



ARLIS/NA October 2009 Lunchtime Chat Transforming Visual Resources in the 21st Century [transcript]

Heather We'll start our chat in about 10 minutes.

11:50 Heather As you join us, feel free to introduce yourself (or not). Whichever you prefer.

11:51 Heather You can also click on "edit nickname" to change your guest name.

11:52 Heather The "edit nickname" link is right below the box you write in.

11:52 Heather Hi Elizabeth!

11:52 Elizabeth Schaub Hello!

11:57 Amanda Hi everyone, I'm Amanda from the University of Chicago VRC

11:58 Heather Hey Amanda, glad you could join us! We'll get rolling in just a few minutes.

12:01 Heather Welcome everyone! Today's chat is moderated by Elizabeth Schaub, Visual Resources Collection Director at the University of Texas at Austin. We're going to chat about Transforming Visual Resources in the 21st Century. Take it away Elizabeth...

12:02 Elizabeth Schaub I'm looking forward to this afternoon's exchange of ideas. Let's start by addressing change, in a general sense, since it's something that those of us in the visual resources community have been facing head on for quite some time.

12:02 Elizabeth Schaub How have you been coping with change in your workplace?

12:03 Elizabeth Schaub Make that "coping" not comping.

12:03 Amanda Well, for us communication has been key. Just making sure to have an open exchange with faculty and staff about changes that are taking place...

12:05 Elizabeth Schaub Communicating with your faculty and students is extremely important.

12:06 Elizabeth Schaub What about communicating with your direct supervisor?

12:07 pefry I'm trying to get "my" faculty used to the idea that I won't be "their" personal librarian for much longer. The only way for this type of position to survive as a librarian position is to be a campus-wide image reference and resource librarian

12:07 Elizabeth Schaub What strategies have you used to stay abreast of new technologies?

12:08 Elizabeth Schaub I agree with pefry. The use of images is ubiquitous across campus and we need to find ways to collaborate with our colleagues in other units.

12:10 Elizabeth Schaub How are faculty responding to the idea that they might not have your undivided attention in this brave new world?

12:12 Heather Can you give some examples of things you are doing at UT Austin?

12:13 Elizabeth Schaub The collection that I manage sits administratively within the School of Architecture. However, we have made our collection available to the entire campus community through ARTstor's institutional hosting program.

12:13 Heather ARTstor seems like a good gateway into larger university collaboration.

12:14 Heather Are any of you collaborating on institutional repository projects?

12:14 Elizabeth Schaub We are working with the University of Texas Libraries who administer the Digital Repository.

12:15 Elizabeth Schaub We initiated a project currently called Student Work Archive Project. The goal is to channel student work into the Digital Repository. Faculty would require students to submit their work as part of the course requirements.

12:16 Elizabeth Schaub This is an example of how we are broadening our scope within the school while contributing to a larger university initiative.

12:16 Heather What other types of cross-campus projects are you (chatters) working on at your institutions? Don't be shy! It's not a chat with out you...

12:18 Elizabeth Schaub Anyone?

12:19 Amanda Recently, we have facilitated grant-funded digitization projects that are based in other departments.

12:19 pefry My digital collection is almost entirely pedagogical, and it's only the unique, institutionally related collections that are targeted for the institutional repository.

12:19 guest9433381 Sounds like we have similar situations, Eileen.

12:20 guest9433381 However, our institution hasn't even developed a repository for those unique, institutionally related collections yet!

12:20 guest9433381 We're hoping that can be something the library and VMR staff can collaborate with.

12:20 Elizabeth Schaub Absolutely!

12:21 UCLA ARTstor is also used at UC for sharing images accross campuses, but in the difficult budget situation in California we have also seen the closing down of some of the VR collections on some of our campuses. A double-edged sword!

12:21 pefry I wish we all knew with certainty what the future of ARTStor Hosting will be. It seems to be more acceptable for us to host our pedagogical collections inside ARTStor, than to have them in with archival collections

12:21 Elizabeth Schaub That is a good point. ARTstor is currently working on Shared Shelf which is going to provide hosting plus many more features.

12:22 Elizabeth Schaub However, it remains to be seen if there will be a cost associated with Shared Shelf (in addition to the annual licensing fee).

12:23 pefry The Library has agreed to fund ARTstor. Whether they will fund Shared Shelf remains to be seen. I think it would give status to item-level image cataloging.

12:23 Elizabeth Schaub A question posed by Ann Whiteside in her article on the recommended reading list is one I thought we could explore: "What services should we be providing if we are no longer the primary image source?"

12:24 UCLA I recall hearing a library administrator ponder (just a few years ago) whether ARTstor's funding model was sustainable in the long term. So I know that is still something that is of concern. As is the annual cost for large institutions.

