operations that do not have a programmer on hand to automate the upload process must add manual file uploads into their already busy workflows, placing a burden on smaller publishers especially. Creating an easier submission process is an important next step in ensuring small publications can participate and preserve their newspaper archives. This new process could also be beneficial for the other internal digitization workflows and quality assurance of ODNP.

Technological Independence

With the decision to collect, preserve, and host born-digital news, the ODNP website software and user interface also had to be reconsidered. The software created for the Chronicling America project and NDNP partners, Chronam, was not as customizable as other state-wide digital newspaper programs wanted it to be. In 2015, staff from UO Libraries, the University of Nebraska Libraries, and Penn State Libraries, met to develop the Open Online Newspaper Initiative (Open-ONI) (https://github.com/open-oni), which is an open source, collaboratively-developed newspaper-hosting software. Open-ONI's goal is "to lower the entrance bar for libraries, archives, historical societies, and other cultural heritage institutions to display digital newspaper content. [The team] was formed in response to a need for free, easily deployable, flexible, plug-and-play software that is useful for collections large and small, local and national." (Dussault et al, 2017).

The ODNP website upgrade to Open-ONI took place in the summer of 2017, and the migration took a little over a month to complete. The new website has a modern interface with the out-of-the-box template that allows for easy customization and interoperability on mobile devices. There are also new features like the "This day in history" feature, built by Linda Sato, Programmer at UO Libraries, a redesigned map, and a calendar feature for searching by date. As a community-developed and maintained software from the Open-ONI partners, there is easier upkeep and ability to have integrated code with the core repository.

Other systems-related improvements have been made to the in-house workflows and processes for handling the large volume of digitized and born-digital newspaper content. The Newspaper Curation Application (NCA) (https://tinyurl.com/y5fc6lcz) was developed in 2016 by Jeremy Echols, Analyst Programmer at UO Libraries, to assist students with organizing, processing, applying metadata, and providing quality control to the newspaper PDFs. In the web-based application, student employees can check PDF upload submissions from publishers participating in the current newspapers program, apply metadata to the PDFs, and review other metadata entries. For ODNP staff, NCA has tools to track issues as they move through the workflow, add new titles and corresponding MARC information, and control the access permissions of the student employees. The open source code of NCA is available on Github.

Figure 2 and 3. The old and new website homepage of the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program.

Looking forward, there is another hurdle the Program has encountered and will need to address—archiving of Oregon-based news websites that do not have print or PDF editions. This year, the Program had to reject one newspaper's online issues that could not be transformed into legible PDFs with searchable OCR text for the website. In 2019, web archiving solutions will be investigated with a focus on low barrier technologies, open source tools, and automated processes for collecting and preserving these websites. There is also the possibility that investigation of these technologies could assist with the overall PDF submission process from publishers and libraries, as well.

Fig. 4. Metadata entry workflow page for students to input newspaper metadata in NCA.

Future Partnerships and Projects

ODNP is primarily supported by UO Libraries by funding staff time, equipment, and digital storage that is devoted to the Program. The per-page fees for newspaper digitization support student positions that assist with digitization, metadata, and quality review. These costs are $0.65 per microfilm page and $0.85 per print page, if photography is needed for physical papers. The costs for newspaper digitization can be prohibitive for small institutions. To assist with fundraising efforts, the ODNP created a Fundraising How-to Guide on the ODNP blog (https://odnp.uoregon.edu/fundraising-and-grant-writing-how-to-guide/), which includes best practices for direct fundraising, grant writing, and a list of grants and fundraising resources in Oregon that are supportive of newspaper digitization projects. This guide has been a successful and empowering resource for newspaper digitization advocates across Oregon.

At present, there are several ways to partner with the Program for newspaper digitization. Local public libraries, historical societies, museums, and newspaper enthusiasts have been vital to adding to the contemporary and historical coverage on the website by advocating for funds for newspaper digitization and reaching out to the publishers of their local newspapers to consider joining the current newspapers program. The recent digitization of the *Coquille City Herald, Coquille Herald,* and *The Coquille Valley Sentinel* (in process) has been a multi-year digitization project led by Bert Dunn, a community member and author, who is leading outreach for donations to fund the incremental digitization of these reels. Inquiries are often made about a minimum cost for starting a digitization project—there is none! Reels can be added as funding allows, which hopefully provides more flexibility for local budgets and supporters of Oregon cultural heritage.

In 2018, the Program extended the PDF submission workflow and process, allowing public libraries and other organizations that cannot afford the cost of microfilm digitization and have digitized their local title(s) in-house to submit them to the ODNP at a reduced rate of $0.40 per page. Vernonia Public Library initiated this workflow by contributing scanned PDFs of newspapers from the area, *The Independent* and the *Vernonia's Voice.* These workflows are being refined in hopes that other libraries that have digitized their newspapers for local use would be interested in sharing with the Program (with appropriate technical specifications and copyright permissions) for hosting and preservation on the website.

There are still more refinements that can be made to the internal and external workflows, more newspapers to add to the website, and more partnerships to be initiated. Open access standards for the Program have extended and will continue to extend beyond access to the newspapers; it impacts the day-to-day processes, supported systems and tools, and collaborations and partnerships. The recent changes in the past few years have not changed the core mission of the Program—our commitment to providing free online access to historic Oregon newspapers. 🐉

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