

RBMS Web Team

Report for ALA Annual 2011

The Web Team functions under the auspices of the Publications Committee of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). This report was written by Web Team members and compiled by Shannon Supple, Web Editor (2010-2011)

WEB TEAM MEMBERS

Editors*:

Shannon K. Supple – Web Editor (2010-2011), incoming Senior Web Editor (2011-2012)
Christopher Thomas Smith – Senior Web Editor (2010-2011)
Jason Kovari – Assistant Web Editor (2010-2011), incoming Web Editor (2011-2012)
Melissa Hubbard – incoming Assistant Web Editor (2011-2012)

Liaisons:

Randal Brandt (2009--) – Bibliographic Standards Committee Liaison
Katie Carr (2009--) – Security Committee Liaison
Eva Rose Guggemos (2009--) – Membership and Professional Development Committee Liaison
Melissa Hubbard (2010--) – Publications Committee Liaison and Preconference media coordinator
Christine Megowan (2010--) – Exhibition Awards and Seminars Committees Liaison, digress.it project
Kate Moriarty (2010--) – Executive Committee Liaison
Lynne M. Thomas (2009--) – Social Media Liaison

Web Editors Emeriti:

James P. Ascher
Christian Yves Dupont
John Pull

* After ALA Annual 2011, Jason Kovari becomes Web Editor, Chris Smith becomes a web editor emeritus, Shannon Supple becomes Senior Web Editor, and Melissa Hubbard becomes Assistant Web Editor.

REPORT

I. Overall Website Statistics

Since the website statistics were last reported (7 December 2010) until 19 May 2011, rbms.info has had 53,662 visits, and 107,773 page views with an average of 2.01 pages per visit. Once again, a substantial percentage of the views were for “Your Old Books” (29,916 page views, 27.76%), followed by the main page (12,255 page views, 11.37%), the Controlled Vocabularies (5,014 views, 4.65%), the preconference index page (3,332 views, 3.09%) and the 2011 Preconference index page (3,236 views, 3.00%).

Most of our website’s traffic continues to stem from search engines (60.92% of visits), and the top five keywords are “rbms” (8.40% of visits), “old books” (2.17%), “rbms 2011” (0.97%), “old book values” (0.92%), and “value of old books” (0.87%). Most visitors have IP addresses located in the United States (43,626 visits, 69.36%) and report their language as English (51,475 visits, 95.92%). The dominant browsers continue to be Internet Explorer (43.45% of visits) and Firefox (36.48%), though Safari (10.34%) and Chrome (8.51%) continue to steadily increase. Similarly, the dominant operating systems remain Windows (81.24% of visits) and Mac (13.88%), but there continues to be a smattering of mobile platforms used (including iPhone, iPad, and Android, devices) which has increased slightly since the last report (2.55%, compared to 1.91% previously).

II. Web Survey Follow-up and Next Steps for the Website

The RBMS Web Team conducted a survey of RBMS members and other site users about their needs for and uses of the website in August-September 2010. The responses highlighted three areas for improvement of the website: more regularly updated and additional content, a simplified navigational structure, and an updated site design. Since that time, the Web Editors have been determining how best to proceed with improving the website and addressing the concerns of its users. We have already created a space for the RBMS News Editor to add news updates, experimented with collaborative spaces for the DCRM groups, with Drupal-based projects, and in social media, and posted procedures for committees to follow to update their webpages within the site. Yet, there is clearly more work to be done.

We are now considering a vast overhaul of the website, with a change in hosting service, platform (Drupal), and site organization/navigational structure. This is a huge undertaking and it will take time to plan and, if once we decide how to proceed, implement. First steps will include inventorying the website’s array of content and drafting a suggested navigation and site map as well as determining whether we need to hire a web designer to create a new Drupal-based site.

The Web Editors would also like to remind RBMS committees that committees are responsible for updating the information on the webpages within their purview and can update links by following these link-checking procedures: <http://rbms.info/committees/website/linkchecking.shtml>. Web Team members have neither the content expertise nor time to complete research for this extensive task. The Web Team relies on our fellow RBMS members to keep the content current. Committee members and other users of the site can always send updates to editor@rbms.info and the Web Team will respond as swiftly as possible.

III. Individual Project Reports

A. Experiments with the Drupal Platform:

In addition to “Careers in Rare Books and Manuscripts: Frequently Asked Questions,” Chris Smith created a second test of the Drupal platform with the News blog, which feeds directly into the News & Events section on the front page of the website. The Drupal-based pages currently live at the experimental subdomain new.rbms.info (with the News blog at <http://new.rbms.info/?q=blog/10>). We will continue our Drupal experiments and explore adding additional content as well.

B. Thesaurus Design:

The redesign of the RBMS Controlled Vocabularies site is on hold while the Controlled Vocabularies team migrates data from MultiTres to the TemaTres Vocabulary Editor.