12:25 pefry I think there is going to come "a great divide". Departments may be willing to pay for technology support. Libraries may be willing to pay for specialized cataloging and image reference. I don't think either is going to pay for both

12:26 Elizabeth Schaub Yes, eliminating redundancies in tough economic times is a priority for most institutions.

12:26 guest7913293 As for other services, ideally we could train faculty and their teaching assistants to find and use images in presentations, but unfortunately this can put us in competition with other campus units responsible for "media training."

12:27 Elizabeth Schaub How can we work with the "competition" to maximize benefits for faculty and students?

12:28 pefry Yes, I'm signed up for a workshop next week on Adobe Presenter that they are doing for faculty. For too long, my faculty have let me go to these things and then pass the info on to them. Those days may be over

12:28 AmyT It would be great if we could offer courses or training through that department, but the reception to that was not warm. Hopefully it is a different story on other campuses?

12:29 Heather Have you tried a center program, like the one I just mentioned? Usually the people running these programs are very happy for the help.

12:29 Heather I meant "central program"...sigh...

12:30 Elizabeth Schaub It seems to be a challenge to entice faculty to attend training session en masse.

12:30 pefry Yep, they just don't like that method of instruction

12:30 guest9433381 Yes, here it's very much a culture of one-on-one instruction, if at all.

12:30 AmyT Yes, I think they are more receptive to one-on-one training, or for signing up their t.a.s!

12:31 Elizabeth Schaub Betha Whitlow at Washington University, St. Louis has been able to provide training during faculty meetings.

12:31 Elizabeth Schaub Having a captive audience helps.

12:32 pefry But that's actually an expensive luxury. I think I will be able to continue to offer faculty assistance with image-related software and technology, but it's going to have to be a broader base of faculty, and more within a library context

12:32 Heather Do folks working for departments (art, architecture, etc.) feel like it would be out-of-bounds to teach "Teaching with Images" classes to broader audiences on campus.

12:33 Elizabeth Schaub How might that type of class get facilitated outside the department?

12:33 Karyn Hinkle I liked pefry's idea of centering such a class in the library context.

12:34 UCLA Some campuses have centers for teaching effectiveness where this kind of thing is taught.

12:34 Heather Look to see if anyone is already teaching this. If not, offer to teach one. There really is a need.

12:35 Elizabeth Schaub Again, this points to the need to partner across campus and in so doing raising the profile of what you have to offer in terms of knowledge and expertise.

12:35 Elizabeth Schaub How are you currently staying on the radar screens of image users?

12:35 pefry I think this gets to an important problem. How to establish our "expert" credentials outside the departmental context. I have to be careful not to tread on toes about this

12:37 Elizabeth Schaub It's important to practice diplomacy so having an informal chat over coffee might be a way to start the conversation in a non-threatening way.

12:37 Amanda The humanities division hosts weekly "Tech Talks" which are informal, brown-bag style presentations on different technology-related items within the division. We usually present something on images once per quarter.

12:38 Elizabeth Schaub Do you find that the Tech Talks lead to more interaction with faculty and students after you've given them?

12:38 Amanda Usually not art history faculty and students, but that's how we've received questions from other departments within the humanities.

12:39 Amanda Basically, it increases our presence on campus in an informal way

12:39 pefry I've had more luck "advising" a contact in our Tech Learning center about issues particular to images, and we communicate regularly. Information sharing - yes. Teaching in their center - No

12:40 Elizabeth Schaub How do you stay engaged with your local faculty and students who might be using a plethora of image resources including the one you manage?

12:41 Heather Even librarians would benefit from some good new ideas about that. :~) Staying in touch with people outside the main depts we serve. Tricky.

12:42 Elizabeth Schaub Has anyone been leveraging social networking tools?

12:42 AmyT Well, I have a blog that no one but me reads!

12:42 Elizabeth Schaub Really?!

12:42 Heather Ha!

12:42 pefry When I see something new that's really good I forward it to the appropriate Subject/Area Librarian. Or the Reference people. But I need better ways of doing it on a more regular, effective basis

12:42 Karyn Hinkle We ask students for favorite image sources on surveys; like AmyT we also blog about the ones we find and ask in the comments for more.

12:43 Elizabeth Schaub We have a blog too. Our blog feeds our Facebook page.

12:43 Elizabeth Schaub The nice thing about a blog is that over time it becomes a resource you can go back to instead of trying to keep track of information you've forwarded in e-mail messages.

12:43 AmyT Yes, but it is the Architecture Library blog, which includes our visual resources collection, so I don't think there is an audience for it because the information is too broad (new databases, new image tools, how to find subjects in the library ,etc.).

