The NHPRC and University of Denver Records Authority Software Project

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Presently: Records Management Consultant, Encana Oil and Gas (USA), Inc.

Formerly: Director, University Records, Business and Financial Affairs, University of Denver
Records Management Services

DU Project Team

Nancy Allen  Director, Penrose Library, Project PI
Evan Blount  Programmer
Greg Colati  Digital Initiatives Coordinator, Project PI
Robin Dean  Records Management Assistant
Rachel Desormes  Records Management Assistant
Lisa Diedrich  Administrative Assistant, Penrose Library
Theresa Hernandez  Budget Officer
Joanna Lamb  Records Management Assistant
Lindy Naj  Director, Records Management
David Read  University Records Manager, Project PI
Fernando Reyes  Programmer
Jesse De La Cruz  Graphic Designer
Project context
University of Denver (DU)

• Founded in 1864
• 11,600 students
• 2,300 faculty and staff
University Records Management

- New university-wide program
- IRS 990
- Duplication of sensitive records
- Drive the collection of archival records via retention schedules
Major Initiatives

- University Records Management Policy
- University Records Retention Schedule
What did we need to do our job?
Records Management Services

A tool to:

• Collect and manage survey, interview and records inventory data

• Enable creation, maintenance, and access to retention schedules
A tool that is:

• Open-source, web based
• Based on not bound to traditional practices
• Lightweight and easy-to-use
• Standards-derived, and customizable
Why did we build?
## Appendix B. Records Management Software Feature Comparison Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Liaison</th>
<th>Retention Manager 3 (IRCH)</th>
<th>Versatile Retention 7 (Zasio Enterprises)</th>
<th>a.k.a. Classification &amp; Taxonomies (Synercon)</th>
<th>a.k.a. Disposition Management Software (Synercon)</th>
<th>Versatile Enterprise (Zasio Enterprises)</th>
<th>Documentum Records Manager (EMC)</th>
<th>OmniRIM 7 (OmniRIM)</th>
<th>Eloquent Records (Eloquent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sends surveys for interviews</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has interview forms</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sends record retention</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y (with add-on)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prints record retention reports</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N (with add-on)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audits changes to retention schedule data</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y (with add-on)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has data interoperability with other software</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has legal research capability</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers ability to customize fields/tables</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares controlled vocabularies across software</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports metadata</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers security/authentication</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers web-based access (no client software required)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manages content</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Encouragement from community

“... the City of [--] would be very interested in this type of software ... an easy-to-use open source system that meets the very specific needs of records management staff would probably be greeted with cheering ...”

— Listserv feedback from large municipal government entity
How is it built?
LAMP Architecture

- Linux: operating system
- Apache: web server
- MySQL: database software
- PHP: web scripting languages
- Public Search powered by Solr
- Current Hardware set up at DU
  - Linux RedHat 5 Enterprise with 1 GB of RAM and 20 GB of hard disk space, and uses RAID 5 storage
Initial Design Emphasis

- Survey feature

- Ability to identify the office of primary responsibility central administrative records

- Records inventory collection as a basis for building a retention schedule from scratch

- Multiple access points to web “published” schedule
Timeline

• Proposal to NHPRC: June 2009
• Grant kick off: January 2010
• Developer hired: March 2010
Design Adjustments

1. Balance focus on inventory with features for loading pre-existing schedules or purchased taxonomies.

2. Provide not only ease of access, but also make the schedule (display) readable and easy to understand.

3. Preserve the ability to search/filter by organizational unit – and enhance emphasis keyword search.
Timeline

Q1, 2011:

• Records Authority (RA) went live February, 2011
  – A full three quarters ahead of schedule.
  – Simultaneously, DU
    • completed development of a new retention schedule
    • Used RA to publish it on the University web portal.
Timeline

Q2, 2011:

• First edition of the RA User Guide ready

• Grant partners set up to test RA
  1. Shared “sandbox” environment
  2. Individual “virtual” server environments
Timeline

Q3, 2011:

• Installation guide and wiki in development

• Working with grant partners who will go live:

  1. Remote support for test install
  2. Remote support for production install

NOTE: Working with a new, ad-hoc partner who heard about RA and contacted the project team.
Timeline

Q4, 2011:

• Wrap up final modifications to RA software.

• Contribute RA software to Project Hosting on Google Code
  – Supports a number of open source organizations, including those responsible for some of the components used to develop RA
  – Provides a free collaborative environment that comes with its member controls, Subversion/Mercurial/Git repository, issue tracker, wiki pages, and downloads section.
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Testing Partners

- The Baltimore Museum of Art
- Michigan State University
- City of Seattle Clerk's Office
- Wheaton College
Partner Testing - Initial Reactions

• Don’t necessarily like DU terminology choices for display headers, e.g. “record group” instead of “record series.”
  – NOTE: These can be customized by each institution.

• Add search suggestions feature. NOTE: This validates a nice to have requirement of the project team.

• Add detail for procedures, e.g. for using a Mac, for working with the load template (Excel), or for creating a new record group/series.

• Add visual representation of the baseline process RA was designed to support, e.g. process flow diagram.

• The survey is a great tool and the ability to choose different types of survey questions is especially useful.

• Enable addition of questions to forms, e.g. number of linear feet for physical records.

• The application is intuitive and can be adapted for different program/departmental needs.

• LIKE!!
Software Demo

• High level survey
• Admin dashboard
• Survey follow up
• Records inventory
• Create and publish records series
• Public search
http://library.du.edu/site/about/urmp/recordsAuthority.php