

Providing Web access to special collections

Digitization project focuses on popular (but fragile) postcards



Situation

When California's Pomona Public Library first considered a digitization project, Library Systems Manager Bruce Guter admits the library had a lot to learn. "We were a late starter in digitization technology and we had limitations in staff and familiarity with the new technology," says Guter. "But, we had a special collection—the Frasher Foto Postcard Collection—that we wanted to digitize and began looking for a solution that could help us."

A commercial photographer, Burton Frasher created and sold picture postcards of the southwestern United States from the early 1920s to the 1950s. He died in 1955 and in the mid-1960s his family donated his materials—including photographic postcards and prints, negatives and indexes of his collections—to the Pomona Public Library.

"We started from ground zero when we undertook this digitization project and found CONTENTdm® as a tool," says Guter. "When we began our project we wanted to find something that would provide a preservation strategy and further the preservation of our fragile special collections."

Solution

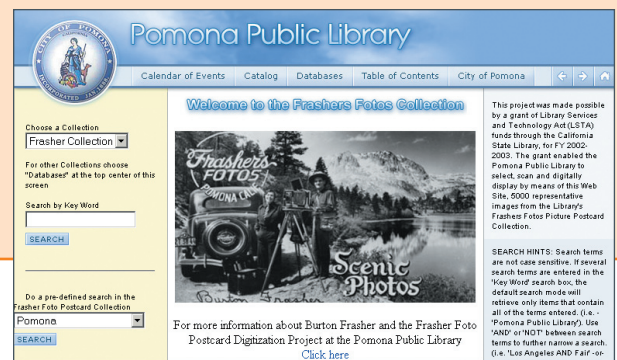
Pomona Public purchased CONTENTdm, OCLC's digital collection management software after considering a number of other digitization tools. Guter and his staff wanted a tool that would handle multiple collections and all types of original media formats, including video, audio and multidimensional objects.

"We wanted something that we could use for this project and others in the future," says Guter. "**It's fast and easy to use** and provides **a total media management tool**, which is what we were after."

AT A GLANCE

Pomona Public Library, Pomona, California

- 35 miles east of Los Angeles
- Serves a community of over 150,000
- Digital Collection: Frasher Foto Postcard Collection
- Total digital objects: 8,000
- <http://content.ci.pomona.ca.us/>



"We found CONTENTdm to be perfect for us."

Pomona Public Library's digitization of the Frasher Collection was made possible by a grant of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds through the California State Library for FY 2002–2003.

Pomona Public has used CONTENTdm to select, scan and display more than 8,000 images from the Frasher Collection on the project's Web site. The project used CONTENTdm to create, organize, publish and retrieve the digital objects that appear on the project Web site at <http://content.ci.pomona.ca.us/>.

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Results

“Our Frasher Collection has proven **very popular with library users,**” reports Guter. “We get inquiries about it from all over the country. Most recently, we were contacted by a film production company that is making a documentary for the PBS American Experience TV program and is interested in Frasher’s photos of Las Vegas.”

“As with any digitization project, the chief virtue of all this is that you’re able to provide **access to materials that otherwise you cannot make available because they are so fragile,**” says Guter.

Currently, there are nine separate collections of digitized photographs and images available from Pomona Public Library's Web site.

For more information about CONTENTdm Digital Collection Management Software, please visit www.oclc.org/CONTENTdm/, call 1-800-848-5878, ext. 4301 or send e-mail to contentdm@oclc.org.