

HARVARD

Records Management Services

HARVARD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



The NHPRC and University of Denver Records Authority Software Project

SAA Annual Conference

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NHPRC
DOCUMENTING DEMOCRACY

 UNIVERSITY OF
DENVER



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DU Project Team

Nancy Allen	Director, Penrose Library, Project PI
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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?

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?

Records Management Services

Appendix B. Records Management Software Feature Comparison Chart	Sends surveys for interviews	Has interview forms	Creates record retention schedules	Prints record retention reports	Publishes record retention information to web	Audits changes to retention schedule data	Has data interoperability with other software	Has legal research capability	Offers ability to customize fields/tables	Searches full text of all data fields	Shares controlled vocabularies across software	Exports metadata	Offers security/authentication for access	Offers web-based access (no client software required)	Manages content
Administrative Records Management Software															
Liaison	Y	Y	Y	**	Y	**	**	N	Y	**	**	**	Y	Y	N
Retention Manager 3 (IRCH)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	?	?	?	N	?	N	N
Versatile Retention 7 (Zasio Enterprises)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y (with add-on)	?	?	Y	Y	?	Y	N	?	Y (with add-on)	N
a.k.a. Classification & Taxonomies (Synercon)	N	N	N/A	N/A	N/A	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
a.k.a. Disposition Management Software (Synercon)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	?	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Enterprise Content Management (ECM) Software															
Versatile Enterprise (Zasio Enterprises)	N	N	Y	Y	Y (with add-on)	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y (with add-on)	Y
Documentum Records Manager (EMC)	N	N	Y	?	Y	?	?	N	?	?	Y	?	Y	Y	Y
OmniRIM 7 (OmniRIM)	N	N	Y	Y	?	Y	?	N	?	?	Y	?	Y	?	Y
Eloquent Records (Eloquent)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

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>