C. Exhibition Awards Gallery Project:

The web team is building an online gallery for the Exhibition Awards Committee. Lead by Jason Kovari, this endeavor will supplement the currently hosted 10th-anniversary site and allow for annual updates. Although initial completion of the project was set for Annual 2011, Web Team and the Exhibition Awards Committee schedule complexities have postponed the project.

D. Collaborative Editing with digress.it:

After the positive response to the Digress.it sites that were set up before Midwinter 2010 for Examples to Accompany DCRM(B) and for DCRM(G) Review, James P. Ascher and Christine Megowan have set up 6 more sites with Digress.it: DCRMS(S) Examples, Controlled Vocabularies Scope Notes Project, Leab Exhibition Awards Criteria, an online seminar about creating Electronic Exhibits, and DCRM(MSS).

The sites for DCRM(B) Examples, DCRM(G) Review, and Genre Scope Notes are currently accessible to the public, with DCRM(S) Examples and DCRM(MSS) Review still in the process of generating content. Due to licensing restrictions, the online seminar on Electronic Exhibits is accessible only to individuals who registered during an initial sign-up period. The Leab Awards discussion page is accessible by invitation only to Exhibition Awards Committee members. As of May 25th, there are 87 registered users across all 7 sites. Comments and posts total 604 comments on 109 posts, breaking down by project as:

- DCRM(B) Examples: 160 comments on 66 posts
- DCRM(S) Examples: 1 comment on 2 posts
- DCRM(G) Review: 297 comments on 21 posts
- Genre Scope Notes: 2 comments on 9 posts
- Leab Exhibition Awards Criteria: 0 comments on 3 posts
- Electronic Exhibit Online Seminar: 143 comments on 7 posts
- DCRM(MSS) Review: 1 comment on 1 post

The biggest challenge in setting up and maintaining these sites has been customizing the style sheets and maintaining visual continuity from one version to the next as updates to Wordpress and Digress.it are

released. James has proposed that customizations be limited to simple changes such as font size and style, and should not include changes to the menus or overall layout of the page. James has begun adding the Wordpress procedures to the Web Team Manual and is eager to add processes as they come up.

E. Social Media Projects:

RBMS members and committees have expressed a strong desire to explore social media tools. Lynne Thomas and Shannon Supple continue experimenting with an RBMS Twitter feed and Facebook page.

The official RBMS stream was started on 21 January 2010 at <http://twitter.com/RBMSinfo>. As of 19 May 2011, we have 345 followers (compared to 204 in October 2010 and 120 in July 2010) and have been added to 40 lists by Twitter users. Our policy is to follow anyone who follows us as long as they are at least vaguely related to libraries, archives, the book trade, or special collections. We have tweeted 1109 times since launch and are regularly retweeted and "tweeted at" by various ALA groups as well as SAA groups and individuals, so we are considered a reasonably good network of special collections professionals for sharing information. In April 2011, we added an automatic feed using dlvr.it, allowing each post created by the RBMS News Editor to feed directly into our Twitter stream.

RBMS's official Facebook page was created on 19 July 2010. We have 178 "likes" (i.e. subscribers). The 2011 Preconference page has 74 "likes." Posts to the RBMS Facebook page average between 350 and 620 "impressions" (i.e. views).

AddThis is a linking service that allows users to transmit web pages on various services. The Team added it site-wide 13 March 2010. For the period 7 December 2010 through 19 May 2011, we have had 46 total shares, including 16 for *Your Old Books* and 11 for the RBMS.INFO homepage. (The other shares are spread throughout the website with 1-4 shares per page.) The character of the services used to share our website are as follows: 26.32% Facebook, 21.05% print, 13.16% Google, and 10.53% email. These numbers continue to be small though sharing on Facebook has increased.

These results show that our social media presence is slowly gaining ground. We plan to continue our current approach but are also open to suggestions from RBMS members and others who use these services.

F. Posting Agendas, Minutes, and Resolutions to the Website:

In response to the Executive Committee's request to post committee agendas and minutes on the RBMS website, Executive Committee liaison Kate Moriarty, trained by Chris Smith, compiled all recent agendas and minutes into one location: <http://www.rbms.info/committees/minutes/minutes.html>. Committee chairs are encouraged to review the page and to send missing agendas and minutes to Kate for posting.

The Executive Committee has also asked the Web Team to post RBMS resolutions to the website. The Publications Committee is working on a template for the resolutions. Once the template is completed and the resolutions are ready, Kate will post them to the website as well.

G. 2011 Preconference Documentation:

The Web Team plans to create a page documenting the 2011 RBMS Preconference, which will be similar in nature to past such pages and will contain audio and video recordings, photographs, and documents.