

HELLO DLF and Hello Philly

My name is **James Martin**. I am an Archivist with the Special Media Division of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and am currently employed at our College Park, MD facility. I have been with the agency since March, 1990

Background on the Special Media Division of NARA

- **Encompasses the Cartographic and Architectural Branch; the Still Picture Branch; and the Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch**
- **I have worked within or performed work for each of these three branches during my career**
- **Today's presentation will be focused on the day-to-day operations of the Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch in relation to today's topic**
- **But first, some more background info . . .**

Basic Work Processes of the Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch of NARA

- Operates the moving image and audio recording research room at College Park, MD. The research room allows for video dubbing of access copies.
- Answers reference inquiries from the public – snail mail, e-mail, telephone, in-person
- Processes orders for copies of original records by using the Vendor System.
- The Vendor System allows customers to choose an approved commercial vendor in the DC area to make copies in the format and time framed agreed upon.
- All items pulled to fulfill all orders result in additional service fees charged by NARA.
- Customer pays for a newly produced Master or Reproduction Copies of the original record if none existed; the new copy becomes the property of NARA and will be used for future reproduction orders.
- The branch does add to its collections, but is not pro-active in this endeavor. All federal agencies of the U.S. government must by law have in place records schedules for proper disposition of federally created or collected records. Approximately 66% of all special media items are eventually destroyed. The rest become archived at NARA and are processed.
- The overwhelming majority of records of NARA are considered to be part of the public domain.

TOPIC: Partnerships Between Public and Private Entities to Facilitate Digital Access to Moving Image Collections

- **There are over 500,000 original Dynamic Media recordings in the Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch, including: motion picture films, video recordings, **moving images**, sound recordings**
- **P-I-R Concept (Preservation, Intermediate, Reference)**
- **Current Partners**
 - **Topics Entertainment**
 - **Amazon/CreateSpace**
 - **Google**

TOPICS Entertainment

- Headquartered in Renton, WA (Seattle suburb)
- Website is: <http://www.topics-ent.com/>
- NARA and Topics entered into a contractual agreement several years ago
- NARA to receive a small percentage of the total sales of DVD sets – approximately \$150,000 to date from approximately 1.5 million DVD sets sold via Costco, Sam's Club
- Traditional business model (short tail)
- New Topic for research about every six months

AMAZON/CreateSpace

- Contractual agreement has been in place for about a year
- It's E-Store for the National Archives is being constructed at
http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_ss_gw/104-7158789-2853524?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=national+archives
- To date less than 400 DVDs have been sold
- NARA to receive 20% of total sales minus ingestion costs
- Long tail business model . . . Very long

Google

- **Approximately two years ago entered into a tentative agreement with NARA**
- **Did a digital mini-pilot involving approximately 100 titles from the National Archives and posted them at <http://video.google.com/nara.html>**
- **Views and downloads are free and considered part of the public domain**
- **Another long tail**

The Long Tail Theory

- Term borrowed from statistics
- Chris Anderson's article in the October 2004 version of *Wired* Magazine applied the theory to Internet Commerce
- The following quotes are taken from a report by David Pierce which he prepared for the Library of Congress and UCLA titled "Expanding Access to Moving Image and Audio Collections in the Digital Age – Strategy and Recommendations", February 8, 2007:
- Long Tail Principle 1: " 'Products that are low in demand or have low sales volume can collectively make up a market share that rivals or exceeds the relatively few current bestsellers and blockbusters, if the store or distribution channel is large enough.' "
- Long Tail Principle 2: " ' Where inventory storage and distribution costs are insignificant, it becomes economically viable to sell relatively unpopular products; however when storage and distribution costs are high only the most popular products can be sold.' "
- Long Tail Principle 3: "Use recommendations and referrals to push demand down the Long Tail to otherwise ignored products."

Observations On Current Partner Practices

- NARA has only used readily available resources to meet partnership demands. No additional resources have been allocated. The agency may not be able to continue with this practice as more potential partners make overtures.
- By not following the regular ordering procedures of the Motion Picture, Sound, and Video Branch, a significant cost of doing business has been shifted to the agency.
- POCs come and go with each partner, so re-educating each new person as to the limits and workings of an archive is a constant.
- Agreements, though time consuming, help the agency and the potential partner focus on what each wants out of the venture and gives NARA a voice in how the products are presented to the public.
- Upper management is concerned about the amount of time staff donate to partnerships in place of normal work assignments.
- “Hey, let’s start with the low hanging fruit”.
- Preservation efforts are served but only to a point.
- Duplication of effort among competitors . . . Well, sometimes the partners are competitors.
- Generally speaking, they seek us out, we don’t seek them
- But we have no choice . . . NARA must continue with her partnerships. Too much volume and not enough resources.

More Potential Partners ?

- Microsoft
- ThoughtEquity.com
<http://www.thoughtequity.com/>
- Blinkx TV - <http://www.blinkx.com/>
- Can NARA handle more partners?
- More “Corporate Overlords”