ArtHist.net

Re: Q: M–DID and ARTstor

Redaktion

Response to Sara Tucker <sara.tucker@washburn.edu>:
Q: M-DID and ARTstor: "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 colleage dean asked me to help the
art historians, who are just facing up to the need to move from slides to
digital images [...]"

[1]

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From: Dorothee Haffner <Dorothee.Haffner@culture.hu-berlin.de>

Dear Sara,

if you are looking for an easy-to-use-system for online images I suggest to
take MDID. It's freeware, easy to handle (as far as I see) and used by
several institutions in the USA. The software they offer for download helps
you to organize your images and share them with other collections. Contact
David Ehrenpreis (ehrenpdh@jmu.edu <mailto:ehrenpdh@jmu.edu>) for general
questions or Andreas Knab (mdid@jmu.edu), the MDID software engineer, for
questions concerning hardware and technique. If you looked at the website
you certainly noticed the online workshop to be held on December 1. This
should be a good opportunity to get a closer contact.

There are two other (German) software systems which I can recommend:
DILPS (www.dilps.net)
EasyDB (www.easydb.de <http://www.easydb.de/>)
Both are realizing online-based image databases with presentation tools and
are working with open source tools. For a closer view on DILPS you can get a
guest account (contact Thorsten Wübbena,
wuebbena@kunst.uni-frankfurt.de). EasyDB offers a demo version on its
website.

If you are looking not only for a software but also for an online tool for
image research I suggest to take a look on prometheus
(www.prometheus-bildarchiv.de <http://www.prometheus-bildarchiv.de/>, take
the English version of the website). Prometheus was developed within some
German universities and is a broker that brings together an array of
different databases (university institutes, museums, libraries). Actually

prometheus offers 25 databases with more than 260.000 images, and the number of both databases and images is continuously rising. The image holders put their databases at disposal free of charge for use in research and education (open content).The license fees are used exclusively to cover the expense arising from running, managing, and improving the image archive. The system itself is decidedly non-commercial. License fees are rather low: campus license costs only 2.000 EUR a year, institutes even less (depending of the number of persons using it). For details see the website.

I gave you a guest account which I'll sent to your personal e-mail so you can take a look on the possibilities. Since the system is a German one of course the search fields and entries are also in German. We are thinking about a multilingual tool but have not yet realized it.

For further informations on prometheus don't hesitate to contact me directly.

Best wishes and greetings!
Dorothee Haffner

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Dr. Dorothee Haffner | Diathek Fotothek Neue Medien
Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Kunstgeschichtliches Seminar
Post: Unter den Linden 6, 10099 Berlin
Sitz: Dorotheenstr. 28, Berlin-Mitte
Tel (030) 20 93-43 11 | Fax (030) 20 93-42 09
http://www.prometheus-bildarchiv.de/

[2]
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From: Lisa Norris <tantpis@comcast.net>

Dear Sara-

Interesting timing - I'm copying our slide librarian and his assistant, who've made it possible to move to digital, which we've done over the last several years. We LOVE MDID for many reasons - and at a conference I attended it was hands down the winner in terms of what's available. The costs are in purchasing the images and paying for staff to do a good job processing the images, maintaining server, etc. But as far as I understand there's no fee for its usage, and unlike ARTstor, you won't be left with nothing if the subscription is no longer an option. And its new incarnation should allow access for research, presentations, etc. to all students as well as faculty who want to use them.

For specifics, downsides, etc. I will defer to my colleagues. The fact that I had a really hard time giving up my slides (which I still use at times)

and have written the above is testament to the fact that this system does
work pretty well.

Best wishes-
Lisa

Lisa Norris
Kutztown University (also Tier 3!!)

Reference:

Q: Re: Q: M-DID and ARTstor. In: ArtHist.net, Nov 24, 2005 (accessed Dec 21, 2025),

<https://arthist.net/archive/27739>.