12:43 pefry Which brings up another question. Are we too isolated? Would we be better off having much more contact with reference librarians, both institutionally and within ARLIS/NA?

12:44 Heather I think the trick is to mix in "fun" related info - in with the more pragmatic material.

12:44 AmyT We did put together an image guide in LibGuides this semester.

12:44 AmyT Yes, more fun would help!

12:44 Heather Well, at least that

12:45 pefry I show almost everyone the UT and Depauw youtubes. EVeryone loves them! and pay attention to them!

12:45 Elizabeth Schaub Thank you!

12:45 Elizabeth Schaub Going back to pefry's question about isolation.

12:45 Heather That's what one of our SILS students keeps reminding me re Facebook postings. :~)

12:46 AmyT I also do a print and PDF newsletter each semester. Do I think anyone reads it? No, but it is a way of reminding them that we are here. And it is easy to send to faculty in other departments.

12:48 Elizabeth Schaub One way that we keep our profile high within the school is by curating two exhibits each year.

12:48 Elizabeth Schaub The exhibits highlight collection content that might be useful for faculty and students.

12:49 Heather Are the exhibits you do always faculty photographs?

12:49 Elizabeth Schaub The exhibit gets advertised in the school's bimonthly online eNews publication.

12:49 Elizabeth Schaub We highlight both faculty and student contributions.

12:50 Elizabeth Schaub We also archive the exhibits online (click on the Exhibit Archive link) :



<http://soa.utexas.edu/vrc/exhibits>

12:51 Elizabeth Schaub We have an opening and invite faculty and students. It's a way to promote the collection and get people in the door physically so they know about us and our virtual collection.

12:51 pefry This seems to be one avenue toward survival - a broad involvement with departmental/school activities.

12:51 Elizabeth Schaub Absolutely.

12:51 Karyn Hinkle And speaking of image collections online, do your departments still keep lists of resources on your websites? Does that feel too old school? We find it difficult to keep our list current, unfortunately.

12:51 Heather I think openings, parties, mini-celebrations are a good idea - another way to bring people together in a social way.

12:51 pefry It's just harder to justify when it's the library paying your salary, especially when the library administration is "de-emphasizing" branch libraries

12:52 AmyT We've started doing an open house at the beginning of fall semester. And offering cookies!

12:52 Elizabeth Schaub We have web resources listed online accessible via our site but we also have links on delicious.

12:52 Elizabeth Schaub Cookies are always good and inexpensive.

12:52 Heather Pefry - justify what? I lost the thread

12:52 AmyT Which is a good thing since I have to buy those cookies myself. And that's just during the open house, by the way, we don't offer cookies every day!

12:53 Elizabeth Schaub Check.

12:53 Karyn Hinkle Oh, cool that you have a delicious stream, Elizabeth. Does that feed into your website? Or your facebook?

12:53 pefry Being so involved with departmental activities. What I'm seeing is that the "BIG" schools, Music, Law, Business, will pay for the luxury of having their own branches and experts. Not so the smaller areas

12:53 Elizabeth Schaub We have a link to Delicious on our home page. Our blog feeds our Facebook page. We also have a link to delicious on the Facebook page.

12:55 AmyT For architecture, the branch helps with accreditation, so we're lucky there.

12:55 Elizabeth Schaub FYI, here's our Delicious link:



<http://www.delicious.com/utsoavrc>

12:56 pefry It;s much less clear what that means now for studio, and especially for art history. If an institution has ARTStor, is that enough?

12:56 Elizabeth Schaub I would argue no.

12:56 Elizabeth Schaub Especially as it relates to architecture content.

12:57 Elizabeth Schaub In the few minutes we have left, I'd like to ask if anyone has suggestions as to how the ARLIS/NA Visual Resources Division might be effective in meeting the member's; needs.

12:58 pefry Have to revert back to my "tech consultant" duties and go check out a couple of classrooms for a symposium tomorrow. At least I no longer feel compelled to actually be here for a Saturday symposium.

12:59 pefry But I will leave a comment. I think the usefulness of the VRD may be over. I wonder if we would not be contributing more if we actively participated in Reference, Cataloging, and appropriate division meetings

13:01 Elizabeth Schaub Your suggestion points to the fact that visual resources activities have relevance across what we have thought of as traditional boundaries.

13:02 Heather Well, that's all the time we have. Thanks for joining us today everyone. Great conversation - lots of good ideas.

13:02 Heather We'll post the transcript next week (or so).

13:02 Heather Thanks for moderating Elizabeth!

13:03 AmyT Yes, thank you!

13:03 Elizabeth Schaub Thanks to everyone who contributed to the conversation. I hope you can each walk away with something to inspire action!