

Technologies & Techniques for Cultural Heritage Digitization

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Abstract: Cultural heritage institutions have the herculean task of digitizing their diverse and extensive collections that are continually growing, all while adhering to industry guidelines for image quality and long-term accessibility. This presentation will provide an overview of the industry's available scanning technologies for collections conversion of various collection types, and how to utilize these technologies to increase throughput and ensure preservation grade digital assets.

We will also examine the importance of quality assurance, which includes an overview of national and international standards such as the Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiatives (FADGI) and Metamorphoze, as well as how these protocols can impact decisions from project feasibility through execution. We will discuss the factors that affect image quality at capture as well as image quality assessment techniques that will ensure that collections are scanned to satisfy and exceed these standards throughout the entire workflow.

About the author:

Peter Siegel has served the not for profit community for over 25 years, initially designing imaging programs for non-profit institutions. Peter was the Head of Digital Imaging and Photography for Harvard Art Museums and Fine Arts Library. Here he planned and implemented the modernization of the entire imaging lab and photography services department by designing and integrating image capture technologies for image creation, management and permanence. Peter was also the Director of Digital Imaging at the American Museum of Natural History and was responsible for all aspects of the Digital Imaging program and created an image database containing over 270,000 high-resolution images from Collections, Catalogue Ledgers, and Archives.

After 15 years of working "in the trenches," Peter decided to embark on a new challenge with Digital Transitions and founded the Division of Cultural Heritage (DCH). The primary focus of the DCH is to support the complex needs of cultural institutions through viable hardware solutions and technical support services. His vast knowledge enabled him to develop reprographic and book capture systems that speak to the concerns of quality, reliability, safety, versatility and speed.