Following the TRAIL: Gift-Cultures and Collaborative Efforts for the Library Community

Maliaca Oxnam, University of Arizona
Marie Waltz, Center for Research Libraries
Joni Blake, Greater Western Library Alliance
Overview

- TRAIL – Technical Report Archive & Image Library
- Culture status models and gift cultures
- Gift Cultures & the TRAIL model
- The role GWLA and CRL are playing
- Further Thoughts
What is TRAIL?

Technical Report Archive & Image Library

- Digitizing & preserving early federally funded technical reports
- Collaborative effort of more than 17 institutions
- Multi-year funding infrastructure from 33 institutions
- Shared vision and recognized need
2003-2005:
- Starts with a local project at University of Arizona
- Discussion at ASEE Annual conference; grassroots efforts began (June 2004)

2006:
- GWLA Strategic Initiative approved (April 2006)
- Taskforce appointed; first meeting (August 2006)

2007:
- Completed pilot project (March 2007)
- Explored potential partnerships and continued environmental scanning (September 2007)

2008:
- Pilot deemed successful; funding renewed
- Pursuing partnerships (University Michigan & Stanford)
Contributing Institutions

Content, Staff and Financial Support

- University of Arizona
- University of Washington
- University of Hawaii-Manoa
- University of Arkansas
- University of Colorado-Boulder
- University of Utah
- University of Michigan
- University of New Mexico
- Rice University
- Baylor University
- Colorado State University
- Cornell University
- Kansas State University
- Linda Hall Library
- Oklahoma State University
- Stanford University
- Center for Research Libraries
Contributors Currently Providing Financial Support:

- Arizona State University
- Brigham Young University
- Colorado State University
- Iowa State University
- Oregon State University
- Southern Illinois University
- Texas A&M University
- Texas Tech University
- University of Hong Kong
- University of Houston
- University of Kansas

- University of Missouri - Columbia
- University of Nebraska – Lincoln
- University of Oklahoma
- University of Oregon
- University of Southern California
- University of Texas at Austin
- Utah State University
- Washington State University
- Washington University, St. Louis
Charge

Develop a collaborative project with the Center for Research Libraries to identify, digitize, archive, and provide persistent and unrestricted access to federal technical reports issued prior to 1975.
Collaboration vs Cooperation

- **Cooperation** – 1) to act or/work with another or others to common end : operate jointly; 3) to associate with another or others for mutual economic benefit

- **Collaboration** – to work jointly with one or a limited number of others in a project involving composition or research to be jointly accredited
“If you have an apple and I have an apple and we exchange those apples, then you and I will still each have one apple. But if you have an idea and I have an idea and we exchange these ideas, then each of us will have two ideas.”

– George Bernard Shaw
Cultural Status Models

- command hierarchy – scarce goods allocated by one central entity and backed up by force
- exchange economy – goods allocated in a decentralized way through trade and voluntary cooperation
- gift-culture - status is determined not by what you control but by what you give away

– by Eric Raymond in Homesteading the Noosphere
“Gift cultures are adaptations not to scarcity but to abundance.”

– by Eric Raymond in Homesteading the Noosphere
Roles

- Contributors (Content)
- Nodes (Content Organizers)
- Central Organization (Metadata/QA)
- Digital Archives
- Print Archives
- Scanning Partners
- Interface Provider
- Taskforce Members
Libraries are changing

- Gift-cultures are one way to maximize our resources and expertise/specializations for the good of the community.

- Can be achieved regardless of the number of participants, geographic location, collection scope, or member assets.
GWLA’s Organizational Activity

Originally Based on Exchange Economy

More Recent Projects are Gift-Based
GWLA’s role & Institutional participation

- Taskforce structure/commitments
- Conduit for members
- Central Overhead
- Fiscal management
- Legal body for MOUs/contracts
Fitting It All Together

- Michigan/Google, Stanford
- CRL
- GWLA “Silent Partners”
- GWLA “Active Partners”
- University of Arizona
CRL members are a community of Interest

- CRL’s 245 members from universities, colleges and independent research libraries
- CRL institutions represent a community of interest for this project, librarians and scholars who will use the technical reports.
- CRL institutions can also become contributors to the TRAIL Project.
CRL’s role

- We can be a conduit for additional contributors
- We are a contact to other institutions, such as ARL
- We are giving additional fiscal management
- We will assure good practices in digital preservation
How do gift cultures form?

**Vision**
- Start discussing the ideas
- Develop a shared vision

**Impact**
- Share knowledge base
- Obtain institutional support
- Timing will vary by institution

**Intimacy**
- Focus on developing trust
- Maximize use of social network
- Consistent communication and reflection
Questions?

TRAIL Pilot website:

http://digicoll.manoa.hawaii.edu/techreports/

Maliaca Oxnam
oxnamm@u.library.arizona.edu

Marie Waltz
waltz@crl.edu

Joni Blake
joni@gwla.org