

M-DID and ARTstor

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As a brand new member of this list, I write to ask for very general advice.

I'm an historian, but also on half-time assignment for 3 years, helping colleagues across my university to make better and smarter use of computers in teaching. Our college dean asked me to help the art historians, who are just facing up to the need to move from slides to digital images. Two of the (very different) most recommended ways to go have been ARTstor and M-DID. I've just been touring the M-DID website and it **looks** most impressive. I'm particularly interested in it, because it looks to me as if it might help many disciplines store and use media we've already got, but organize and access poorly so far.

My first M-DID question concerns what sorts of hardware and tech support are needed to make the thing work. Right now we're in the last of the 3 year grant period supporting my efforts, and at the end of it we'll have our grant-supplied server maybe available to handle part of the load. We've got a very overloaded although good IT staff, so all but emergency problem fixes can take a while to get done. The art folks also have a part-time curator who is willing to learn to use the new scanners I've helped them get, plus serve as M-DID art history curator. There are a fair number of amateur but dedicated techies such as myself willing to handle some tech in our own areas.

Second on M-DID, what catches should I be looking into and why did any of you who use it adopt it? Are you glad or sorry?

On to ARTstor - I gather our tier 3 university status means it will cost us about \$8000 a year after one-time start up costs of maybe \$15,000 (these figures are from memory so may be a bit off). We'll definitely still need the ability to organize and store and access a lot of existing images. If ARTstor is the best way to go, we'll need to be able to make a VERY strong case to our administration, which views continuing yearly payments as something to do only in the last resort (the struggle to go with a Microsoft site license was pretty epic). If you think ARTstor is best even for medium-at-best university budgets, how would you help us make that case?

Arthist.net

With thanks for any and all advice,

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Reference:

Q: M-DID and ARTstor. In: Arthist.net, Nov 21, 2005 (accessed Dec 22, 2025),
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