**AMICO**

Art Museum Image Consortium: creating a collaborative image database

University of Pittsburgh
February 16, 2000

**What is AMICO?**

- Independent, non-profit, consortium of institutions with collections of art
- Mission: enable educational access to museum multimedia documentation

**Why AMICO?**

- Encourage broad use of museum collections
- Create common library for consistency and ease of use
- Administer educational licenses efficiently
- Facilitate interchange of experience and ideas
- Build links among museum and user communities

**AMICO's Challenges**

- Content
  - What are we going to distribute?
- Documentation
  - How will it be described?
- Technology
  - How do we digitize, and provide access to it?
- Intellectual Property
  - Do we have the rights?
- Economics
  - Can we pay for it?
- Community Building
  - Why would we collaborate?
  - Who wants it, and what will they do with it?

**Shared by all creators of information resources**

**Who's involved?**

- Members
- AMICO
- Distributors
- Subscribers
- Users

**Creating and Delivering the AMICO Library**
**AMICO Members**
- **founded Consortium in Sept. 1997**
  - 31+ members in North America
  - new members welcome, worldwide
- **pay dues**
  - 2,000 - 5,000 $US based on budget
- **govern consortium**
  - committees: editorial, technical, rights, users
- **contribute to the Library**
  - text, image, multimedia
- **use the Library**
  - in galleries, library, research ...

**AMICO Works**
Works in the AMICO Library are documented by a catalog record, and image and an image metadata record. Other multimedia may also be included.

**AMICO**
- **assists members**
  - advice, training and support
  - specifications, best practices
- **manages agreements**
  - artists rights, distributors, licenses
- **compiles library**
  - verifies data formats, vocabulary
  - enhances indexing and authority control
  - validates image and multimedia files
  - ensures record structure, links
  - transfers to distributors

**AMICO Distributors**
- **AMICO Thumbnail Catalog**
  - on Web for public access
- **Research Libraries Group (RLG)**
  - university access
- **Ohio, California state consortia**
  - statewide college access (under development)
- **Other Distributors likely**
  - Primary & Secondary Schools, Public Libraries and international users
- **Different access for distinct communities**

**AMICO Web**
- www.amico.org
AMICO at RLG

- Research Libraries Group
- not-for-profit library information network
- Offer many resources
  - abstracting and indexing, archival records, bibliographic records
  - AMICO Library part of their Eureka Service
- Limited learning curve for existing users
- 24/7 support and service

AMICO at RLG

AMICO Web Thumbnail Catalog

Search Result
www.amico.org

AMICO Web Thumbnail Catalog

AMICO @ RLG

Subscription Service

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Subscription Service

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Subscription Service

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Subscription Service
AMICO Subscribers

- educational Institutions
  - universities, colleges, schools, libraries, museums
  - annual subscription fee

- license specifies users and uses
  - non-commercial, educational
  - faculty, staff, students, researchers, walk-in users and distance education
  - presentations, papers, theses, lectures, local systems

- annual subscription fee for
  unlimited access to a growing library

AMICO Users

- integrate image content throughout curriculum
  - art history, studio, cultural history, languages
  - imaging and printing

- use content in local and networked systems

Users in Art History

projection of images in classroom

in depth study

Student assignments

Users in Art Studio

Assignment:

- Review the AMICO library for works that explore the concepts of solid and void.

- Analyse them as you prepare for the creation of your own work.

Users in the Library

online review replaces slide carrousels
Users in Cultural History

Dürer's Large Passion used with Bach's St. Matthew Passion to provide context for Luther's Freedom of a Christian

Users in Technical Studies

• Computer Imaging
  - Review metadata accompanying AMICO images and assess issues in image quality and fidelity
  - Identify criteria for creating accurate digital colour reproductions of works of art

• School of Printing
  - Assess issues in faithful colour reproduction from digital source

Issues

• Content
• Documentation
• Technology
• Intellectual Property
• Economics
• Community Building

Issues: Content

• collections development
  - at 50,000 works "more holes than cheese"
• consistent documentation
  - text, image, multimedia
• critical mass
  - of what, for whom?
• breadth vs depth
  - lots of things, or lots about a few things?
• persistence
  - access over time to same works

Issues: Documentation

• data specification
  - separate display data from access data
  - field level guidelines (for indexing dates, terms)
• editorial consistency
  - shared authority files and indexing rules
  - existing tools aren't enough (~30% of names not in ULAN)
• metadata standards
  - descriptions of works and associated media files
• cross-resource discovery
  - AMICO Library links to other resources e.g. bibliography and full texts

Issues: Technology

• Members
  - collections management systems, image capture, audio, video, multimedia, extended text
• AMICO
  - contribution management, image and text validation, multimedia, member and distributor support
• Distributors
  - library access interfaces, collections integration
• Subscribers
  - local on-campus systems, OPACs, Web pages, etc.
• Users
  - own analytical, research, study systems
**Issues: More Technology**

- Multimedia
  - common formats, structures, metadata and descriptions
- Consistent and unique naming
- Verification and maintenance of links
  - each AMICO work is a multi-part object
- Consistent capture standards
  - comparable results
- Systems security, user authentication
- Authenticity

**Issues: Intellectual Property**

- Protection
  - technological vs social and legal mechanisms
- Consistent terms and conditions
  - common agreements, no special terms
- Distinct licenses for user communities
  - primary school uses different from university
- International licenses
  - global distribution requires review of terms
  - relationships between institutions and users differ
- Artists rights negotiated
  - agreements with Artists Rights Society (ARS)

**Issues: Economics**

- Self supporting not-for-profit
  - cost-recovery required
  - not dependent on grant funding for core activities
  - long-term sustainability a key goal
- All institutional participants have stake
  - no money returned to members
  - subscription fees support activities of the consortium
  - incentives for distributors & subscribers to develop tools and add value
- Keep access free at point of use

**Issues: Community Building**

- Shared mission enables collaboration
  - not-for-profit and educational focus
- Consistent terms for participants
  - common, transparent, formula-based agreements
- Open multi-way communications
  - public specifications: technical and data
  - known license terms
- Shared risks and benefits
  - members collaborate online
  - users share experiences
  - all build expertise

**AMICO as example**

- Building multimedia digital libraries
  - requires new methods and strategies
- Social, economic, legal and technological challenges
  - integration of people, institutions and systems
- Technology is an enabler not an end in itself
  - image databases only one small part of the picture

**More info?**

Art Museum Image Consortium
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