

# Using Social Media to Connect Users to Digital Archives

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**Abstract:** Archivists continuously think about how to provide the most effective means for users to access collections. A new question that has emerged is what facilitates the discovery process for users. As social media becomes common place these services provide a unique avenue to drive discovery of archives or items within a collection. Since the development of digital archives and libraries has greatly increased due to decreasing software costs and an increasing awareness of the potential behind digital projects, the opportunities offered by social media are increasingly within reach. Digital archives and libraries serve as an additional access point for patrons to access collections. Together digital archives and libraries with the combination of social media potentially serve as outreach programs for many cultural institutions. Social media makes it seem possible for an institution of any size to reach a potentially limitless number of users. This poster will present preliminary findings from in depth interviews conducted with a small stratified sample of archivists from the southeast Wisconsin area, and quantifiable data set of site usage specifically from referrals from social media applications to archival collections.

## **About the author:**

*Jennifer Stevenson* has recently completed her first year of doctoral study at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She received her MLIS and a concentration in Archival Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She then went on to receive a Certificate of Advanced Study in Digital Libraries. Jennifer's research interests are invested in digital archives, social media, user studies, and archival software development. She is interested in information retrieval and the social impacts of information and communication technology amongst different user groups. Professionally, she has been working in the world of digital archives. Over the past several years she has worked at several institutions as a digital archivist consultant. She believes that user studies regarding digital archives will help the archival profession to continue to provide service and outreach while at the same time provide new archivists with knowledge that will allow the profession to grow.